

BILL JONES
of **PARADISE VALLEY**
OKLAHOMA
AND THE
GREAT SOUTHWEST

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Two Oklahoma Boomers

BILL JONES OF PARADISE VALLEY OKLAHOMA

**HIS LIFE AND ADVENTURES FOR OVER FORTY
YEARS IN THE GREAT SOUTHWEST. HE
WAS A PIONEER IN THE DAYS OF THE
BUFFALO, THE WILD INDIAN,
THE OKLAHOMA BOOMER,
THE COWBOY AND
THE OUTLAW**

**COPIOUSLY ILLUSTRATED
FROM PHOTOS AND
DRAWINGS FROM REAL LIFE**

**BY
JOHN J. CALLISON
KINGFISHER, OKLAHOMA**

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PREFACE

In the old days, when that part of the West, stretching from the Missouri river to the Rockies, and from the Rio Grande to the British possessions, was an almost unbroken wilderness, inhabited by roaming Indians and wild animals, there came a class of men, lured by the love of adventure, who were not afraid to brave the hardships of pioneer life. They did a great work in making this vast region habitable for the millions of people who now occupy it, with their farms and factories, their villages and cities.

The romance of the West has largely disappeared. The great cattle ranges have been divided up into farms, and the cattle, instead of plodding on foot, now ride to market in palace stock cars. The cowboy of the old cattle trail and the free range may now be seen only in story books, and as he is represented (and sometimes misrepresented) in moving pictures. Most of the rough-and-ready men who did the pioneer work have passed over the Great Divide, and a new generation, of milder manners but no truer hearts, have taken their places.

This book is the story of one of the pioneers, who still lives to tell the tale. He followed the trail; he rounded up the cattle; he chased the jackrabbit; he worried the tenderfoot; he fought with the cook, the prairie dog and the horned toads; he did many other things too numerous to mention here, but interesting to read about later on in the book. He swore some in those days, otherwise he would not have harmonized with the landscape. He was able to see the funny side of things as he went along, which was a fortunate thing; for it kept him going, and often smoothed over rough and dangerous experiences.

This book lays no claim to literary excellence. It just tells what Bill Jones did, saw and felt during his forty years in the Southwest, in his own way. If he has contributed something to the reader's enjoyment, he is content.

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CHAPTER I.

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH A STENOGRAPHER.

"Wanted: A lady typist."

I inserted the above advertisement in the paper, and then I was ready for business. The first applicant was a woman about forty years old and as ugly as a coyote. I gave her the job, and after she had removed her wraps and hung them up she sat down at the machine, fixed the jingle-bob and adjusted the do-flapper. Then she asked me if we would commence the day's work in the usual way.

"I guess so," I replied, and went on with my writing. I expected to hear that machine start off on a piece of rag-time music about like K. C. Jones, but nothing of the kind happened. She turned around and looked at me. I asked her what was the trouble.

"Are we going to start the day's work in the usual way?" she repeated.

I will admit that I can give a jack rabbit a running start of one hundred yards, and catch him in a thousand-yard dash; but I am too slow for the people of the East. "Please put me next to the way of starting work here in Illinois," I said to her.

"Every place where I have worked for the last twenty years," she replied, "when I was ready to go to work in the morning, the boss would always take me in his arms and kiss me."

"My dear girl," I answered, "as I already have a wife and a little boy, I don't think it would be right for me to do anything of that kind."

With that, she grabbed her hat and wraps, and out she went, while the phonograph in the next room played the "Rogue's March."

About 1:00 P. M. another one showed up. I gave her the job. She was a blonde, about twenty, and as pretty as a sunkist peach. After the usual preliminaries in such cases, she sat down at the machine. Thinking I ought to start the afternoon's work in the usual way, I stepped up behind her, put my arm around her neck and was going to put a kiss where it would do the most good. Then something happened. After I got through seeing stars, diamonds and a few other things, the lady where I have my office opened the door and windows to let out the smoke, swept out the dust and feathers and rearranged the furniture.

"Mr. Jones," she said, "I think it is safe for you to come out from under the bed."

With the help of two plumbers and a doctor, I got the machine fixed up that evening. Next morning I wrote my wife that I had been attacked the night before by half a dozen burglars and nearly beaten to death. And what next? Too slow for one and too fast for the other!

About ten o'clock next day another one dropped in. I gave her the job. I asked her a good many questions, and her answers were satisfactory. She sat down and was starting to write, when she turned around and looked me square in the eye. I could feel the touch coming. I got up and opened the window and the door, so I could get

out at one while she went out at the other. She wanted to know what I did that for, as the weather was extremely cold. I told her that out West where I lived, when we went to church, we always raised the windows and left the door open, so the congregation could get out in a hurry without getting run over or burned to death, if the sky pilot failed to give satisfaction. I also told her that we always carried our guns to church with us, so that in case we were attacked by Indians we could stand them off.

All this time I was standing within about four feet of the window, with my writing table between us. She looked me in the eye, and wanted to know how I happened to be battered up so badly. I told her I had attended a banquet a few days ago at Danville, Ill., and in coming back there was a wreck, coaches all burned up and everybody killed. She said it was funny she had not heard of it before, as she knew all the brakemen between Bloomington and Danville. I told her that I was the only one who escaped. Then she looked me in the eye the third time and wanted to know if this was to be an open shop or a union job. I told her if she would promise to behave herself, I would shut the door and window. Then she wanted to know if I belonged to any union. "I don't know," I said, "my father was a Union man during the Civil War times."

"My, but you are slow," she said. "I mean, do you belong to any kind of an organization where people who do not have to work meet for various reasons?" I told her that at one time I had joined the Knights of Labor, that I had belonged to the Grange, the Alliance, the I. O. O. F., the Knights of the Orient, the Owls, the Horse Thief's Association and several others, but I had dropped

all of them except the Benevolent Order of Jack Rabbits. Then she wanted to know how many days in the week I worked, and how many hours each day. I told her I did not know.

"Well, what in blazes do you know?" she replied.

"I know that out West in a cow camp we work thirty days for a month and twenty-four hours for a day, and if it is raining or snowing or real bad weather, we have to do a double trick, all for thirty-five a month."

Then she acted as if she was coming round the table. I got in the open window and looked out to see if there was a policeman in sight. Then she picked up some of my copy, read a little and said that it was all a lie.

I reached for my gun, without thinking I was in Illinois.

"Yes, I know that," I replied. "I carried the belt in Oklahoma about a year. A young lawyer came along one day and the boys made me give it up to him."

Then she reached for her hat and said she would only work six hours a day with three half-holidays each week for refreshments, and the price would be \$25.00 per. Then she beat it while the phonograph in the next room played "See the conquering hero comes." As she went out, she stopped in the hall long enough to tell me that as soon as the McNamarras got back from California, where they are spending their vacation, she would have me dynamited.

Then I went to see a blacksmith, to get him to hammer it out for me. He said that he could do it all right, but I would have to furnish the hammer and a few pounds of shingle nails.

PARADISE VALLEY, OKLA.

MR. WOODROW WILSON, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Most Esteemed and Worshipful Master:—

I enclose you, under separate wrapper, a typewritten copy of my new book, entitled "Forty Years on the Hummer."

I enclose stamps for return postage.

Do you think Bill Taft and Bill Bryan will run for President in 1916?

Respectfully,

BILL JONES.

PARADISE VALLEY, OKLA.

MR. BILLIE BRYAN, WASHINGTON, D. C.

My Dear Sir and Brother:—

I enclose you under separate cover a typewritten copy of my new book, entitled, "Forty Years on the Hummer."

Enclosed find stamps for return postage.

Respectfully,

BILL JONES.

WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

MR. BILL JONES, PARADISE VALLEY, OKLA.

Dear Sir:—

I have delayed answering your favor of recent date until I could read your book. The other day I thought I would have a chance to read it, when a messenger boy rushed in and handed me a telegram. Here is what it contained:

"Woody, quit your smiling. You have T. R. and the

Kansas Progressives on the run, thinking there is a cyclone headed West.

John Riggs, Committeeman,
"Dexter, Kansas."

At a meeting of the Cabinet this evening, it was unanimously decided to appoint you to a very responsible position. I instructed the Secretary of War to make it out at once and forward it to you.

I hope you will receive it in a few days. I think you can sell all of the first edition of your book here in Washington, as all the Cabinet Members wanted to borrow the typewritten copy you sent me.

Thanking you for the favor, I am, respectfully,
W.

P. S. Yes, I think the three Bills—Taft, Bryan, and Jones—and the Niagara Falls, will always be running.

Respectfully, W.

WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

MR. BILL JONES, PARADISE VALLEY, OKLA.

My Dear Bill:—

Will say in reply that I think your book will prove to be a great seller, as everybody here in Washington wants a copy as soon as it is off the press.

Respectfully, BILLIE.

A few days later the postman handed me a oig official envelope that looked like it might contain a government blanket, or a copy of the Patent Office report. As it was from the Secretary of War, I knew that it contained my commission as Ambassador to China, Mexico or Cuba,

where a man with a steady nerve and an iron jaw was badly needed.

I laid it on the table in my office, and went out and notified the landlady and all the boarders, especially the young lady with the violet eyes, that my commission to Oshkosh had arrived. "All come in and I will read it to you." After I had read all the "Be it resolved" and "Whereases," I came to the place where it said, "appointed Porter at the Military Prison at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. You will proceed there at once and report to the warden for assignment." After I had finished reading it I laid it on the table and looked around the room to see where the young lady with the baby-blue eyes was. I was surprised. While I was reading they had all got up and silently departed. I was alone in my office, with that commission on the table.

I had been to Leavenworth several times, and I knew that it was not an open shop. They were all bound together by an iron-bound oath or something else that would prevent me from accepting the position as a porter. I wrote them that I was suffering from a nervous breakdown, contracted while I was detained at Huntsville, Texas, and that I would have to decline.

CHAPTER II.

BOYHOOD DAYS—THE BENDER FARM IN KANSAS—
KILLING MY FIRST BUFFALO—HOT WINDS—GRASS-
HOPPERS AND GOVERNMENT AID—WITH THE CHOC-
TAW INDIANS—TEACHING SCHOOL IN ARKANSAW—
THE GOAT PARTY—A MISHAP IN JOPLIN, MO.—A
PRINTER'S DEVIL IN CHEROKEE, KANSAS.

I was born and partly raised in old Missouri. That settles it—you will know from the start that I have had plenty of trouble. A boy born in Missouri is sure to have trouble, and lots of it; and if I had to be born again, it would be in Missouri, for I am still hunting trouble. If I had been born in Hoboken, N. J., perhaps I would have owned the Standard Oil Company; then I would have given my money to the Methodists, and see what a row that would have caused in the Baptist camp. If I had been born in Arkansaw—the land of the big red apples and where the girls with the sun-kist cheeks are the prettiest in the world—there is no telling what good fortune might have come to me.

When I was old enough to wean, mama put a muzzle on me, and father put us all in a wagon and lit out for Kansas. We stopped about fifteen miles east of Cherryvale for a few weeks, where Daddy tried to buy a claim. While we were camped there, the Bender trouble came up; the Bender family had killed a lot of people and buried them in the garden. Among the victims was a Dr. York.

When he was missed a search which resulted in the discovery, I think, of about thirteen men who had been killed and buried in that garden. There were lots of good honest people who would tell you the Benders were hung; others would say that they were shot, and sometimes it would be reported that they escaped. I don't know as much about it as some people do who were not there, but I do know that if the Benders got away, they got so far that the shrewdest officers in the United States have not found them to this day. What I saw at the Bender farm was a plenty for one chunk of a boy to see.

We went on farther west and located about half-way between the county seat and the woodshed. Dad could have bought the land where Peru, Kansas, is for a plug of tobacco, but he did not have the plug. Another thing, he was looking for a farm and not a stone quarry. Millions of gallons of oil have been taken off that farm since then.

Father bought a claim, and we all turned in and made it a good farm, and he still owns it.

That Fall a lot of settlers went to Barber County, on a buffalo hunt, and that is where my trouble started. As I was the youngest one in the crowd, I had to keep camp and do the cooking. The first day they all had a good time hunting, and brought in a few turkeys, jack rabbits, and a coyote. All they talked about that night was buffalo, antelope, turkeys, mountain lions and coyotes. But they let all the big game get away. Next morning they were up and gone again; I decided that I would do a little hunting myself. We were camped on a little creek; they all went on one side and that left the other for me.

I had one of those old human guns, about seven feet



Hunting Buffalo in Kansas and the Indian Territory, 1873

long, that grandfather used when he was in Kentucky, hunting Indians along with D. Boone. About ten o'clock I discovered three buffaloes standing around looking wise, about a mile away. I walked and crawled until I was within a hundred yards of them. They could see me just as plain as I could see them. One young cow was standing with her side to me, and the other two had their heads toward me. I got ready and cut loose at the cow. As I had heard that you could not kill a buffalo by shooting him in the head I expected to see the cow drop and the rest run off. But nothing of the kind happened. I was more surprised than they were. I loaded up my old gun and tried another shot. When the smoke cleared away, I was still there and so were the buffaloes. Third shot, same result—I began to think there was something wrong in Denmark. I could take that old gun and knock a squirrel's eye out in the highest tree in Missouri, and I could kill a wild goose or a prairie chicken at that distance every shot.

Just why I could not hit one those big buffaloes was a mystery to me. I was very careful when I loaded that old rifle next time. I took an invoice, and here is the way it showed up—one boy, one big gun, three buffaloes one hundred yards away, plenty of ammunition, nothing in sight but the prairie and the buffaloes. Would I go away and leave them there? No; I would try again. I took good aim, shut both eyes and pulled the trigger. What happened in the next few minutes I have not to this day found out. I took a sudden notion to go to camp and started there in a hurry. I tried to fly. I noticed that the buffaloes were going toward the camp and it looked like

they were trying to beat me to it. I did not want them to beat me, because I had gone away that morning without washing the dishes, and the camp was not in good condition to receive visitors. I also noticed that one of them had a lame foot. I did not stop to see what was the matter, as I was not a veterinary surgeon anyway, and I was in a hurry to get to camp. I had business there that needed my attention.

All this time I was headed for camp—so were the buffaloes—I thought I would stop, get on one and ride to camp like Bill Cody. Would they stop and pick me up? I was doing my best to beat them to camp, when I began to feel their hot breath on the back of my neck. I turned my head to see how close they were and the unexpected happened. It most always does happen to me at just such a time. I stepped into a hole and down I went. That hole proved to be a little gully about two feet wide, two feet deep and about two hundred feet long, partly covered over with grass. I don't know whether I fainted or not, or how long I stayed in that hole. Anyway, when I looked out there was not a buffalo in sight. I crawled out and took a good look around and then went back after my gun and hat. I had no trouble in finding them, for I had left the gun where I started. I am not going to tell you how far it was from where I started from to that hole, as you might think I was telling the truth. I have been on several buffalo hunts since this one, but none that had such a moving effect on me. I started on to the camp, and about half a mile from there I found Mrs. Buffalo as dead as Jim Jeffries.

When the rest of the crowd came in that evening I

had about four bushels of buffalo meat nicely cooked for supper. During our stay we got several others—all we wanted to haul home.

I almost overlooked the bob-cat that I had a fight with. I had been out all day and had run out of gun caps. About four inches of snow had fallen the night before, and when I came on to Mr. Cat, squatted down in the snow, the problem was how to get him without any way to shoot. I was raised to believe that if you do not attack trouble, trouble will attack you, so I laid the gun down, got a good club, and at it we went. First round Mr. Cat got the worst of it; second round, Willie was slightly damaged, but still in the race. In the third round I received quite a bite and several scratches, but a good uppercut with my club laid him out for good.

/ There are lots of people who remember the summer, fall, and winter of 1874; hot winds, grasshoppers and government aid. First, came the hot winds. They were like a furnace, and would blister the hands and face like fire. We had to get into the house and shut the windows and doors to keep cool. A few days later came the grasshoppers, and they were a hungry bunch of tramps. They got everything that was green, and ate a good many things that were not green. They ate up forty rods of stone fence in thirty-seven and a half minutes by the watch. They destroyed more stone fences that fall than all the boys, dogs, and rabbits put together. The green headed horse-flies were pretty bad that fall, and they made it hot for the stock. We had a pet cow, and in order to keep the flies from eating her, we covered her with some green paint that

we had left over, after painting the house. The hoppers came along, ate up the cow, paint and all.

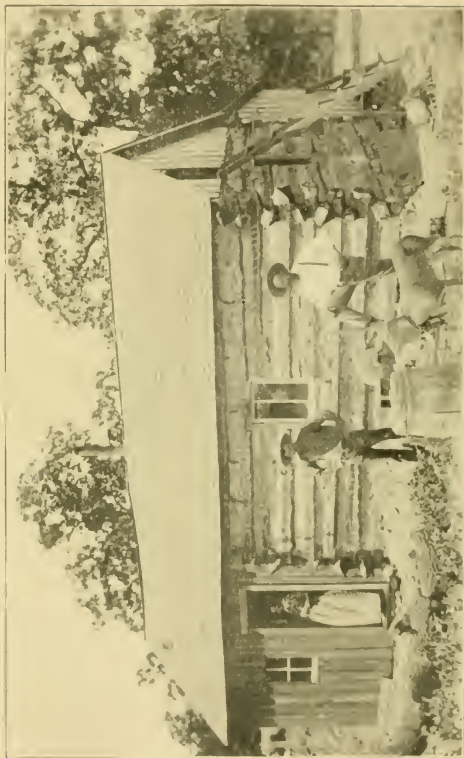
The hoppers would hold up the children on their way to school and take their lunches away from them. After the grasshoppers had eaten everything, we turned in and ate the grasshoppers. One old fellow said he used to live with the digger Indians in Idaho, and they considered a grasshopper equal to or better than oysters, crawdads, clams, chili, or chop suey. So we all learned to eat grasshoppers, and I can say from experience that they were fine; but I do not want to live long enough to eat them three times a day again. After that we had grasshoppers for about six weeks and had them cooked and served in every way that could be thought of. Then the cry went out that the people of Kansas were starving to death. Thousands of carloads of aid were sent by the good people back home to starving Kansas, and even the government sent hundreds of carloads. Ten years later you could not find a man in Kansas who would acknowledge that he went up and got his little pile.

I remember that the men who received and distributed the aid were quite a bunch of jokers. We would get in line and pass by the house, and when we would stop at the door, the clerk would grab up what he thought you needed most and hand it out to you. My first draw consisted of an old beegum hat, about fifteen inches high and four sizes too big for me, which some good old preacher had thrown in the car; a pair of number 12 boots; three pairs of government socks; a pair of pants that some skeleton had worn, as they fit me like a lady's kid glove; a coat and vest fifteen sizes too big; an old blue overcoat

that saw service when Sherman marched to the sea; some undershirts that were just right, and several pairs of drawers. Several years later, after I had been married a few times, I found out where they came from. I think they were donated by different parties, as they were all different in size, material, and make-up; but they kept me warm that winter. One Sunday, bright and early, I dressed up in my new suit and hiked out to show it to my girl. When she met me at the door she looked like an angel from wonderland. It would take some one better posted on women's clothing than I am to describe what she had on. I went in. She looked me over, commenced to laugh, and so did I. Pretty soon the whole family came in and began to laugh; then we all laughed together. We laughed all that day and all that winter, and everything we had on that Sunday morning makes me laugh, when I think about it now, and I just sit down and have a good laugh. I have made it a business through life, every time that I would get discouraged and troubles would come to me in great big bunches, I would have a smile all to myself. I expect I have been asked a thousand times what I was smiling about. My answer always was "nothing." As all our neighbors got about the same things, we all had a good time.

I never enjoyed myself, in all my life, before or since, more than I did that winter. I forgot to tell you that I found thirty cents in five and ten-cent paper money in the pants pockets. Shin plasters, we called it, and that was all the money I had for five months.

I never will forget the first dance I went to. After that, we got up a dance for the purpose of showing our new



A Western Home

clothes, with the understanding that each boy and girl was to wear just what he or she had. I went with my sister and my girl. I have attended many masquerade balls since that night, but I can say truthfully that I never saw a bunch of young people enjoy themselves half as much as we did in Southern Kansas that cold winter.

A year later four of us started to Arkansaw, to put in the winter hunting, fishing, and trapping, with the intention of having a good time. We started about November 1st. I think we crossed the Kansas line about where Elgin is now. We traveled in a southeast direction, crossed the Arkansaw River at Ft. Gibson, and the Canadian River not far from Webber Falls.

We camped one evening about thirty-five or forty miles west of Ft. Smith, Arkansaw, and had our supper. Then I went to an Indian hut to buy some feed for the horses. I got back to camp about sun-down. The other three had the team hooked up and were ready to start back to Kansas, and were waiting for me. It certainly was a surprise party for Bill. I had never heard a word about going back, and when they told me to climb in, I did so; but, before they could start, I threw my war bag out on the ground, grabbed my old fiddle, and jumped out. The outfit started back to Kansas and I camped there by the fire that night. It got pretty cold before morning and I stayed there because I had to.

Next morning I gathered up my traps and started to Ft. Smith. I walked about a mile and came to a house that proved to be inhabited by a white family. After I had breakfast, I hired to the man to make a thousand

rails, and I put in a month making rails, hunting, going to dances and clearings.

A clearing is something like an old-fashioned apple paring, a husking bee, or a house raising. The man I was working for had a girl my age, and there was a young alfalfa widow living about a hundred yards away—the only two white women in that part of the then Indian Territory, except the girl's mother, where I worked. The Choctaw Indians at that time were trying to live like white people, so I would go and help them make a clearing. The white women would go along and help the Indian women do the cooking, and that just suited me. The girl's name was Marie. I have forgotten the alfalfa widow's name—I don't care to remember it—for she was a holy terror anyway. But Marie was a well-raised Kansas girl and as full of fun as any girl I ever met. The woods were full of pretty Indian maidens, who could talk good Choctaw but very poor English. Mrs. Alfalfa furnished the wagon and team. I did the driving and Marie made the fun.

The first clearing I went to was about two miles from where we lived. The outfit consisted of an old rickety farm wagon and two balky mules. That was before they had good roads or automobiles. About 9:00 A. M. we all got in and started. The mules had a very bad attack of what Mrs. Alfalfa called cold shoulder. I called them a pair of democratic mules, because I never could tell which way they were going, when they started, or what they were going to do next.

After an hour experimenting, we surely did start. I think a four-pronged pitchfork in Mrs. Alfalfa's hands was the cause of it. The mules started so suddenly that Marie

went off the seat backwards, with one foot under my left arm. Mrs. Alfalfa was standing up in the front end of the wagon, tickling the mules with the pitchfork. She fell over on me, I fell on Marie, and then she fell on both of us. Before I could get straightened up, the mules ran onto a side hill, partly upset the wagon, and threw all three of us into the road. As I went out first, the girls both fell on top of me; but Marie and I were enjoying the fun, while Mrs. Alfalfa was surely mad both ways.

We put things in shipshape order and started the second time all right. We got within half a mile of the clearing, when the mules balked again. Mrs. Alfalfa took the lines from me and got the pitchfork. Marie and I got out to see the fun from a safe distance. What she did to those mules was a-plenty, and what she said to them would not look well in print. But we got to the place about eleven o'clock—two hours going two miles. Marie and I laughed until we cried. I certainly enjoyed myself that day. I found an Irishman in the bunch of Indians, and I turned the widow over to him. Then I had Marie to myself. After the dance was over, we decided that it would be safer and quicker to walk home, so the four of us walked. The Irishman and the widow's uncle went and got the mules next morning.

While I was making the rails, Marie's brother and another young fellow came out from Ft. Smith to go hunting. We went fifteen or twenty miles west into the Canadian Hills, where we camped that night. There were all kinds of game—deer, wild cats, panthers, and turkeys by the thousand. We stayed there two days and got a wagon-

load. I had a very close call from a big panther—closer than I ever want again.

I went out one day with an Indian to help hunt up some cattle. I had not got into the habit of carrying a pistol, and Mr. Indian did not have a gun either; but we both had big cattle whips, and the Indian had a big dog along. Mr. Dog showed us that he was on to his job that day, when we ran across a big bear. Mr. Dog, Mr. Indian and Willie went after that bear and, after a running fight of about three hours we had him dead. That was the first bear meat I ever ate, and it was fine.

About Christmas Marie's sweetheart came from somewhere and I was at the wedding. I rode to Ft. Smith in a wagon and started to walk to Van Buren, five or six miles down the river. About a mile from Ft. Smith I was overtaken by a man driving a good team and a double-seated spring wagon. He asked me to ride with him and I got in the back seat. We caught up with a young woman who was walking in the road, and she kept in the middle of the road. The man turned out and drove past her. He was driving in a fast trot and never stopped. When we passed her, she grabbed the rear end of the wagon and jumped in. As she climbed over the seat I was on, I noticed she had a big pocket knife in her hand, and the blade looked to me as if it were a foot long. She had me guessing some, but I did not have long to wait. It happened quicker than I can write it. She climbed over the front seat, and with her knife just reached out and cut both lines in two at one slash.

It looked to me as if there was going to be a runaway and a wreck, but nothing of the kind happened. The man

just said: "Whoa, pets," and the team stopped. She made a vicious stab at his neck, but he dodged quickly and jumped out on the ground. She followed after him, and at it they went. I jumped out and held the team. It was his business to look after the woman. After about five minutes of rough-and-tumble fighting, the man had the knife; but he also had several cuts that bled pretty freely. He hog-tied her and put her in the wagon, while I tied the lines together and we went on to the river. When we got on the ferryboat, I made my getaway. There was not a word spoken between them during that time. I asked the ferry-boat man about it, and he said "jealousy."

I stayed in Van Buren that night. I bought me a pony, and I also hooked up with an old cowboy from Texas. We joined forces and agreed to go and capture Northern Arkansaw from the natives. We took the old wire road that went from Van Buren to Springfield, Missouri. It got that name from being the telegraph line from Springfield to Ft. Smith, during the Civil War. We traveled along till noon and stopped at several houses for dinner, but failed to get any. We finally got a corn-pony. We went on a little farther and camped by a cornfield. While my buddy fed the ponies and made the fire, I went out to get a rabbit or anything else I could find for us to eat. I will not describe the hog I slipped up on and killed with a club—you have already been told about him by others. I took him to camp, skinned him, and cooked him on the coals. While I was out hog hunting, my buddy got some coffee, salt and a tin can to make our coffee in. We certainly enjoyed that meal.

We stayed there that night, sleeping in an old rail

pen that had some seed cotton in it. It got very cold before morning and I thought I would freeze. It was just like having an iceberg for a bedfellow—sleeping with that man from Texas. If that old rail pen had not tangled the wind up a little, I believe I would have frozen. I got up before daylight, built a fire, and thawed out. We had breakfast and lit out.

The next night we stayed at a farm house, had a good supper, a good bed, a good breakfast, a good stable, and plenty of feed for our ponies. We asked what our bill was, and the man said he would leave it to us. My buddy gave him a nickel and he was satisfied. I gave the old lady a quarter and the fun commenced. The old man said it was too much and they gave me the nickel. That was all the change they could dig up and we finally settled by them giving me a gallon of buttermilk. I poured it in my fiddle and we moved on. Just as quick as we got out of sight, we drank all we wanted and poured the rest out. But that buttermilk made a good fiddle out of it. I gave a dollar and a half for that fiddle and sold it for seventy-five dollars to a man in Carthage, Missouri, and he said it was the finest toned fiddle he ever played on. I saw him twenty years later, in Colorado, and he told me he sold it to a man in Chicago, two years later, for two thousand dollars.

We stopped one night not far from the Missouri line and stayed all night with a man by the name of Jackson. He wanted me to stay and work for him, offering me five dollars a month; and, as the weather was too cold for traveling, I took the job. As I was not going any place,

just seeing the sights, I bid good-bye to my buddy and he went on.

The first week in January, I helped Jackson chop wood and pick up rocks off of a piece of land he was clearing. He asked me one night if I could teach school. I told him I never had, but I thought I could, if I could get a certificate. He said it was a subscription school and I would not need one. He asked me a great many questions and finally said I would do. The old log school house stood on a hill, about a mile from his home. He found sixteen kids for me at fifty cents each, a month, rangings from a five-year-old to a twenty-five-year-old. There was a girl in the bunch, about my age, and two brothers—one twenty and the other twenty-five. I got along the first day all right; and, as I had to board around among the people, I went home with that girl the first night.

Her father was a very religious old fellow, and talked about the Bible all the time. I let him do most of the talking and agreed with him. Next day one of the brothers thought he was too big to get a pail of water and said he could whip me if I did not like it. Each one of them weighed twenty-five pounds more than I did. Well, those two fellows ran things to suit themselves that evening. That night I went back to the man's house, who got me the job, to get my bearings. He told me those fellows had broken up every school and cleaned out every teacher for three years, and if I would whip both of them he would see me through it. I went next morning, loaded for bears, wild cats, buffaloes, or anything else that was on that hill. I did not have long to wait. They were already there and came out to meet me. I knew I was in for it. They made

a run for me. I dodged the big one, stuck out my foot, and down he went. Before he could get up, I had the other one down. I had one or the other down all the time, until they told me they were satisfied. Before the week was out they were as good friends as I had there. I was the whole works after that, as long as I stayed in that part of the country.

Wednesday night I was invited to a dance and asked to help make the music. Thursday night I went to prayer meeting and did my share. Friday night I went to the school house and started a class in singing. Saturday night I got thirty-five cents to play for a dance. I went to church Sunday morning; and, as the regular class-leader was not there, I made them a pretty good talk. They passed the hat and gave me a quarter. I also went home with that big girl and her pa. Tuesday night I went with one of the little girls, as there was going to be a bussing bee, they called it. There were two big girls at that place; and, as there were only two rooms to the house, one inside and one out, and a loft above, the upper floor was just a lot of clapboards laid across the poles that took the place of joists. The old folks, the little girl, and Willie went out to the stable to do up the chores. After about a half-hour the little girl and Willie went back to the house. The two big girls were up in the loft, dressing for the party. I was reading a chapter from Jesus Christ, when all at once there was a crash overhead. One of the girls had stepped on a board that gave way and down she came.

I had the pleasure of attending what the boys called a goat party while I was teaching school that winter. This is about the way it happened, as nearly as I can re-

member. Some one in the settlement had an old billy goat that had been a prize winner in his younger days. About twenty young fellows and some that were old enough to know better made arrangements to steal that goat, take him out in the woods and have a feast. They started the game Saturday morning, by procuring five gallons of mountain dew and other articles too numerous to mention. About sundown we gathered at the appointed place. We drew lots to see who would go get the goat and, of course, I was one of the boys that drew a prize number. The other boy was the son of the man who owned the goat. The agreement was we were to bring him into camp alive, which we did. We started after him. Up to that time I had never made the acquaintance of a goat or heard of Peck's bad boy. We climbed over the lot fence where he was, and as it was rather dark, I could not tell Mr. Goat from the rest of the sheep. I have been told that an old dog or a wolf won't attack a bunch of sheep where there is an old goat in the bunch, and I think I know the reason why. It is said that a man knows more than a dog. In some cases this is true, but not always, and that's what ailed Willie that night. While we were looking for the goat, he found me all right, and something struck me about where a man wears his hip pocket. I remember hitting the ground, and that flock of sheep running over me a few times. I tried to get up, when the same thing happened again; so I knew there was no use for me to try to catch that goat. I just lay there and let the other fellow catch him. We finally captured him all right and took him to camp alive. Some of the boys killed and dressed him and put him on to roast, like they

used to barbecue a beef, at an old time Fourth of July picnic. While Mr. Goat was cooking, we told stories, sung all the songs we knew, sampled that mountain dew pretty freely, and played seven-up. About one o'clock A. M. we proceeded to eat Mr. Goat. I was satisfied all the time that I did not like goat meat, and besides, I had a good supper before I started that evening. By that time I was beginning to get sore and stiff from helping catch the goat and was commencing to feel sick. Some of the boys said I had sampled the jug too freely. Somehow or other, my feet got mixed up and I laid down by a tree to rest. It was the custom in that country when a man got sick to put him in the creek to cure him, and I was the first victim on this occasion. They had no trouble undressing me; and, as we were camped on the creek bank, it took only a few minutes to put me in the water. After about fifteen minutes in and out of that ice water, I made up my mind that I wasn't sick and never had been. The boys made me sample the jug again and then I was ready for the next act on the program. Every man and boy in that crowd had to try that creek that night, and we did not wait to undress some of them.

When the old man missed his goat he was mad, and mad both ways. He carried an old blood spiller around to fix the man that stole his goat. After about a week he cooled off, and someone told him who did the job. He said he thought all the time it was that dum Yankee school teacher. No more goat parties for me. I came very near losing my place as class leader and Sunday school teacher over that night's foolishness. They had me up on the carpet, and I pleaded guilty to my part of the affair.

Several others who were there helped me out by taking the blame on themselves. I was reinstated and told to go my way and sin no more. I got along very well the rest of the winter, but was kept on the go all the time. I don't think I averaged three hours sleep a night for three months.

When I went home with one of the little kids I would always help do the chores. Sometimes I would help do the milking. At one place they had one of the meanest cows I ever saw. On one occasion she broke out of the lot and swam across the creek, with the old man after her. He finally got her back into the cow lot and, as there was plenty of ice in the creek, we had ice cream for supper.

I went to another place to stay all night; and, as they had a lot of cows to milk, the whole family went along. The old man was milking a cow that was bad about switching her tail; first, into the milk bucket, then in the old man's face. I asked him if he had ever tried tying her tail to his boot strap. I told him that was the way the Dutch do, and he thought it was a good idea. He tied the cow's tail to his boot strap and went on milking. It worked all right for awhile. But suddenly she got scared at something and started off in a hurry, jerking the old man off his stool. That spilled the bucket of milk all over him, and she dragged him around the lot a few times through the mud. All the time he kept yelling, "Head her off and don't let her get into the brush." The cow stopped once, long enough to let the old man get up on his feet, but away she went again. Part of the time he had his hands on her hips, and part of the time he had her by the tail, and all the time he was running. Sometimes he could use both feet. It put me in mind of a lot of boys playing leap frog.

All the time the old man and the cow were playing circus, the rest of the family were laughing to beat the band. When the boot strap gave way, the old man was on the ground out of breath, covered with mud and slime, and mad. Yes, he was all swelled up. After he got over it, he said he did not care to try any more Dutch tricks, especially if a Yankee school teacher was mixed up in it. >

My school was out about the first of April, and before I went North they all met and gave me a farewell dance and supper. I promised to come back next winter, but I did not. I never found a better hearted lot of fun loving people than I met in Arkansas that winter.

On my way north, I stopped one night at a little place called Gadfly. When I got to the railroad I sold my pony and outfit, and went to Carthage, Missouri. I stopped there only a couple of days, as I was hunting trouble, and went on to Joplin.

At that time Joplin was a small place. In fact, it was two small places. Half the town was known as Murphysburg. It was a mining town, and the miners would dig a hole any place it suited them. If they did not strike ore, they would move and dig another hole. I tried mining for so much per, but it did not suit me.

I was on the night shift and, in going to my boarding house about 4:00 A. M. one morning, I missed the way. But I did not miss one of the old holes that was uncovered, and in it I went. Some of the holes were pretty deep, and some were half full of water—not a very good place to pass the night, I discovered. When I fell into that hole, I grabbed for anything I could reach. About two feet from the top there was a stake driven into the wall, for some

purpose, and by chance I got hold of it and hung on. I tried to raise someone by yelling, but nobody came to help me out, so I stayed; because I had to. My arms began to ache and get longer, and I was getting tired. After it got light enough for me to see, I discovered that the bottom of that hole was not over two feet from where I was hanging. I let loose, sat down and said a few words to myself, as there was no one else to say them to. I climbed out and went home, and it was a week before I got over it.

I stopped a few days at Weir City, Kansas, and tried digging coal. There was too much work and dirt mixed up with the job, and I went on to Cherokee. After hanging around for a few days, I concluded I would be a printer. I started in one Monday morning as a printer's devil, and some people in the town said I was a sure enough devil. Anyway I had a devil of a good time that summer—I was a devil, printer, pressman, assistant editor, and part of the time I was editor-in-chief, also baseball player on the side.

Along about the first of July another young fellow and myself took Horace Greeley's advice and started West. As neither of us had much money, we decided to try the box-car route. As it was our first trial as tramps or hoboes we did not have very good luck, but after a week of walking, riding, running, and flying, we arrived at Dodge City, Kansas.

CHAPTER III.

DODGE CITY, KANSAS, THE WICKEDEST CITY IN AMERICA—THE ENDLESS CHAIN GAME—A NIGHT HIKE TO THE CIMARRON—THE SNUFF MINES—CAUGHT IN A BLIZZARD— RATTLESNAKES AND THE INDIANS.

At that time it was said to be the worst place on earth, and if there was any such place as a hades on earth, it was this same little cattle town out on the frontier.

Dodge City was first settled in 1872, the same year that I went to southern Kansas. Larry Degar was City Marshall, and he was as good, if not the best, City Marshal that Dodge ever had.

The first settlers went there in wagons. They lived in tents, sod-houses and dugouts. When I first went there everybody was running a saloon, a dance hall, or a gambling house. Usually all three would be under the same roof, right on the main street, with the doors wide open for twenty-four hours a day, and for three hundred and sixty-five days in the year.

The town was full of gamblers, man killers, cattlemen, soldiers, buffalo hunters, bull-whackers, mule-skinners, railroad men, cowboys, fast horses, fast women and tenderfeet. I belonged to the last-named class.

If there was anything about Dodge that was slow, I failed to see it. Everybody was making money; everybody had money to burn, and spent it as freely as they

made it. Anything worth less than two bits was not worth carrying, and such a thing as a penny was never seen. A cigar was two bits, so was a drink at the bar. It cost two bits to get a shave; a box of matches cost the same, and so on.

Such an institution as a laundry was not known. Everybody went down to the river and washed his own clothes, and something would get into your clothes besides sand and gravel that would make life a burden to you. The only remedy was a hot fire, a camp kettle, plenty of soap and hot water, and a little salt. It was nothing unusual to see the gambler, the tramp, and the bad man side by side on the river bank doing their own laundry. Everybody had too many dirty clothes of their own and too much money to be bothered with those of other people. It was the custom out there, at that time, to change your under clothing every six months, summer and winter, whether there was any need of it or not.

Dancing and gambling were the main pastime and business. You could see every class and kind of men, all crowded together in the gambling houses and dance halls, from the high rollers of the east and west to the cowboy from the south, all putting their money on the card that usually won for the dealer. You could see the prosperous business man, the rich banker, the tramp, and the cowboy with his high heeled boots and big spurs all on the dance hall floor at the same time; and occasionally a preacher would happen along, stop to look on a minute, get the Dodge habit and join in the wild revels. It was catching and you could not resist the temptation. It was in the air and you just had to join in, that's all there was to it.

For ten years or more Dodge City was continually in the limelight. It was the whole show, a regular three-ringed circus, with something new going on in each ring all the time; most interesting, however, at the evening performances. The full story has never been told, and never will be. Perhaps it is best that one-half the world never knows what the other half is doing.

There was a class of men in Dodge who were opposed to such scenes as they saw daily, but there were too few of them. Nearly every day brought a good citizen to Dodge, and nearly every day they had a bad man for breakfast, until the time came when there were enough law-abiding citizens to put a stop to such deeds as gave Dodge City the reputation of being the wickedest little town on earth.

There was only one Dodge City. There was no room for another. It was strictly against the rules and regulations for a man to carry more than two revolvers, a Winchester rifle, a butcher knife in one bootleg and a tomahawk in the other, fifty years ago, and when that class of men died, it was with their boots on and Boothill was their final home.

I was in and around Dodge City for eleven years, from 1876 to 1887. When I went there I was in the class known as tenderfeet. I was not hunting trouble and I never found any. If a man exercised a little good common horse sense he was not molested. If he tanked up on dance house whiskey and began to hunt for trouble, he was sure to get what he was looking for. That was the class of men who gave to Dodge the name of the wickedest little city on earth. No man or woman ever came to Dodge City

who did not have the privilege of going to church and listening to the minister, or to the dance hall. People could have their choice and, with very few exceptions, I never saw strangers in the town molested.

Everyone had a nerve-wrecking story to tell you about the Indians, the cowboys, and the bad men, and everyone had a practical joke to play on you, as I found out. I took all the jokes that were played on me good naturedly, and it was not long until I could play a joke on the other fellow and tell a story that would make the hair stand straight up on the tenderfoot's head.

I had not been in the town an hour when a young fellow asked me if I wanted to make some easy money. Sure, that was what I came for. He said that I could make four dollars in four hours, easy; that he was making from ten to twelve dollars a day—just the quickest way to get rich that he knew of—and for one dollar he would tell me how it was done. To make the story short, I gave him the dollar, and he told me to hunt up another tenderfoot and talk him out of a dollar, just as he had done me. He called the game an endless chain affair; and, to the best of my knowledge, that is where the endless chain game started. I don't think it has stopped yet, but is still going under different names.

Next day I found a job herding antelope. The man who got me the job said I would have to be a foot racer, as the antelopes were afraid of a man on a pony and I would have to walk after them. I told him I had outrun a herd of buffalo once and thought I could outrun an antelope. "You are just the kid I am looking for," he said, "and I know you will have a job just as long as the ante-

lope last." He told me the man who owned the antelope ranch lived ten miles north of town, on Sawlog Creek. He said I would have no trouble finding it, as everybody in that country knew Bill Tilghman, and he would pay me forty dollars a month and board. Well, I went out to the Sawlog, but I could not find the ranch, or Tilghman, or any one else. I was back in Dodge by ten o'clock that night and I think I traveled about seventy-five miles that day. I afterwards put in about fifteen years looking for that antelope ranch. My side partner got a job hunting coyotes, and was known as Coyote Bill after that. Then we got a job as broncho busters. I think the first broncho we attempted to ride threw up the game.

Another man said he wanted to hire a lot of men to work in the Snuff mines on the Cimarron river, fifty miles south of Dodge, and he would pay four dollars a day to men who could stand that kind of work. He wanted ten men, as it would take that many to stand off the Indians. They had attacked the mines the week before and killed all his men. As the country was full of Indians, we would have to make the trip to the Cimarron river after night, to keep the redskins from capturing us. After we got there, we would have no trouble in standing the Indians off, as there was a good doby house to camp in, when we were not at work, with lots of guns and plenty of ammunition. All we had to do was to dig snuff, keep camp, hunt and kill Indians.

As that was what I wanted to be, a great Indian hunter, I took the job. He told me I could be the boss if I could find ten or fifteen men to go along the next day. I started out to find the other men; and, as there were



A Tenderfoot Out West

lots of tramps going west on the Santa Fe, I had no trouble in finding that many. I could have gotten a hundred if I had wanted that many. We were ready to start by dark. The man said we need not take anything along to eat, as we could easily get there before daylight the next morning, and the cook would be up and have breakfast ready for us, so we could go to work that day, if we wanted to. We crossed the bridge over the Arkansaw river about dark, and away we went, Coyote Bill in front and I in the rear, to see that none of the men quit and went back. Coyote was as good a flat-footed walker as ever left the plow handles to go West to dig snuff, and for the first hour we went at a rate that would have made Weston, the great walker, ashamed of himself.

At the end of the first hour some of the men began to grumble at the pace we were going. I told Bill to let up a little to give the other men a chance to get their breath. By twelve that night we got to Bluff Creek, thirty miles south of Dodge.

When we left Dodge the man who hired us told us to be on the lookout for Indians, and if we saw any tepees, or camp fires on Bluff Creek, we had better go around them, as the Indians might capture us. He said they would eat us just as they eat dogs. Sure enough, when we got to the bluff where we could see down in the Bluff Creek Valley, there were a few camp fires burning dimly. We held a council of war and it was decided we would go a mile or two west before we crossed the creek. As the night was pretty dark, we had quite a time after we left the trail that ran from Dodge to Camp Supply.

As I was the boss, I had to take the lead. The country

on both sides of Bluff Creek is very hilly, and we had lots of trouble. I was going at a pretty good pace myself when I walked over a bluff and down I went. I must have fallen and rolled a hundred feet, and when I stopped in the bottom of the gully I could see by the skyline that the other fellows were all taking the same tumble, and they all landed in the same gully with me. We all escaped with a few bruises, except one; he sprained his ankle and could go no further. It was decided to leave him there, and two of the men said they had changed their minds and would stay and help him back to Dodge. I told them they had better stay hidden in the hills until the next night and, if the crippled man could walk by that time, to get back to Dodge before the Indians got them.

The rest of us hiked on to the Snuff mines, twenty miles further on. When we struck the head of Bear Creek, two more of the men played out and hid in the hills to wait until the next night to get back to Dodge. Five or six miles farther on three more gave it up. Just before daylight all the men played out except Coyote Bill and little Willie, and the two of us went on. About sunup we crossed the river, but we could not find the house, the mines, or anything else. Bill called me a tenderfoot sure enough, and I didn't deny it. We hid in the plum thickets all that day, without anything to eat or drink. As soon as it got dark we started back to Dodge, fifty miles through the sand and forty over the hills. When we got back as far as Bluff Creek we overtook the fellows who had played out, and fifteen miles further on we caught up with the first three who had given it up. By the time we got back to Dodge we had walked over a hundred miles without

anything to eat or drink—two nights and a day. Of course, there was plenty of water in the Cimarron River, but it was so salty we couldn't drink it. Our job in the Snuff mines and our Indian fights were all a dream.

When we got back to Dodge we rested up and then went to hunt another job. We found some men who were going buffalo hunting, and we hired to them to skin buffaloes, at twenty-five cents a skin and our meals included. But we had to furnish our own blankets, as that was the custom out there. We got back to Dodge about Christmas, and we had about a hundred dollars apiece coming to us. We killed about eight hundred buffaloes and their hides brought the three hunters something like two thousand dollars. It took the five of us only two weeks to spend that roll.

On the eight day of January I hired out to Fred Patterson as a night herder in a bull outfit. The train consisted of six teams, seven yoke of oxen, and two wagons to the team, with the boss, six drivers, or bullwhackers as they were called, and little Willie, as night herder. We had no trouble of any kind until we got to the Cimarron River. We crossed it and camped where the Snuff mines were supposed to be. I told Patterson about my job in the Snuff mines and I thought he would surely kill himself laughing. All the time I was getting wise and my feet were getting all right. The boss told me I could even up the case on the four tenderfeet that he had picked up as bullwhackers. The boss and I arranged to give them an Indian scare, to break them in. A bunch of buffalo hunters were camped close to us, and it was fixed up between us that about ten o'clock that night, I would come

running into camp yelling, "Indians!" and shooting my gun, when the hunters, the boss, and the other two men would all commence to shoot and yell, "Indians! Everybody, run and hide."

The Indian scare worked all right. Next morning we found two of the tenderfeet about a mile from camp hidden behind the river bank, and the other two I found about two miles from camp hiding in the plum bushes.

Two weeks later, while we were camped on Wolf Creek, we were attacked by sure enough Indians, and they did not care a darn if they did shoot a few of us. But we stood them off without any loss. It is not so funny when you are attacked by real Indians as it is when it's only a joke.

The next night we camped on a little creek and, as usual, I took the work cattle out to graze for the night. The weather was rather warm for that time of the year. About ten o'clock the wind shifted, commencing to blow from the north, and it began to get cold. By twelve o'clock it was snowing and a regular blizzard was coming. I turned the cattle loose, so they could find their own shelter, and started to camp—about three miles away. As I had to face that blizzard, I thought it would be better to get off the horse and walk, but the horse would not lead against the storm. I then turned him loose to follow the cattle, and I started on foot. I got to camp about four o'clock that morning, more dead than alive. Kind reader, I will not try to tell you what I suffered from cold that night. I was caught out on the open prairie in one of those western blizzards that sweep across the Dakotas, Nebraska, western Kansas, and the Pan Handle of Texas. If you



Twenty-Five Years Later a Millionaire

were ever in one of them, even in a good warm home, you know how people who are caught out have to suffer.

But bad as my case was, I was better off than the men in the camp. Three of them were sleeping in a wagon and the other four on the ground. When I got to camp, the blankets of the men on the ground had blown away, and they were lying there freezing to death. If I had been thirty minutes later getting to camp, all four would have been frozen. When we camped that night, I had gone to the creek, about a hundred yards from the wagons, to get some water and wood. I found a lot of drift wood piled up behind a big bank, and that pile of drift wood saved all eight of us from freezing that night. I roused up the three who were in the wagon, got some matches from one of them, and lit out for that drift wood. I started a fire and then ran back to camp. By that time the three men in the wagon were up, and by the time we packed those four men to the fire, they were nearly gone. That was where I learned how to doctor a man who is freezing to death.

We all lived through it, went on to Ft. Elliot, unloaded our freight, went to Sweetwater, loaded the train with buffalo hides, and went back to Dodge. About the first of March I hired out to the stage contractor who carried the mail from Dodge to Tascosa. My work was to look after one of the stage stations. I rode to the station on the buck-board, as the wagon or buggy was called in which they hauled the mail and passengers. I found the station consisted of a picket house, about sixteen feet square, well fixed for a man to camp in, a corral and a stable for six or eight mules, and plenty of grass for the stock.

All I had to do was to look after the mules, see that the Indians did not run them off, and have them ready for the stage driver when he came along. As he came along only twice a week, I had plenty of time to cook, eat, sleep, and play my old fiddle, besides keeping a lookout for Indians.

Did I get lonesome and want to go back to God's country? I guess yes.

One day when I was feeling unusually lonesome and was sitting in the shanty with my back to the door, playing my old fiddle, my Winchester and my old forty-five laying on my bunk, in walked five Indians. Before I knew they were there they had my guns.

I just figured it out that Willie was a sure enough goner that time.

One Indian gave a grunt and said:

"Heap good music, pale face boy; play more," or something to that effect, an I played "The Girl I left in Kansas," "Gillroy's Kite," "The Irish Washerwoman," "Arkansaw Traveler," "Nellie Bly," "Old Zip Coon," and the "Blackjack Grove."

I played everything I could think of and stopped.

Mr. Indian gave another grunt and said, "Wah, good boy, play more." Then I played everything I could think of the second time. If I had known the "Tango" I could have played that, and the Indians would have given me a gold medal.

By this time I was getting very tired and wondering whether they would shoot and scalp me, or only tie me to a fence post and roast me. Or would they make a spread-eagle out of me, like they did Pat Hennessy in the Indian

Territory? It was nearly night and I thought they might be good Indians and go to their camp for the night and thus give 'me a chance to get something to eat and rest awhile. But nothing of the sort happened. Every time I would stop playing, Mr. Indian would grunt and say "Heap good, play more."

I just kept on playing until I got so tired that I did not pretend to play any tune at all. An old-fashioned cane mill would have sounded good in comparison to the music I was making; but they just sat there on the floor and looked wise, and when I would stop they would just grunt and say, "Play more." As they always kept their guns looking my way, there was no use for me to get fussy about it. I was sure getting hungry, tired and sleepy. I fiddled all that evening and all that night. Along toward morning I just collapsed and fell over, and when I came to myself, it was about nine o'clock next morning. I looked around for the Indians, but they were gone, with my guns and all my grub. They had also taken the mules with them. I soon discovered the reason they had left without first taking my scalp.

Everybody who knows anything about rattlesnakes knows that they are great lovers of music. There were plenty of them in that country, and they would come to the house every evening to hear me play on the fiddle. Sometimes I would play in the daytime, and sometimes I would feed them with mice or birds, just to see them eat. I got so that I knew some of them by sight. I made a study of the snakes that came to visit with me, and I can say that rattlesnakes are just like men. I never saw two that looked exactly alike. There were some good, jolly

snakes in the bunch, and some were grouchy and mean, always hunting trouble, just like some men. Sometimes they would come in the house and crawl around. As long as they were looking around it was all right, but when they would coil up and commence to rattle, I would move out of striking distance. A few of them I had to kill.

When I came to myself that morning, there were several big snakes in the house and quite a lot of them outside. I soon saw, in looking around, that they had made a fight with the five Indians, for there were two dead Indians on the ground, not far from the house. From that day on I have been a friend to the snakes, for I believe that bunch of snakes saved my life. I resigned my commission right on the spot and lit out for Dodge.

CHAPTER IV.

A TRIP TO THE BLACK HILLS—PROSPECTING FOR GOLD—CAUGHT IN THE CIRCLE—BACK IN TEXAS HUNTING BUFFALO—FIRST EXPERIENCE AS A COW-BOY—DROWNED IN THE CANADIAN RIVER—BACK IN DODGE—A TRIP TO K. C.—MY FIRST APPEARANCE ON THE STAGE—A HARD RIDE OF FIFTEEN HUNDRED MILES AFTER HORSE RUSTLERS.

About the first of April, Baker and I decided that we would go to the Black Hills and prospect for gold that summer. When we got to Cheyenne, Wyoming, we bought a couple of ponies to pack our camp equipage. After spending a couple of days there, we went on. Just what we saw and done in Deadwood and the Black Hills that summer was a plenty. We prospected and dug holes in the ground, but we did not find any pay dirt. Five other fellows joined us, making seven all told. We joined in for mutual protection; that was the year after the Custer Massacre, on the Little Big Horn, and it was not very safe for one or two men to get caught out by a bunch of Indians.

About the first of September we decided to leave and take a few Indian ponies with us. Well, we got the ponies all right and lit out for Dodge. The second day we discovered a bunch of Indians on our trail, and only about a mile away. It looked as if there were about fifty of them and, as they seemed in a hurry to go some place, we dropped the ponies and started in a hurry, too. After

about a five-mile run one of our horses went lame, and as the kid on the lame horse was Willie, I had to stop and the other six men decided to stay with me. We got into a buffalo wallow to fight it out with the Indians. They did not give us much time to make preparations to receive company. With yells and war hoops they galloped in narrowing circles, hugging the opposite sides of their ponies and firing rapidly. We were sure caught in the circle; and, as that was my second time under fire, I wanted them to go away and let me alone. They might accidentally shoot one of us. But they were in no hurry to leave and were mad, because their ponies had been stolen. But we left their ponies. I thought, after they had them, they ought to go away and not be running around on the prairie, shooting at us every time they got close enough. We did a little shooting ourselves, and by night we had fifteen or twenty ponies down on the prairie; but they got another out of the bunch we ran off with. How many Indians we killed and crippled I do not know, as they always take the dead away. Every chance we got we would dig the dirt loose and pile it up in front of us to protect ourselves. About the middle of the afternoon, they made a determined attack to take us out, and they narrowed the circle down to about twenty yards; close enough for us to do good work with our six-shooters. They finally gave it up and retired. Two of our men were killed, Baker was hit in the left arm, Willie was hit in the off leg and the other men escaped without a scratch.

We fixed up our wounds as best we could, and waited for the next round, but it never came. Night came on and one of the men who was not hit tried several times to

slip out and find help, but each time he was chased back. We made up our minds that just before sun up they would try to slip in on us, and either kill or capture us. One of the men was an old Indian fighter, and his orders were to save the last cartridges to keep the Indians from getting us alive, to keep from being tortured to death. But when the sun came up the Indians were gone and a bunch of cowboys and prospectors were headed our way.

I got back to Dodge that fall with both pockets full of gravel, and hungry as a coyote. I went on to Texas and hunted buffaloes and trapped that winter; but I did not get very rich, as buffalo were getting scarce. The Indians were very bad that winter, and it was a continual fight—hardly a day passed that we did not have to take a few shots at them. That spring I hired out to a cow outfit that was goint to take a herd to Dodge. After we got them rounded up and the road brand on them, we started North. Nothing out of the way happened to Willie until we got to the South Canadian River. It was bank full. After a few days we got across, and there is where I came very near getting my final check cashed. I came so close to it that I could see St. Peter and the Golden Gate and all kinds of angels. I thought I was eating buckwheat cakes and honey. The streets were paved with gold; they gave me a golden harp with a thousand strings to play, and after I played the Arkansaw Traveler with variations a few times, they said I was all right and to come in. I was made a sergeant and they gave me a seat over by George Washington. About that time the boys got some of the water out and some wind in, and my visit to heaven

was over. I have sometimes wished that the boys had left me there.

When we got to Dodge, it certainly was a live wire. The country was covered with cattle and the town was full of cowpunchers. The saloon keeper, the dance hall man, the gambler, the restaurant man, and the barber were certainly having a harvest. The first thing an old cowpuncher would do when he hit Dodge was to get a drink or two and then to the barber shop, where he would get his eye knocked out for two dollars. Then he dressed up, got a square meal, and was ready for whatever showed up; and it was very seldom that something did not show up to suit his fancy. Usually the dance hall was the next place, and as there were several in Dodge, we were all accommodated. It cost four bits to dance each time—that included a drink at the bar for you and your partner. What we did, how we did it, and what we did it for would make a book as big as Webster's dictionary.

I had always thought that the stars were natural, and were made by God when He made the earth; but I found out different. The stars are nothing more or less than holes in the sky, put there by an old puncher out for a time. It is supposed that after he gets his gun in action, he can hit anything from the sky to the earth, or from the earth to the sky, as you please. But I have seen cowboys that could not hit a house, unless they were inside of it and the doors shut, and I have seen others that could clip the head off a rattlesnake with their six-shooters while running their horses at full speed. I have seen them spend a dollar and a half for a pair of overalls, then kick and swear for a month about how high clothing was. At the



Fording a River on the Old Cattle Trail

same time, I have seen them pay seventy-five dollars for a saddle, twenty dollars for a pony, fifteen dollars for a hat, fifty dollars for a pair of gold mounted revolvers, ten dollars for cartridges, and think they got the outfit cheap.

That fall I went to Kansas City with a train load of cattle. When I left Dodge, I had a hundred and fifty dollars. When I got back there, three weeks later, I owed the Santa Fe the price of a ticket, and the company owed me the price of a good pair of pants. I got the whole east end of them kicked out on my way back west. I had as one of my buddies, "whatever that is" on that trip to Kansas City, one of those actor fellows who had got stranded and was making his way back East the best way he could. We had a pretty good time the first week in Kansas City. We went to all the shows on a free pass. About that time my one hundred and fifty dollars was gone.

When the actor's wife got in, he got all three of us a job at a theatre near the market square, where the old horse-car barn stood. We were billed as Mr. and Mrs. Banks, and Professor Willie Jones, three champion cowboy acrobats and comedians, just from the great southwestern cattle ranges—first appearance in Kansas City. The way they filled that old house that week was a caution. The house was crowded all week to see us. I did a good many stunts that week, besides what I did on the stage. When Banks got me a job as one of the stage hands, he told me I had better buy a diamond shirt stud. He said it would give me a better front. The audience would think I was a millionaire cattleman, and that I was on the stage just for their amusement, not for the big salary I got. We went and hunted up a pawn shop. He said we could get a

diamond cheaper there than we could at a regular diamond store. He selected one that weighted a pound and a half, and cost me a dollar and six bits. It looked to me like the North Star. It made me feel like a five hundred dollar short-horn among a lot of Texas scrubs. I afterwards traded it off in Raton, New Mexico, for some snake medicine for one of the boys, who had been so careless as to let a snake bit him.

When I accepted that job as an actor, Banks insisted that I get married. I told him that I was too young and too poor to take care of a wife and a bunch of children. He just laughed and said he knew all the time I was raised on a farm; but he did not think I was so green as all that.

When they paid us off Sunday I received six dollars. Just think of that—six dollars for a week's work, when I had paid five dollars for a room and seven at the hotel, besides ten dollars for make-up—that's the name Banks gave it. Then I begin to think he was right when he said I ought to have a wife to take care of me. I expected, from what he told me about what an actor got, to have several hundred dollars coming to me; but after the excitement incidental to a settlement with a millionaire theatrical manager, I came to the conclusion that I got all that was coming to me and some to spare. Gus and Carrie Canfield were two more of the stage hands that week.

I saw enough of city life in two weeks to last me a long time, and I hiked back to Dodge. Then I put in a year as a cowboy in the territory of No Man's Land and the Pan Handle of Texas. While I was working for Lee and Rey-

nolds, at Camp Supply, some rustlers ran off some of their cow ponies. McKinney was head man at Camp Supply for Lee and Reynolds. One day he sent for one of the ranch foremen to come in, as he wanted to talk with him about those stolen ponies. When Red got back to Camp, he told me to take four warriors and hit the trail after the ponies. My orders were to get them, bust the company, or never come back to Supply. We put in two months trailing the rustlers, and found them up in the hills on Big Sand Creek in Colorado, about where Colonel Chivington massacred the Cheyenne Indians. We rested up a day or two and went back to Supply. If the horse rustlers ever got any more of their ponies I never heard of it.

CHAPTER V.

OFF TO COLORADO WITH A HERD OF CATTLE—AN ALL-NIGHT FIGHT WITH MEXICANS—A MONTH IN ALAMOSA, COLORADO—ON A PROSPECTING TRIP TO WESTERN COLORADO—COOK IN A SURVEYORS' CAMP AND BOSS OF A PACK TRAIN—TWO THOUSAND FEET ABOVE TIMBERLINE—CARRYING THE U. S. MAIL IN A DISH PAN—THE BURIED CITY.

One summer I went with a bunch of cattle to Colorado. We traveled up the Cimarron River, crossed the Santa Fe railroad at El Moro, passed on the north side of the Spanish Peaks, crossed the Rocky Mountains over the La Veta Pass, struck the San Louie Valley at old Ft. Garland, and from there went on west across the San Louie Valley to the Rio Grande River. The night we camped at El Moro, the most of us went to Chililee, a Mexican town, close to El Moro, where we expected to have a good time, and we were not disappointed. The Mexicans had a dance hall with a bar in one end, where you could buy cigars and the makings for cigarettes, and you could buy the drinks, if you felt that way.

We told the proprietor we had a few souvenirs to spend and, if he would furnish the girls and the music, we would give him a few of them as keepsakes. Mexicans, like most white men, are very accommodating, when there are a few dollars in sight. He sent out and in about an hour the Mexican señoritas commenced to come in. While

the girls were getting ready for the dance, we were playing Monte, smoking cigarettes, and some of the boys were "taking on a few," just to keep their nerves steady. When the music started, we got the girls and began dancing, and I'll bet we had more fun than ever the Astorbilts had at any of their society balls in New York.

We were having such a good time with the Mexican señoritas that some of the young Mexicans thought we wanted to steal the girls, and they began to get angry and smart.

About three in the morning everybody was hooked up just right to have some trouble, if any one else felt that way, and it was not long until a Mexican slapped "Big Jim" on the head with his sombrero. Jim promptly downed him, and the fight started. I think that every kind of a gun and knife that could be gotten hold of was in use. The lights were shot out quicker than you could close your eye. As well as I can recollect, the fight lasted an hour. I used up a box of cartridges, and when all the cartridges were used up the fun was over. We lit up the hall and took an inventory to see how many of the boys we had left. The count showed everyone of us present or accounted for. There were no Mexicans in sight, and no one was seriously injured. We hunted up the proprietor, the girls came back, and the dance went on until daylight.

If a man gets killed in a fight of that kind it does not count. If he gets hurt, so he can't yell or shoot, that don't count either. But it's the man who gets hit slightly who is considered seriously hurt, because he is mean and wants to fight some more, and we usually have to take him to camp and tie him to the chuck wagon to keep him from

hurting himself. Before we left the dance hall, we settled with the proprietor for all damages. Treated all the Mexicans so there would be no trouble, and left to hunt up other new and strange places to conquer.

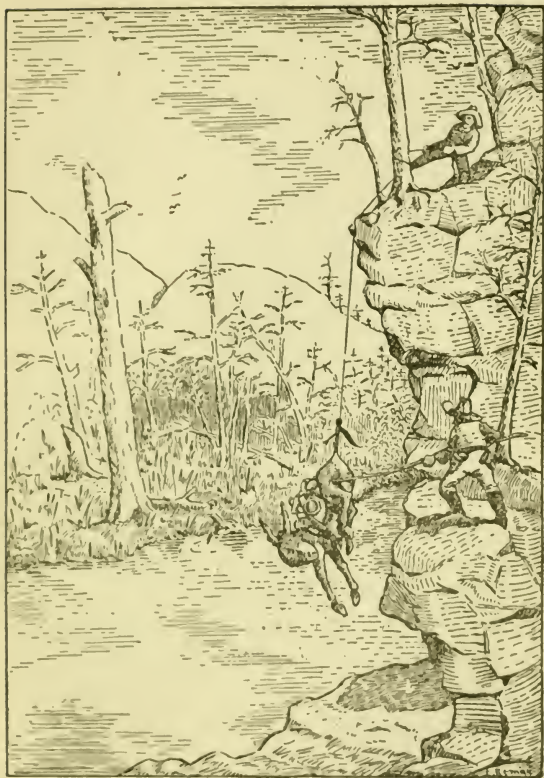
We turned the cattle over to the new owner, got our pay, and for a month we certainly made a live town out of Alamosa. That was one town, and I believe the only town I ever struck, where the city marshal and police let us run to suit ourselves. We never had any trouble with the officers or citizens; we had plenty of money to spend, and they wanted us to spend it; so our boss made arrangements with the city marshal that if any of us got unruly, we would look after him ourselves. The first one who went wrong was my brother Jack. He wanted to run the red light dance hall to suit himself. It took six of us and two policemen to take him to camp. When we got him there, we just hog tied him and let him stay there until he promised to be good, and it was an every night occurrence for one or two boys to be taken to camp to stay until they promised to be good. That plan worked fine, for no one was killed. We never had a fight with the officers or among ourselves during the month that we were there. I expect there are some people in Colorado yet who remember that bunch of cowboys from Texas.

Big Jim and Willie went on West, on a prospecting trip, to western Colorado, crossed the Powder Horn Range, and on down to Ouray. No doubt you have heard the old saying, "The world by the tail and a down-hill pull." I think it was a hundred miles from the top of that hill, straight down to Ouray. We hunted around and found lots of fool's gold, but none of the real article. When we

ran out of money, we struck a job cooking for a bunch of surveyors. As long as we were in camp, cooking was a good job. It was when we moved camp that our troubles began. We had six Rocky Mountain canaries to pack our camp outfit on. In the forenoon the surveyors were trying to find out how far it was from a certain place straight up to heaven, and in the afternoon they would hunt up a place to see how far it was straight down to, well—Pueblo.

After our morning meal, we would pack our traps on our canaries (that is what my partner called them) or burros, and start out. All the surveyors had to do was to find a good place to jump off, and they were in camp, ready for dinner or supper, as the case might be. All we had to do was to get a hand-spike apiece and hunt around on the mountain side over the rocks and through the timber for an opening we could pry our caravan through. Sometimes we would take a long rope and tie it to the canaries' tails, take a turn around a tree and push them off. Sometimes they would hang up on a tree or the corner of a big rock, then one of us would hold the rope and the other would take the hand-spike, go down and pry him off. Sometimes all we could do was to sit down on a rock and just cry and cuss.

My partner did the cussing and I would pray and pass the hat. Sometimes he would pray, while I would take a drink out of the medicine box. Sometimes it would only be a half-mile up or down from one camp to the next; but it would take us half a day to make it, and a few times it took us all day. I remember one time the surveyors got lost from us, and they had nothing to eat from one morning



The End of the Trail in the Mountains

to the next. Of course, an old-time cowboy or an Indian never gets lost. It's always the camp or tepee that gets out of place.

Sometimes when we would be above timberline we would take a tin can, knock both ends out, put it to our mouth, and run around to catch enough mountain air to fill our lungs. Then we would sit down and cuss till we ran out of wind again. We quit that job on an average of four times a day for a month; after we would rest awhile, we would get up and go back to work. The air above timberline is very light. If I go up another mountain with a pack train, I am going to take a blacksmith forge along to pump wind into my lungs with.

We camped in one place three days and tried to cook some navy beans. They were harder at the end of the three days than they were when we began to cook them, and even soda had no effect on them. I have been told that you can't get water to boil above timberline. My partner took along a two-bushel gunny-sack full of wind, one time, when we had to cross a hill two thousand feet above timberline. The air was so light at that altitude that I bled at the nose for half a day. After that we surely quit and started out of the mountains.

We stayed all night at Del Norte on our way out, and the landlord told us they wanted a man to carry the United States mail up to the Highland Mary Mine, or some other place. He said it was only three miles up there, and I would have to make one trip a day and the pay would be a hundred dollars a month. I took the job for both of us, and we were to take turns carrying the mail. Next morning I got the mail sack on my back and started out.

I think it was ten miles the way I went. When I got where they told me the mining town was, I could not find it. I heard a man yell and, looking through the trees, what few there were, I saw Mr. Man standing by a tree about two hundred yards away. He told me to come to him, as he was in the camp. I could not see the camp or the town. I went over to him and asked where the post-office was. He said I was within twenty feet of it. Well, I did not know whether he was crazy or whether I was. There was nothing in sight but a world of snow, a few trees, and that man, and only twenty feet from the post-office.

"I am from Missouri," I said, "Please show me."

"All right," he said. "Follow me."

He turned around, grabbed that tree and slid down it; I followed him, and in about a minute I was in the post-office. The town was in a gulch, and was covered up with snow from ten to one thousand feet deep. The miners had tunnels dug through the snow from their cabins to the mines and post-office. When they went out, they went up a tree to the top of the snow.

It was nice and warm under the snow. I had my dinner, and got ready to go back to Del Norte. There was a man who was going out, so we went together. I took the mail sack and he had a shovel and a big dish pan. I wondered what he was going to do with them, but that was his business. When we got out of that gulch and struck the mountain side, about three miles above the town, he took off his snow shoes and got into that scoop shovel and told me to take off my snow shoes and get into that dish pan, and we would be in Del Norte before God would get the news that we had started. After considerable argument,

and some showing, we were ready to start. I always did like excitement and was always ready to try anything that was new to me. Well, I just had to laugh when I thought about what the post-office authorities in Washington, D. C., would say if they knew I was carrying the United States mail in a dish pan.

The other fellow took the lead and I followed. It took only about three minutes to make that three miles; but it was the most exciting three minutes I ever went through. We went that three miles and up the other side of the hill, a hundred yards or more, and then back to Del Norte, quicker than you can read about it. After we stopped, I looked at that mail sack, where one end had dragged on the snow and there was a hole burned in it as big as your hat.

I told my partner about that trip and he said his nerves were too weak to carry the mail. I resigned that evening in favor of the next man that came along, and started to find something that was not so exciting as riding down a mountain side in a dish pan at the rate of a mile a minute.

When we got back to Alamosa, we bought tickets to Pueblo over the D. & R. G. We got to the top of La Veta Pass at dark and down to La Veta for supper. After we started for Pueblo, the engineer in making a quick turn in the road ran his engine into the rear coach and upset it; so the work train took us back to La Veta for the rest of the night. We finally got back to Dodge City, where I put in six weeks punching cattle for the Santa Fe railroad.

CHAPTER VI.

RAILROADING AND PUNCHING CATTLE AT THE SAME
TIME—NINE MILES AND NO ONE HURT—CAUGHT
IN A HOTEL FIRE IN NEWTON, KANSAS—BOG-
RIDING IN NO MAN'S LAND.

In the winter of 81-82 the Santa Fe was very short of men, so I thought there would be some easy money in going as a brakeman. The Santa Fe, at that time, was one of the worst roads in the country. They just had a right of way with two rusty streaks of iron and a lot of dinky engines that a threshing machine engineer of to-day would laugh at. When I struck the train master for a job, he asked me what I had been working at. I told him the last thing I had done was herding cattle.

"Cowboy, are you?" He laughed and winked at the other man in the office. I found out afterwards what that wink and laugh meant.

"Well, if you think you can ride a box car as well as you can a broncho, you can have the job."

The winter was a very cold one, and there was lots of snow. Talk about your slow trains in Arkansaw, they were not in it with the Santa Fe that winter. All western Kansas and eastern Colorado were covered with great herds of cattle, which the snow and cold weather had put on the bum. After I got my commission, in the shape of a switch key and a headlight, we started out. We got along very well the first half-day, then we stuck in a snow

bank. The boss sent me back to Dodge, after a gang of section men and an engine to pull us out. It was three hours after I left the train until I got back with an engine. They buckled it on and pulled us out. We went back to Dodge and got another engine, with a snow plow attachment that looked like a catfish's head.

When we got within about a half a mile of that snow bank we stopped and held a council of war—that is, the engineer, conductor and rear brakeman did—the fireman and Willie were not consulted about what should be done. They decided we would back up a little and take a running shoot at that snow bank and butt her wide open. If we should begin to slow up too much, with the prospect of getting stuck, we would all jump off and push.

When we struck the snow bank we were going about six miles an hour. Our train, if I remember right, was made up of seven cars of railroad iron and an old sheep car that would not hold sheep any more. This last was used for a way car, and there were in it some old prod poles that cattle shippers use.

We went through the snow bank, but had to stop, for there was a bunch of cattle on the track a hundred miles long reaching from the first station west of Dodge to where we crossed the Arkansaw River, at Sargeant. You see we did not stop at Cooledge then. As it is the head brakeman's business to do everything except drink the red oil and sleep, it was my duty to get the cattle off the track so the train could go on. The conductor gave me one of those prod poles and a lantern, and after that string of cattle I went. We were then about nine miles west of Dodge, and by that time it was dark. The fireman said

we did well the first day—nine miles and nobody hurt.

Well, I punched cattle off the track all night, and we got to Cimarron by sun up next day—nineteen miles in twenty-four hours. We would have done better, but the fireman went to sleep and I got two miles ahead of the train and after I had passed on, the cattle would get back on the track to get out of the snow. So I had to turn back and punch them off the track the second time. When I got the fireman awake (you see the engineer, conductor, and rear brakeman never go to sleep on the road), we started again, and I had to get the old cows off the track the third time that night.

We went into the hole for numbers 1 and 2, or some other numbers, to pass. I don't think they ever passed. I think they both had a good hand, and ordered J. N. W. up. I put in the day carrying water and chopping railroad ties to keep that old engine alive. The Santa Fe used wind-mills to pump water in the tanks, and they were always out of order. When No. 2 came along, they had a carload of coal along with them; so we borrowed enough to last us twenty-four hours. About seven P. M. we got orders from J. N. W. to pull out and to keep a good lookout for No. 4, as it was reported to be on the road somewhere east of Garden City, in a bunch of cattle or a snow bank.

By hard work the train kept up with me that night, and we reached Garden City by ten o'clock the next day. When we got to the station I was pretty hungry, so I borrowed a chew of tobacco from the section boss's wife.

It was the same old story all the way—"Get those cattle off the track!" We went into the hole at Holly's

for something and stayed there two days waiting for a train to come along, so we could find out if the war was still going on. I guess old J. N. W. had forgotten about us. We fared very well those two days for there was a box car on the side track that had a box of soda crackers in it. I guess some cowboys had broken into that car and helped themselves to some of the crackers. A railroad man would not be guilty of breaking into a box of crackers unless he had been fasting for over four days.

I got caught up with my sleep and went on to Sargeant to see what was the matter. When I went into the office and told the agent who I was, he called the train dispatcher at Nickerson. The train dispatcher said that J. N. W. had been out hunting jack rabbits for three days, and left no orders for us. He gave me a little yellow piece of tissue paper, and I went back to the train. The fireman had gone to sleep, while the engineer was in the caboose eating crackers, and had let the engine go dead. I went back to Sargeant and reported. They sent out a switch engine to bring in the crew and the dead engine. When we all got in, I found out by a little figuring that we had been on the road five days that I had walked one hundred and twenty-five miles and had punched one hundred and six miles of cattle off the track.

It was just seven days from the time we left Dodge till we got back. The train master asked me how I liked railroading. I told him I had another name for it, and if he wanted me to punch any more cattle for the Santa Fe, he would have to furnish me with a pony and a six-shooter. I made a few more trips, and on the first pay day I resigned. I had worked for the Santa Fe just six weeks.

I told you about the brakeman that kicked the east end out of my pants, on my trip from Kansas City to Dodge; well, he went to Colorado, and was deadheading and bumming his way back to Kansas City, when he struck our train. I not only kicked the north end out of his pants, but the east and south side also. That goes to show that it does not pay to kick a man when he is down, for you may be down and out yourself, sometime.

After I quit the Santa Fe, I went to Newton, Kansas, and as the weather was still cold, I thought it would be a good idea to go home awhile. At Newton, I went to a three-story frame hotel, not far from the depot, to stay all night. I was given a room on the first floor, next to the roof. Sometime in the night I got so cold that I got out of bed and dressed and started to go down-stairs to hunt a fire. When I opened the door into the hall, I discovered that the hotel was on fire. The hall was full of smoke, the flames were headed my way, and I was cut off from the stairway. I shut the door, went to the window and kicked it out. By that time some one yelled "Fire!" and the big doings were on. I looked out of the window, and it was about twenty feet to the pavement. I thought I would wait a few minutes before I made the jump. By that time quite a crowd had gathered. Some were yelling "Why don't you jump down?" and others, "Stay there until we get a ladder!" I tore the sheets and the quilt in two and made a rope ladder, and as I went out of the window the fire came in through the door.

"One spring when I was bog-riding—"

"What?"

"One spring when I was bog-riding, down in No Man's Land,—"

"What in blazes is a bog-rider?"

A bog-rider, my dear boy, is a man that they call a live wire now-a-days. He is a cross between a bolt of chain lightning and a torpedo boat. To be a successful bog-rider, you ought to be able to turn a double flip-flop over fifteen elephants in a three-ring circus; and you ought to be able to make a mile before God gets the news that you have even started. You ought to make a hundred-yard dash in an even nine or better. You ought to know how to get on a pony in such a way as would have made Charles Fish, champion of all champions of bare-back riding, look like thirty cents. And above everything else, you ought to have a pony that knows more than all the circus trick horses that you ever saw put together, for everything depends on the way the pony does the trick.

You ought to have the pony trained so that the minute you hit the stirrup he would jump ten feet high and forty feet head, and he ought to hit the grass making one-seventeen, or better."

Bog-riding is such a combination of fun, excitement and pathos that a very few cowpunchers ever try the game twice. Before I started out, after the boss hired me, I put in a day praying and fasting. I made my will, had the cook and boss sign it as witnesses, sealed it, and said "Here goes, good-bye Lizzie."

"I wrote everybody a letter that I could think of, whom I had treated mean, and asked them to forgive me. Then I wrote to Florence, down in Sumner County, Kansas, close to Bedford, that it was not likely she would ever

see me again, as I was going out in the morning as a bog-rider. And she never did.

The boss said he would give me a pony that could do the trick, if I could do my part of it. He told me fifteen different men had tried it; and, that while they got away alive, most of them were more or less crippled.

The first day out I did not find any trouble, for the simple reason that I did not look for it; my mind was on something else. Next morning, however, I was out bright and early hunting for the same kind of trouble that had put the other cowboys on the hummer. Each one had left a vacancy for the next one that came along to try the job of bog-riding.

I was not long in finding what I was looking for, in the shape of an old cow that had bogged down in the quicksand in the river, where she had gone to drink. I rode up and looked her over, to see if I could coax her to get up and come out without any of my help. She just lay there with one eye shut, was watching me with the other. Every few minutes she would wink at me as much as to say, "If you want this old cow, come and get her."

I stretched my rope out on the sand to see how long it was. Then I calculated how many jumps it would take to get from one end to the other. I put the rope on the cow's horns, tied the other end to my saddle, and we started. When I pulled that old cow out of the bog, you should have seen the look of gratitude on her face. I have saved men's lives in my time, but none of them seemed more thankful than that old cow.

A bog-rider is not allowed to carry a gun, like other cowboys. The boss is afraid he will get discouraged and

jump side-ways. He has to carry a little instrument of torture that looks like a nut cracker. I called the one I carried a gee-whiz. Other cowboys had different names for it. I took the rope off the cow's horns, rolled it up, hung it on the saddle, took a fresh chew of granger twist, got out my gee-whiz, adjusted it on her tail, and commenced to wind it back and forth to get her upon her feet. Sometimes you have to rub their tails with your gee-whiz till the smoke commences to come out of their ears. I would not advise a new beginner to go to extremes with a gee-whiz. Usually a little bit of rubbing will cause the cow to jump to her feet; then she will turn around and look at you, as much as to say, "Are you ready for the fire-works?" Then you have to beat her to the pony and get on and ride away. In case you do not get on your pony in time, the cow will put a pair of horns under your coat tail where they will do the most harm. Sometimes the cows are so weak that when they make a break for you they will fall; then you have to get off you pony and try it over. I have had to get them up as many as half a dozen times, and every time I had to beat them to the pony.

I held that job down fifteen days, and had my coat tail torn off nine times. I tailed up forty-five in that time, and as a cow was worth \$20, I made the company \$900. They paid me \$17.50. As I had to put in half the night patching my coat, it was too hard on me. I wanted the boss to furnish the coat, or have the cook patch mine, so I could rest and sleep; he would do neither, so I quit. I heard afterwards that three of his bog-riders were killed in succession.

CHAPTER VII.

BACK IN TEXAS WITH A BUNCH OF CATTLE—THE FIGHT IN SWEETWATER AND A TROOP OF U. S. CAV-ALRY—ARRIVES AT FT. SITTING BULL MORE DEAD THAN ALIVE—A LIFE-SAVING CREW—DEATH OF JIM SPRINGER—FREEZING TO DEATH—ON A TEAR IN WICHITA, KANSAS.

I was holding a small bunch of cattle one cold winter a few miles east of Ft. Elliot, Texas. I had for a partner a young fellow about my age. We had for a camp an old dobe house covered with brush, and over the brush was about a foot of dirt. Just before Christman it began to rain—one of those cold rains that chill a man clear through. Our house kept us dry the first day and night; by the second day it began to leak through, and for two weeks that rain kept coming. It was cold, too, almost to the freezing point, and during that two weeks Nibs and I never had on a dry stitch of clothing. Nibs did the cussing and I did the praying. Occasionally I would pass the hat and take up a collection for the poor heathen in New Jersey; that is where Nibs came from.

One day we got just a little mad and resigned, and went in to get our money. About the only consolation we got was a little snake medicine and orders to go back and look after the cattle, and back we went. Not long after that we slipped away and went to a little place called

Sweetwater, the same place where we got the buffalo hides on my first trip to Texas with the bull outfit.

Sweetwater was one of these little hallelujah towns where the Methodists were in complete control, and they were so cranky about it that they would not allow a Baptist or a Campbellite in town, for fear he would teach some of the weak-minded citizens to use water sometimes. As I was a class leader in the Methodist church back home, and as we had a few souvenirs with "In God we Trust" stamped on them, they gave us the glad hand. There were about twenty other cowboys there who had drifted in to have some fun; also a lot of bullwhackers, mule skinnners, a few tourists, and about twenty-five soldiers who had come to spend the holidays and a few souvenirs.

Sweetwater was a little place built for the accommodation of the soldiers and buffalo hunters, or any one else who wished to stop there. It was also built on both sides of the street. There were two saloons and dance halls in the town—one on each side of the street. Fanny was the queen in one, and Polly Turn-over was high jinks in the other; and, of course, there was considerable rivalry between the two, for various reasons. It was the custom in those days, when a new town was started to lay out a grave yard, usually called Boothill, and they would dig a grave for the first victim. If I remember right, a tourist by the name of Ryan was the first man in Sweetwater to die with his boots on. I was told that he was kicked to death by a burro.

There were considerable doings in the two dance halls that night. The proprietors were performing the hallelujah act, and the bartenders, the girls and the

fiddlers were doing the rest, while the soldiers were saying amen. We cowpunchers were keeping our fingers close to a live trigger and saying nothing. About midnight someone accidentally let his gun fall in the dance hall across the street from where I was, and as Nibs was there I guess that was right. But in the other one, where I was, the proprietor thought his rival was shooting at him, so he grabbed his gun and commenced to shoot across the street. In less than no time every light in town was shot out; everybody that had a gun was shooting, and the rest were yelling and finding a place to hide from the stray bullets. Some of the soldier boys went to Ft. Elliot, four miles away, and got a company of cavalry to stop the fight. When they got back the fight was off, for the reason that every man was out of cartridges. As no one was seriously hurt, and nobody knew what the fight was about, peace was once more established, the lamps were relighted, and the fun went on.

Not long after the fight in Sweetwater, we got orders for one of us to come in, as the company wanted to send one of us to Supply. Neither of us wanted to go, as the weather was very cold, and there was some snow on the ground. We decided to play a game of seven-up to see who should go. Nibs was a very good seven-up player, but a very poor cook; and as I was a good cook and a poor seven-up player, I had to go. That was the last time I ever saw poor Nibs. He was caught in a blizzard that winter and frozen to death, and partly eaten by coyotes when found. And now after forty years have passed, all I can say for poor Nibs is, that he was game,

and as white a boy as ever left a good home back East to die in a blizzard alone on the prairies of Texas.

I went to Ft. Elliot, and Hatton, the big chief there for the post traders, wanted some mail taken to Supply, as the hack was not running, because the Canadian River was partly frozen over. Next morning I started bright and early to Supply, as a dispatch bearer. It is thirty miles from Elliot to the river, and was it cold? When I got to the river just before night I was nearly frozen. I unsaddled the pony, turned him loose to look out for himself, cached the saddle, and then took a look at the river. The prospects were anything but good. The river was frozen over except a channel in the centre, about thirty feet across. I walked out on the ice as close to the water as I thought would hold my weight. After facing the cold north wind all day, with the thermometer standing about zero, I was already as cold as I could very well be, and to think of climbing off the ice into the ice cold water made me shiver. Could I wade it, or would I have to swim that thirty feet? And when I got to the ice on the other side, would I be able to get out?

At such times some people pray to the Lord for help and success. I did nothing of the kind. I just cussed the country by sections, and the men who caused me to be sent on such a trip. They say the man who hesitates is lost. I only stopped a minute and then I slid off the ice into the water. When I went in, I think all the breath in me went out. I hit the bottom all right and waded across; but when I tried to climb out, the ice broke and under I went. The next time I tried I got out all right, and I got up and started on.

My wet clothes froze in a few minutes; night was coming on, and I had to walk a mile to Jim Springer's ranch, known as Ft. Sitting Bull. I want to say right here that when you are nearly frozen, with about a hundred pounds of wet clothes on, the walking is not good, especially when you have to face a cold north wind for a mile or two. I noticed that the road was not crowded with travelers—I had it all to myself.

I went on because I had to, and I got there. When I opened the door and went in, Springer was behind the bar. He kept a saloon and restaurant for everybody that happened along.

"Where the devil did you come from?" were his first words. I was past talking and my jaws were locked, but I pointed to a bottle on the bar that looked as if it contained a United States Life-Saving Crew. He set it on the bar with a pint cup by it. I made another motion to pour it out, and pointed to my mouth, for I knew that I could not hold the cup. He poured it out and held it to my lips, and I drank a pint of whiskey that would kill me dead as a mackerel if I was to do it now. The room was warm and as soon as my clothes began to soften up, we began to pull them off. In about fifteen minutes I commenced to soften up, I took another drink, but not so much; and in another fifteen minutes, I took another one. By that time we had my clothes off, and by the time he got me rolled up in a lot of buffalo robes, I took another drink. That's the last I remember until the next morning.

When I woke up he had my clothes smoothed out and dry, and I got into them. By that time I was feeling like a sixteen-year-old at a summer picnic, only I was as

hungry as a coyote, as I had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours. Did I take a drink that morning? I did not. Did Jim Springer charge me ten dollars for working with me all that night? He did nothing of the kind. Jim Springer was like a porcupine—he always traveled with his rough side out. He would divide his last dollar with you, and kill you the next day over a trifle.

What became of Springer? I was not there, but I will tell it to you as I heard it. Major Broodhead, a United States Army Paymaster, went with an escort of cavalry to Ft. Elliot, to pay off the soldiers at that post. That evening some of the soldiers went up to the ranch, began drinking and gambling and, of course, a row started; and I can say from experience that half the regular army soldiers are the lowest down specimens of men in the world. When the fight was over, Jim Springer and his ranch foreman, Leadbetter, were dead. The commanding officer sent in an official report that they had attacked the camp, in order to rob the paymaster, and had been killed.

Early that morning I started on to Supply. I hammered the ground at a good rate of speed all that day, and by night I got to Wolf Creek, fifty miles from Springer's ranch. When I got there, I think the whole Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes were camped along the creek. They were not on the war-path, but on their annual buffalo hunt; still, plenty of them that would not have hesitated to kill me, if I had not been prepared for just such an occasion.

I put on a bold front, built a fire, and had supper. All the time I was building my fire and making a pot of coffee, three or four young bucks were loafing around,

wanting to buy my gun. When they found they could not buy it (they offered me five ponies for it), they wanted to look at it, saying they might give me more ponies. After supper I took it out of my belt and pretended to be looking to see if it was loaded. I finally pulled the hammer back and told them to "puckachee," whatever that is, or I might start something which they could not stop. They went.

When I struck their camp I went across Wolf Creek and through the camp until I was fifty yards from the closest tepee and close to the prairie. As soon as it got dark I slipped away and headed for Supply, twenty miles farther on. I made about ten miles, when I played out. I had walked sixty miles that day, and had faced a cold north wind all the way. I had carried my camp outfit with me, as I intended to camp on Wolf Creek that night. A day's tramp for a soldier is about ten miles, if he is in a hurry. I wrapped up in my blanket and laid down in the tall grass to rest. I tried to sleep, but I got so cold I thought I would freeze. My body and underclothing were damp from walking, and when I got cold I was sure enough cold. I was afraid to build a fire; besides I had nothing but prairie grass to burn. I lay there and shivered and cussed until I began to get sleepy and apparently warm. I have been told by others that when a freezing man gets apparently warm, if you don't get up and cut a few rusties to put your blood in circulation, you are a gone sucker. I did some cussing and tried to get up. At first my feet failed to work.

When a man gets in a tight place and thinks all hopes are gone, he first gets frightened, then becomes cool. In

my case, I got mad. I could not get up, for I was too cold and stiff. I tried several times to rise, but it was no go; and I gave it up and laid back on the blanket and said "Good-bye Bill." I began to think of all the meanness I had ever done. I wondered if everybody that I had wronged would forgive me. Then I wondered if anybody would take the trouble to hunt me up and bury me; or, would the coyotes find me first and have a good feed? I must have gone to sleep, or was my mind wandering? I thought I was in a nice warm room; I could hear people laughing and talking; I thought my sister came in and asked if I were sick, as I was taking no part in the good times the rest of the young people were having. She even asked me what I was so quiet for.

Just how long I was in that condition I do not know; but when I woke up, there were several coyotes holding an inquest over me. That made me mad. I managed to get out my gun and I let one of them have it; the rest skipped out. I crawled to Mr. Coyote, stuck my knife into his body and sucked a lot of warm blood. That put new life into me. I tried again and succeeded in getting on my feet. I put in the rest of that night and the next morning, until eight o'clock, getting to Supply. When I got on top of the divide, just south of Supply, where the cold north wind had a good chance to get at me, I gave it up and laid down for the last time, closed my eyes and tried to go to sleep. I said to myself that I only had to die once, and that it might as well be now as later on. After I had rested a bit and could not go to sleep, I got mad and made up my mind that I would make one more effort to reach Supply.

I tried to get up, but I could not make it; so I tried crawling on my hands and knees. How far I went that way I don't know. I remember getting on my feet, staggering, walking and crawling, until I got to the fort. Then I had another fight with one of Uncle Sam's bunch of Life-Savers, and I came out a little the worse for wear, but still in the ring.

Joe Mason was tending bar at the Post Trader's Saloon, and I gave the dispatches to him. Next day I resigned my job as dispatch bearer.

When the cold weather let up, two other old cow-punchers and Willie rounded up some Indian ponies and lit out for Wichita, Kansas. In due time we got there and sold the ponies. My share amounted to \$250. We stayed there two weeks and broke into everything except the county jail. Right here, let me say that I have been arrested only once—that was in western Kansas in 190—. Everybody in Wilson, Kansas, will remember the time that old fellow from Dodge whipped the bully of the town and stood off a would-be deputy sheriff and a bad man. The City Marshal, Mr. Stanley, told me about six o'clock Saturday evening that he would have a warrant for my arrest soon. I told him that after I had my supper and got shaved to come down to the hotel and I would be ready. About eight o'clock, sure enough, he came for me and he took me up to the courtroom. When I got there, every man in town was on hand to hear the trial. I was fined three dollars and costs, amounting to eight dollars. They fined the other fellow the same and turned the Big Dutchman loose. He claimed that he had been kicked by a mule and was not in the fight.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RENDEZVOUS CAMP NEAR CAMP SUPPLY—AN
ENGLISH LORD AND A MILLIONAIRE—THE HEART
AND HAND—A FAREWELL BACHELOR DINNER—A
BEAR HUNT—ROPING A MOUNTAIN LION—OUR
WILD WEST SHOW AND A METHODIST PREACHER

While I was working for the L. R. outfit, Andy Jard, one of their field marshals, established what he called a rendezvous camp about twenty miles east of Camp Supply, on the north side of the Canadian River, where they could send all their extra men, and get them when they were wanted at the spring round-up. They had the contract to furnish several thousand cords of wood for the soldiers at Camp Supply. They sent all their extra men and cow ponies out there, and hired all the men they could get to chop wood.

Big Jim, Dug Ward, John Allen and Willie were sent out to take charge and to put the camp in shape for the rest of the boys as they drifted in. Big Jim was elected Chief Commissary and cook. The Hon. J. D. Ward, a younger son of the Lord of Essex of old England, was a young fellow about twenty-two at that time, and was in America to see the sights, learn the cattle business, and grow up with the country. With the first bunch of tender feet that came from Dodge was Sam Hyde, a young millionaire from New York City, who had come West to regain his health and learn how to chop cord-wood and

learn the cattle business. He had asthma so bad that you could hear him breathe a mile. He was put on light marching orders—that is, he was made assistant to Big Jim as a dish washer. Nice job, some of my readers may say, for a young millionaire; but Sam went at the work in earnest. It was not money he wanted; it was health, and when I last saw him he was fat and saucy, and as free from sickness as any man I ever knew.

After a few weeks of wood-chopping, we began to wish for some kind of trouble or excitement that would relieve the monotony of camp life. Some of the new men, or tenderfeet, as we called them, had a copy of a matrimonial paper, called "The Heart and Hand." It told all about the short road to an early marriage, and to be sure we all wanted to get married.

"What for?" I wanted to know.

"You have me guessing," said Big Jim, "why don't you ask Dug Ward or John Allen."

"Tall Cotton, a big cowboy from Texas, said it was a shame there are so many nice girls and widows who want to get married and no good men in sight."

Frank Ibaugh said he would take one. Coyote Bill said he wanted one, and every man in camp wanted one. A young fellow we called the "Salt Lake Kid," a Mormon from Utah, said he would take half a dozen, big, corn-fed girls from Iowa or Illinois.

"What are you fellows going to do with these girls, after you are married?" I asked.

"Never mind, Bill; get one yourself, and see what you will do."

"Let's get married and settle that afterwards."

"I will have mine help me cook," said Big Jim.

"I will make a princess out of mine," said Hyde.

"I will make mine the Queen of England," said Ward.

"I will make a cowboy girl out of mine," said Allen.

"Say, Bill, what are you going to do with yours?" some of the boys asked me.

"I don't know," I replied; "but I guess there will be a big face-licking in camp when she comes."

We took a vote on the question of getting married, and it was the unanimous decision that we would all send for a girl and get spliced, as some of the boys called it.

Everybody got busy writing to a few girls, and every girl wanted a cowboy. The city girls wanted to get out on the prairies, and the farm girls were tired of the farm. The young widows all had the same story to tell—"I had the meanest man on earth and I had to leave him," or, "he left me."

It was finally settled that we would have them all come at the same time.

The first day of May was the time set for our sweethearts to arrive in camp, and we would all get married at the same time. As we would have to get a preacher from Dodge, a hundred and twenty-five miles away, and as all the girls would have to get off the train at Dodge, they could all come along together. P. G. Reynolds of Dodge City had the only hack line from Dodge to Supply, and he wanted ten dollars apiece to bring our women to us. Ben Nichols said he would deliver the goods with a mule train for five dollars a head, and as the preacher was a Methodist, he would let him ride free of charge.

At an informal meeting one night we discussed every-

thing that would be likely to come up, and mapped out a program for the important occasion. I was elected referee and master of ceremonies. I was to have charge of the camp, and my word was to be law. I was to make all arrangements, and every one signed a contract to do as I said. I made Jim Hamil, Dug Ward and Sam Hyde a committee of three on program. I appointed Tall Cotton, John Allen and Frank Ibaugh marshals, to see that all should behave like prospective married men ought.

The fifteenth of April was the day set for the fun to begin. A farewell bachelor dinner was to be given. I sent to Supply for everything the boys wanted; several new tents, new blankets, groceries, a thirty-two gallon barrel of snake medicine, a wagon-load of bottled beer, and other articles too numerous to mention.

The committee on arrangements said that we would entertain our wives with a Wild West show. Roping contests, broncho riding, bull fights, dog and badger fights, shooting contests or any other kinds of sport that came along.

Everyone of the boys began to get ready for a solid month of fun. The spring round-up was not to start until after the fifteenth of May. The day before the bachelor dinner was to come off I gathered up all the guns, six-shooters, butcher knives, axes or anything else that the boys might use in a fight, took them about a mile from camp and hid them. And that bachelor dinner was a success in more ways than one.

"Say, Bill, did I have a fight last night?" Big Jim asked next morning.

And then he began to fire questions at me. "How

many men did I whip last night? Did any of the boys get killed? Have all of them got back to camp yet? Say, what time of day is it? What were all the fights about anyway? Is there anything the matter with one of my eyes? What is this rag tied around my head for? How did my clothes get torn up the way they are? Where is my shirt and hat? Who owns this old pair of boots I have on? Say, Bill, do you think I could walk this morning on such a pair of legs? If I go out of the tent, would some one run over me? Have the boys all quit fighting yet? Who is that coyote that is doing the Comanche war dance? Where is Dug Ward? What became of John Allen? Did Sam Hyde get rid of his asthma? Tell me, Bill, how many fights I had, and who I was fighting, and what I was fighting for? Who started all the fun anyway? Is there anything in camp to drink? Bill, how many fights were you mixed up in? Do you think I will be all right by the time my sweetheart gets here? Will the boys make fun of me for getting my eye blacked? How did it happen?"

Every man in camp was asking just such questions for several days, if he could get anyone to listen to him.

Every man in camp voted our bachelor dinner a grand success, and all were sorry that it was so soon over.

It took a week to get things in good shape and working order again.

One day two of the boys went down to the river to look after some of the ponies that had strayed away from the range, and when they got back to camp they had a big story to tell about being chased by a bear, and having had a narrow escape.

"Shut up, Concho, you never saw a bear. That

bachelor dinner has got you yet."

"Honest to grandma, boys, we did see a bear."

"Come off, Jack, what are you giving us anyway?"

"How many of you fellows are willing to go and rope that bear and bring him into camp for our Wild West show?"

"Jack, will you go with us and show us where you saw him?"

"Concho, we have a star liar in camp, but I guess you have him skinned both ways for Sunday."

"I hate to be called a liar," said Concho.

"Honest, Jack and I saw a big black bear down in the brush that skirts along the Canadian River, and if you fellows are in on the deal we will go get him, and keep him in camp until we have that entertainment for our sweet-hearts."

"Here comes Bill and Big Jim," said Concho. "Let's see what they say about it."

"Bill, Concho and Texas Jack say there is a big bear down in the bursh about two miles from here."

"There sure is," said both of the boys.

"I have often heard it said that too much corn-juice will cause a man to see snakes and all kinds of bugs, but this is the first time I ever heard of a man seeing a bear." said Jim.

"Let's go and get him," said Ward.

"That's our bear," said Allen.

"Count us in on that bear hunt," said the rest of the boys in a bunch.

The next day was Sunday; it was arranged for everyone in camp to go hunt that bear or anything else in the

shape of a wild animal, and bring them in alive for our circus. There were all told fifteen cowboys in camp, and the rest were tenderfeet. We cowboys would go on our ponies and do the roping; the rest would go on foot and help out the best they could. No guns of any kind were allowed; bring them in alive was the word.

We formed a circle about two miles in diameter, and all advanced toward a common centre. We divided up, so there would be two men on foot between two of the boys on the horses, and ten o'clock in the morning was the time set to start. I was in the ring between Concho and Tall Cotton. I had ridden perhaps two hundred yard when I saw Mr. Bear. No, maybe it wasn't a bear; but what I saw caused me to give a warning signal for the rest to stop. I called to Cotton and Concho and the boys on foot to come to me. I had discovered something about two hundred yards ahead of me that was not down on the bill-of-fare, and we had no guns either. When the other boys came up I told them to take a look toward that big old cottonwood tree and tell me what they saw.

"It's sure a big mountain lion," said Concho.

"It's got me going," said Tall Cotton.

The boys on the ground wanted to go to camp, and I did not blame them either; for Mr. Lion was eyeing us while we were talking about him.

That mountain lion was a prize worth taking a chance on. Cotton slipped away and went after some more of the cowboys to help rope him if we could. He did not look good to us, but we concluded to try him a round or two.

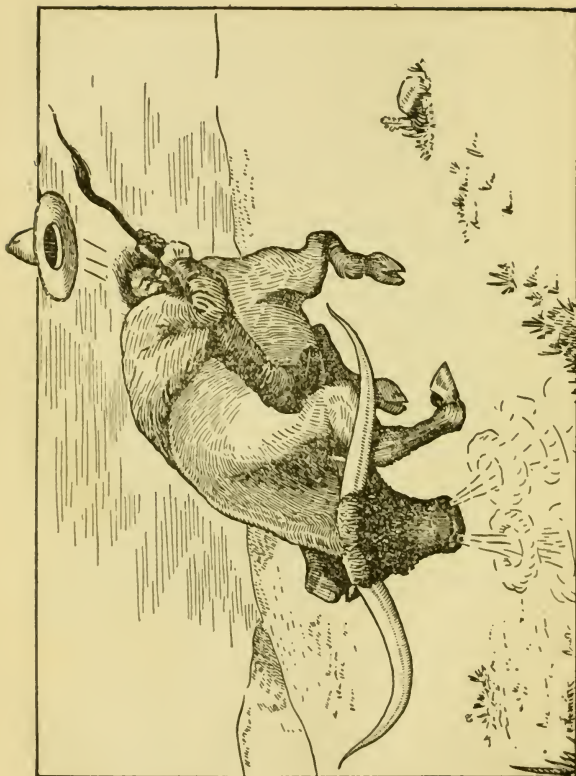
When Cotton got back with three more of the boys, that made six, and we would make a big effort to rope and

tie Mr. Lion down. He showed a brave front. He never turned tail; but seemed to be wondering what we were up to. I don't know what the other boys thought about it, but I felt like going to camp. I was not hunting lions anyway. I have heard it said that it is lots of sport to hunt lions, but when the lion hunts you it is not so funny.

The rest of the boys laughed at me when I said: "Let's leave him and go hunt that bear."

When we had made a circle around him, and were ready to advance, he began looking from one of us to the other, started to switch his tail, and I thought I could see a smile on his face. I know I saw him stick out his tongue and lick his chops. I could see the other boys coming up slowly, ropes ready for the throw. When we all got close enough, Concho gave the word, and six ropes cut through the air straight for Mr. Lion. Concho put one on his neck; he moved just in time for Tall Cotton to put one on his hind leg; the rest fell short. Mr. Lion got busy, made a leap towards one of the boys, and whang went Concho's rope. He made a run, but Cotton's rope held fast. By that time we had our ropes ready for a second throw. He certainly was a game fellow and he fought hard; but we finally had him tied down, with one leg broken. We took him to camp, but had to kill him. Along toward night, Big Jim and his bunch came in with that big bear and two cubs, two coyotes and a coon.

In one week more our sweethearts would arrive in camp. Two of the boys slipped off and went to Dodge, as an escort to pilot them through. By leaving the main trail ten or fifteen miles north of Supply and going through the cedar canyons, they would save several miles of travel.

*A Broncho Buster*

How were we going to know one from the other? Every man in camp was supposed to have a girl in one of the wagons. But which one?

It took two eight-mule teams and six wagons to haul the women and the baggage. We could see them coming a mile away, and I can say there were several men in the outfit who were sorry for their foolishness.

When the teams drove up and the girls began to climb out of the wagons, it was no laughing matter. We began to hunt up the ones that answered to their names as the preacher called them out. There were, I think, eight girls that failed to show up. Hamil, Ward, Hyde and Willie were four of the eight boys that drew blanks. It was voted that John Allen be awarded the first prize. He got a widow with six kids. After our Wild West show was over he loaded them all in a wagon and went down on the Brazos River and went to farming. I saw the family a few years later and they were all doing well.

A week before our Wild West show was to start, we began all kinds of preparations. The boys who were to enter the roping contest began in earnest. The prize was to be a pair of silver-mounted spurs, donated by Joe Mason of Camp Supply. Word was sent to all the neighboring ranches about the fun we were going to have. "Be sure and come, and bring all your old outlaw horses, your fighting dogs, your best ropers, your best broncho riders, your best shots, your best foot-racers. If you have any fighting bulls, bring them along; and last but not least, bring all the pretty girls and women you can pick up. For we have an English Lord and a millionaire in camp who got left in our prize lottery, besides Jim Hamil and Willie.

All four would be willing to marry a cowboy girl or even a corn-fed human girl from back East."

On Sunday the boys and what few girls there were scattered around over the range for fifty miles began to come in, and by Monday noon there were at least two hundred on the grounds. That included the regular army officers and their women, from Supply, and a few soldier boys from the same post.

The first thing on the program Monday was a hundred-yard dash for the record. We entered Sam Hyde. Then there was a kick. Some said they would not run against a tenderfoot and a college man. So there were only five entries. Hyde won easily.

Next was a half-mile with a dozen starters. Dug Ward had a walk-away. It must be understood that a man raised in the saddle is not much of a foot racer.

The next was, "Who could catch a jack rabbit?"

The spectators were arranged in a circle to make a pen, so the rabbits could not escape; and each boy who was going to do the catching was given a rabbit to turn loose in the center of the ring. At a signal they were to go after them. Each rabbit had a different colored ribbon around his neck, so each boy would know his own animal. I thought I was the only one who could do that trick, and I won by only a second.

Then we all went to camp and had dinner. Well, I guess our chef, Hamil, did a good job, even if he was raised in a cotton field way down in Dixie.

First thing after dinner was a roping contest for the girls. We had only six coyotes, so the contestants were limited to six girls in each round. After the girls

were mounted and ready, the coyotes were brought up. The open prairie was to be the field, and if any girl let her coyote get away she would be barred out of all the other contests. The coyotes were given fifty yards start, and I want to say that it was the finest game I ever saw. I have forgotten their names, but a cowgirl won first prize, and an army officer's daughter won second. All six of the girls brought in a Mr. Coyote.

There is no use for me to tell you about the pony races. You have all seen them. Then we began to put up a little cash on who was the best rider. One old outlaw horse after another was brought in, and some boy from a different ranch soon had him in good working order. After the horses had all been ridden, a big steer was brought up. One of the boys mounted him, and the fun commenced. One after the other went to the grass in short order. The last steer was brought up and the rider got on with his face to the back, locked his legs under the steer's flank, grabbed his tail, and that was surely a funny ride, or at least everyone said it was worth the money. When Mr. Steer could not throw him off, the rider offered to bet ten dollars he could ride anything that wore hair. Some of the boys from farther West had roped a wild buffalo and brought him along, expecting just such a talk would be made. The bet was raised several times, and Mr. Buffalo was brought up. Mr. Man showed he was game. He stayed a while, but finally went to the grass.

Then we had dog fights, dog and badger fights, and several bull fights. In the final shooting contest a girl won first money; and in the cattle roping contest there were lots of good ropers, but none made a quick catch like I have seen since.

Take it all around, we had a grand time.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE ROUND-UP—A CRAZY COWBOY—FIGHT
WITH THE CHEYENNE INDIANS—THE BLOODY
TRAIL ACROSS KANSAS—DEATH OF COLONEL LEWIS.

About the first of August we got orders to get ready for the round-up. Concho, Texas Jack, Sugarfoot, Sam Hyde, Dug Ward, the cook and Willie, with the chuck wagon and several extra horses apiece, were ordered to cross the Canadian River and to work out all that country between the north and south Canadian rivers.

Jim Hamil was left in charge of the wood camp, and all the boys who had got married were left with him. We had orders to co-operate with any other cow outfit that we might meet with, and if we needed any additional help we were to send to Supply or the wood camp.

We worked down the south side of the river, and had all kinds of fun and hard riding. Our cook was a tender-foot good and plentiful, and the rest of the boys had quite a lot of fun with him. He was a happy-go-lucky, good natured sort of a young man, willing to do anything to help along, and this got him into lots of trouble. He claimed to be a foot-racer. One evening we camped a little early, on account of plenty of wood and water. One of the boys said we ought to try the cook out to see if he would stand without hitching, and it was a good thing we did, as it afterwards proved. Of course, we had him filled up with stories about Indians, wild animals, bad men. We told

him how a cowboy would sometimes go crazy after being bitten by a skunk, and how during these spells he would get his gun, start a rough camp, and end up by killing some of the other boys. Nobody, we said, was allowed to hurt him, but he had to be roped and tied until he got relief. Concho was selected as the boy who should throw a fit or two for practice.

Just before sundown we all left, Concho started out by saying that he felt rather queer; his head ached, and pretty soon he commenced to act funny, began to jump around and yell as loud as he could. Suddenly pulling out his gun, he commenced to shoot at the cooks' feet, at the same time telling him he would give him a rabbit's chance to get away alive, or he could dance.

The cook knew that Concho was a good shot, and decided he would take a chance on getting hold of the gun, or waiting until the rest of us got back to camp to help him out.

The cook was not much of a dancer, but he did the best he could, and for about fifteen minutes the way he hammered the ground was not slow. Then Concho's cartridges ran out, and the cook grabbed him. Concho was the more active and stouter of the two, but the cook was doing his best to keep him from getting at his knife, thinking all the time the rest of us would hear the shooting and hurry back to camp. For fifteen minutes it was a rough and tumble to see if he could hold him. Finally Concho got loose and started to run. Just then we showed up, and began to yell at the cook to catch Concho, or he might jump into the creek and get drowned. For the next few minutes it was a race for life; Concho in the lead,

the cook after him, and the rest of us doing the best we could not to catch up with them. The cook soon caught up and pounced on to Concho, and at it they went the second time. Just as we got to them Concho gave a sudden lunge and over the creek bank he went. There was only about two feet of water in the creek. Concho was working him across the creek, and we were yelling at the cook to bring him out. Finally one of the boys threw a rope on them; we all grabbed the rope and pulled them out. Concho managed to keep the cook under water most of the time, and when we got them out on the bank, the cook was squirting water like a fire hose.

When we got back to camp we gave them a few doses of snake medicine, and by morning they were all right and ready for something else.

About a week after that we were camped on the head of a little creek that ran into the South Canadian. Sometime after midnight the coyotes turned loose; and two coyotes can make more noise than any half-dozen other animals on earth. They woke us all up and, to make matters worse, there happened to be a skunk or two prowling around in camp, hunting something to eat. It sometimes happens that a skunk through hunger or pure cussedness will attack a man after night. Then there are several things the man can do—get up on the chuck wagon, or climb a tree if there is one handy, or make a run, or fight it out with the skunk on the ground. Skunks are said to go mad, like dogs, and then they will jump you for a fight. If they bite you, you will go mad yourself, the same as you would if bitten by a mad dog. Personally,

I never knew of any one being bitten by either a mad dog or a skunk:

That night some one yelled "Skunk in camp, look out for him, run up a tree." Sam Hyde and the cook went up a tree in a hurry, and stayed there till morning.

We worked west on the north side of the South Canadian River until sometime in August, gathering what cattle we could find and branding a few calves.

We aimed to keep abreast of the chuck wagon; two of us on each side, and the other two would drive what cattle we had. In that way we would scour out a strip of country, ten or fifteen miles wide, and if we would run on to any signs we would even go further than that.

When we got within about fifteen or twenty miles of the Antelope Hills we turned north, intending to cross Wolf Creek and go from there to the Home Ranch. The understanding with us when we started out in the morning was, not to move camp at noon, until we all came in, so we could keep tab on each other.

Sam Hyde and I usually worked together; the other boys worked to suit themselves. After we turned north we traveled slowly, as we had more territory to cover, and every day added a few more cattle to our bunch. Sometimes the young calves would have to have a lift, and the boys with the herd would load them into the chuck wagon. Then you ought to hear the cook pray and say things that would not look good in print. A calf suddenly taken away from its mother can make almost as much noise as a coyote, and when the boys would get five or ten calves in the chuck wagon and they would all turn loose at the same time, with their mothers trailing along behind or on the

side, doing their best to wake the dead, it certainly was a fright. Is it any wonder that all sheep herders and some cooks for cow outfits go crazy?

Now, after thirty-five years have passed, when I visit the photo plays and see the cowboys, the cowgirls, the bad men and the Indians cutting a few rusties on a lot of old plug horses, carrying up-to-date guns and wearing their six-shooters hanging between their legs, I have to laugh.

Sometimes the film company will get a sure-enough cowboy and a cow horse. When I see them, it puts me to thinking of the good old cattle days thirty or forty years ago, when I was a kid out at Dodge City.

About halfway between the two Canadian rivers Sam and I struck a lot of fresh signs. We followed them up and found several head of cattle, and about 4:00 P. M. when we got within hearing distance of camp, we could hear many gun shots. We turned the cattle loose and cut out for camp as fast as our ponies could carry us, we well knowing there was something wrong in camp. Riding over a hill, we ran right into six or eight Indians. It took only an instant to see that the camp was being attacked, and that the boys were giving the redskins the best they had in the shop. Sam and I charged the Indians between the camp and us, and the way we made our guns crack was a caution. The Indians, thinking there were more of us coming, started on the run to catch up with the rest of the tribe that had gone on north. When we reached camp, Texas Jack and Sugarfoot were wounded, and Concho had one arm in a sling. Dug Ward and the cook got off with a few close calls. Several horses were killed, and

the rest of the horses and cattle were scattered. We caught the mules, put the wounded boys in the wagon, and by sunrise next morning we were in Camp Supply.

Here is the story of the fight as the boys told it to me that night, while we were going to Supply: "While we were in camp eating dinner, about 12:30, fifteen or twenty Indians attacked our camp and the fight commenced. Sugarfoot was hit in a few minutes. They kept up a running fire all afternoon. The cook showed that he could fight, and when Sugarfoot was hit he took his gun and helped out. That made four who kept up the fight. About three o'clock Texas Jack was hit; a little later Concho was hit." That left Dug Ward, the cook, and Concho with one arm, to continue the fight, and when we arrived there were only about ten or twelve red warriors left.

When we arrived at Supply we found that the Northern Cheyenne Indians had left the reservation and started north, and that it was some of them that struck our camp, with results as stated. After we got to Supply and did what we could for the three boys, Dug Ward, Sam Hyde and Willie went on six miles north to the Devil's Gap where about thirty or thirty-five cowboys had the main bunch of Indians in a Cedar Canyon and were holding them there, waiting for the soldiers at Supply to come and help capture them.

That evening Major Hambright came to our help with five companies of infantry. About sundown the soldiers went back to Supply. That night the Indians got away from the cowboys and went on north. Charley Sringo, in his book, "A Texas Cowboy," tells about running into

the same Indians on Crooked Creek, about twenty-five miles southwest of Dodge City.

I don't know how many they killed in their raid across western Kansas, but they certainly left a bloody trail, as there were lots of settlers in western Kansas at that time. They killed Colonel Lewis of the 19th Infantry on Witeh Woman Creek, north of the K. P. railroad. Major Ham-bright was court-martialed and dismissed from the United States Army for not capturing them at Supply. After a running fight, those of them who were left were captured in Nebraska or Wyoming, and seven of the leaders were brought to Dodge City and put in jail, where they were kept quite a while. They were finally sent back to the Reservation.

Just how it happened that seventy-five or one hundred Indian warriors, with all their women and children and camp equipage, could raid across a thousand miles of country, past five or six forts, with several thousand soldiers and a world of Buffalo Bill scouts, across three railroads, killing twice their number of white men, women and children, is more than the average man can understand. I thought at the time and I think yet, that the United States regular army ought to be put to work at building good roads, or something which they could do. Whenever there is any fighting to be done, it's the volunteer citizen soldier that goes to the front, and you will find him on the firing line every time. It was a Colonel in the regular army that dug the Panama Canal, after several would-be political road overseers had made a botch of it. I know it would be a good scheme if the powers-that-be would tell Fred Funston at Vera Cruz to cut all wires, then

pull out for Mexico City and capture Huerta, and be sure and give him a large dose of the same kind of medicine that Huerta gave President Madero. Put Villa in charge, come back to the United States and show the people how to build a few good roads.

CHAPTER X.

STUCK UP BY A HIGHWAYMAN—A HACKDRIVER AND
A BARBER—BITTEN BY A DEADLY TARANTULA—
THE INDIAN DOG FEAST—STORIES TOLD AROUND
THE CAMP FIRE.

Were you ever stuck up on the business end of a gun when a man with a bad eye was at the other end of it? If you ever were, you can imagine how I felt one time when I was working for the Lee-Scott Cattle Company.

I was riding along one hot day, about half asleep, thinking about my little sweetheart in Kansas, when I was brought to a standstill by the command of "Hands up!" It's remarkable how a man's hand will go up when he looks into the business end of two big six-shooters. The bullets in them looked as large as salt barrels to me, and if one of those fellows had been a little nervous or excited, and had touched the trigger just a little bit, I guess you never would have heard of little Willie Jones. One of the men got off his pony and came up to me, unbuckled my belt and went through my pockets. He took about \$80.00—all that I had. They then went on their way to hunt up another cowboy that was half asleep. You can guess the result when a lot of us fellows ran on to one of these men a few years later. If anybody remembers of losing a friend by the name of Pross. E. Howerton, I can tell you where his bones are located. "Horse and

Cattle Thief" was the sign posted on a telegraph pole near by:

I have been held up hundreds of times since, but never in such a gentlemanly manner. The way you get held up in the city is so raw that a hungry coyote out in No Man's Land would not be guilty of such an act.

The first time I went to Kansas City I did not know that you could take a street car and ride to any part of the city for a nickel. I wanted to go to the Blossom Hotel. I gave a hackman one dollar and got in. After riding around for five minutes or less, he stopped in front of the hotel. I went in and stayed all night. Next morning when I went out on the street in front of the hotel, there stood the Union Depot right across the street, just forty feet from the hotel. Kind reader, were you ever held up that way?

The next place I visited was a barber shop. I had a haircut, a shampoo, a shave and a shoeshine. When the barber was through I handed the boss a five dollar bill.

"Two dollars more, please," said the barber.

"What?"

"Two dollars more. This is Sunday and we always charge extra on holidays and Sundays. You can read our prices on the card hanging right over there."

Out west you always cut a notch in your gun-stock, and the rest of the boys give you a gold medal, for killing a highwayman. In Chicago they give you a trial and send you to the Bridewell for life, or hang you, as the trial judge thinks best.

We branded 43,000 calves for the Lee-Scott Cattle Company that season.

While I was working for Lee and Reynolds one summer, we had a young fellow in the outfit we called Big Jim. He was not lazy, but he just had a way of letting the other boys do the work. We decided at a council of war that we would break Jim of the habit of laying down under the chuck wagon every time it was in camp. One hot day he took off his boots and sox and rolled up his pants and drawers, so his feet would cool off while the cook was getting dinner. Then we all got busy. I was considered the best all-around trouble man in the bunch. When I was a young fellow on the farm, I had read the life of Jesus Christ, John A. Murrell, Fanny White, Hoyle, Dr. Chase's Recipe Book, Ten Thousand Things Worth Knowing, Gleeson on the Horse, The Silent Friend, sixth and seventh books of Moses, Dr. Gunn, and several others that I have forgotten. I was considered an authority on any question that might come up between the boys. While some of the boys were out after a tarantula, the bite of which is said to be sure death, I was making medicine to cure Jim. When the boys got back to camp with a big tarantula they killed him and laid him down close to Jim's leg. Then they got a pin and fastened it in the end of a stick and when everything was ready, Dad Williams gave Jim two or three in the calf of his leg with that pin. That brought Jim up in a hurry. Some of the boys put their foot on that tarantula and mashed it, and we made him believe that he had been bitten by that tarantula. As Jim and I were good friends, he came to me to be doctored. I told Jim that it was a bad case, and he wanted me to do something to save him. The first thing I gave him was a pint of bear's oil that one of the boys had.

That started some of the poison. Then I gave him a package of soda, then a half teacup full of vinegar—that brought up a lot more of the poison, then a quart of water that I had been soaking a ten-cent cut of tobacco in. By that time we had the poison out, and Jim was about as sick a boy as ever lived to tell about being bitten by a tarantula. About that time his brother got back from a road ranch with a two-gallon jug of whiskey. I gave him a little whiskey to bring him back. The rest of the gang drank the whiskey at Jim's expense. Jim always believed that he was sure bit, and he thought I was a wonderful doctor to save him, away out in the prairie, miles away from a sure-enough doctor. Jim is living in Oklahoma, where he owns a section of fine land.

One summer, while I was home, a lot of us fellows went down to the Kaw Indian agency, and while we were there the Indians had some kind of a feast, and they wanted us to join in and have a good time. We did and such a supper! They had a new kind of meat, or they had cooked it in a different way than I had been used to, and I ate pretty heartily of it; for it was cooked good and done, just to suit me. Some one told us the next day that we had been to an Indian dog feast, and we found out for sure that we had eaten several dogs that night. I was ashamed to look a dog in the face for a year after that, and Big Jim got so he could beat a dog when it came to barking.

When I was a very young fellow, on the farm, I used to see the soldiers of the Civil War days pass and repass our house very often. One day the Johnnies would be chasing the Yankees and the next day the Yankees would

be chasing the Johnnies; and as my older relatives were on both sides, we were visited pretty often, first by one side and then by the other. I think that at one time or another, during the war, every one of Quantrel's men stopped at our house, mostly to see if we had a horse they could use, or to take a shot or two at daddy, if they could catch him at home. I used to stand around with my eyes and mouth open, listening to them tell stories about this thing and that, and I wondered if I would ever be old enough to be a soldier. My folks came from northern Ireland about two hundred years ago and settled in Virginia; then they come on down the line, through Kentucky and into Missouri.

└ STORIES TOLD AROUND THE CAMP FIRE

Buffalo Bill and I were out hunting bear one time in Oregon. "Quit your kiddin', Prairie Dog Dave." Sure we were out hunting bear, when all at once we ran right into an old grizzly bear with two half-grown cubs, not thirty feet distant. We both fired our twenty-two target rifles, so close together that it sounded like one report. Both the cubs flopped over, gave a kick or two and were dead. That old bear rushed us before we could shoot the second time, and before I could turn to run she was on me.

"Say, Dave, why didn't you shoot the old bear first?"

"I thought that Buffalo Bill would kill the old one and I would get one of the cubs, and he thought I would shoot the old bear and he would get one of the cubs. Before I could say Jack Robinson that old bear had me down on the ground, looking into my pockets to see if I had any letters from my sweetheart.

"Say, Dave, did Buffalo Bill run off and leave you?"

"No, he did not. He just sat down on a log, took off one of his sox, filled it with sawdust, grabbed that old bear by the tail, held her out at arm's length, and beat her to death in a jiffy."

"Dave, did you say that was a grizzly bear?"

"Sure, I said so."

"Dave, how much did that bear weight?"

"We got a fence rail, tied her feet together, hung her and the cubs on the rail, put the rail on our shoulders, carried them to our camp, dressed her, and she weighed 1037½ pounds."

"How far was you from camp, Dave?"

"Four miles."

"And you say that you and Buffalo Bill carried that old bear and two cubs four miles? And you said that the three of them weighed over two thousand pounds?"

"Sure, I said so."

* * * * *

Buffalo Bill, Pawnee Bill, and Three Dollar Bill were out scouting in Colorado, on the hunt of a war party of Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians that were said to have captured a Mormon emigrant who was going from St. Joseph, Mo., to Salt Lake City. All at once the three Bills stopped and sniffed the air to see if they could locate their camp.

"There it is," said Buffalo Bill, "just in the edge of that clump of timber, and it is just ten miles to their camp."

"Yes," said Pawnee Bill, "and they are in the center of the clump. That makes them ten miles and a half from here."

"No," said Three Dollar Bill. "They are on the farther side of the clump, and that makes them eleven miles away, and there are three hundred of the braves. Do you think we had better wait until night before we attempt to rescue the Mormons?"

"Yes," said Buffalo Bill. "We will wait until just before the moon comes up. Then we will slip in and rescue them, and by the time we can get those emigrants together the moon will be up, so we can be off about ten."

That night the three Bills slipped into the Indian camp and had no trouble in locating the Mormons. Buffalo Bill put the seventeen women on his pony and started for Ft. Hays, Kansas. Pawnee Bill gathered up the fifty-one kids, put them on his pony and started after Buffalo Bill. Three Dollar Bill was to trail along behind and keep a lookout for the Indians, in case they should attempt to recapture them. That old Mormon was so tickled over his capture that he just stayed in the Indian camp, and was captured three years later by some cowboys and hanged for stealing horses.

The three Bills had gone about five miles when they discovered that the Indians were on their trail. Buffalo Bill and Pawnee Bill whipped up the ponies into a good fast dog trot, and Three Dollar Bill dropped behind to stand the Indians off. As quick as the Indians got within gunshot, Three Dollar Bill began to shoot. His shots were so accurate and deadly that you could have jumped from one dead Indian to another for four miles.

"What became of that Mormon's wives, Texas Jack?"

"They all married soldier boys at Ft. Hays and lived happily ever afterwards as company laundresses."

"Next man on the program," said Big Jim. "Say, 'Old-Man-Afraid-of-His-Squaws,' tell us when and where you were killed and scalped by the Indians."

"Well, boys," commenced the man with the jaw-breaking name, "you know that I was not killed, I only thought so, but I was scalped all right, as you can see for yourselves."

"It's funny," said one of the boys, "that we have worked together for a long time and never knew you was scalped by the Indians."

"In 1877 we were hunting buffalo out on the Staked Plains, when we were rounded up by the Apaches, and the fight started.

"I went to a little creek after a bucket of water, when the Indians cut me off from camp, and I was shot and scalped before the other boys could get to me. I was carried to camp and the boys turned in and fixed me up the best they could. They killed our dog, cut off some of his hide and fit it to my head, bandaged it up, and in six weeks I was all right, as you can see by looking at my hair."

Deacon White will now lead in singing the doxology:

"And now we are across the Brazos,
And homeward we are bound;
No more in that cursed country
Will ever we be found;
We will go home to our wives and sweethearts
Tell others not to go
To that God forsaken cactus country
Way out in Mexico.

“We lived on sage brush, buffalo hump,
And a lot of sour dough bread;
Strong coffee and alkali water to drink,
And a bull hide for a bed;
The way the mosquitoes and graybacks worked
On us was not so slow,
God grant there’s no worse place on earth
Than among the buffalo.”

* * * * *

“The mosquitoes down on the Canadian River, in the Indian Territory, are supposed to be rather large, and they certainly are fierce,” remarked Big Jim, when we were camped on the head waters of the Rio Grande River in Colorado.

“Boys, you know that I was raised down in the Mississippi River bottoms, where the mosquitoes grow to perfection; so you see I am a judge of mosquitoes and know what I am talking about.

“While we were in the wood camp, down on the Canadian River, we had a man in the bunch who said he was proof against any mosquitoes that ever lived. He said that any man who used as much tobacco as he did was not bothered very much by mosquitoes or other such things as you will always find in a cow camp; and he offered to bet five dollars that he could lay down any place the boys would select, and remain there for an hour without moving or batting an eye. We took the bet and selected a place down in the bottom, about four or five feet from a big ant nest. Everybody that knows anything about the big red ants in Kansas, No Man’s Land and

Texas, will tell you that they can bite about as hard as a big rat, and twice as fast, and when they get riled up they will attack anything they can reach. After it got dark we started out to give him a trial. When we got to the spot selected, he took off all his clothing and lay down on his face. The way the mosquitoes settled on that man, and the way they bit, sucked blood and gorged themselves was a caution; but Mister Man showed the boys that he was game. At the end of thirty minutes he was a much bitten man. Then some of the boys took a stick and began to pry open that ant nest. The ants came out by the hundreds and soon discovered the cause of their trouble. When the first one bit, the man flinched a little, set his teeth hard together and said 'That fellow was certainly a cracker-jack.' Just then about a dozen bit him at once, and he began to squirm a little and wanted to know if there were any bumble bees around. By that time there were about a hundred or more ants biting him. That was more than any man could stand. Up he jumped and started for camp on the run. He was laid up for a week. He always accused the boys of selecting a place close to a hornet's nest."

* * * * *

"Say, kid, you promised to tell us about the Mormons. You told us you were born and raised in Utah, now let us have one from you. It's your turn."

"Bet your life I'm a Mormon and I am proud of it, too," remarked the young man called the "Salt Lake Kid."

"Before I start to tell you about the Mormons, I want to say that I am going to tell you the truth and

nothing but the truth, so help me Brigham Young, just as I saw it.

"My people were all Mormons, and lucky or unlucky for me, I am the oldest of my father's kids, and my mother is the first wife. A man in Utah is limited as to the number of wives he may have. Twenty-five is the highest number any man can have, and the number gets less, according to who you are. But in addition to his legal wives, he can have all the proxies he wants or needs in his business.

"My father had fifteen wives and fifteen proxies. If one of your wives dies you are supposed to marry one of the proxies; then you can get a few more young women as second wives or proxies if you want to, and we always want to.

"We lived on a big farm, and in addition to the farm, we had a big ranch where we raised lots of horses, cattle and sheep. As I was the oldest boy I was started out as a kid herder. I was promoted to a sheep herder at ten, and was a full-fledged cowboy at fifteen."

"What's a kid herder? And did you raise goats, too?" "Goats, nothing," said the kid. "You know that we call children, kids out there."

"How many brothers and sisters did you have, anyway?" I wanted to know.

"Say, Bill, you know that when I went to work with you fellows fifty was all I could count, and I had a lot more brothers and sisters than I could count."

"When you would take them out to herd, how would you know how many to bring in at night?" "When I would start out I would take a stick and cut a notch in it, like a gun man does when he kills another man. Say,

boys, it's some fun to herd a bunch of kids ranging in age from a yearling to a ten-year old. Did any of you boys ever have a job herding a bunch of dogies?"

"What's a dogie?" one of the tenderfeet wanted to know.

"I started to tell about the Mormons," said the kid.

"Go ahead and tell the boys about a dogie," said Whiskers. "Well, a dogie is a tenderfoot, and it don't make any difference whether he walks on two legs or four. I will tell you about the four-legged kind," said the kid. "When father went to Utah there was very little stock of any kind there, so he would go back to the States and buy a train load of calves from the farmers, ship them home and turn them loose on the range. Now, a calf raised on a farm don't savey the range any better than a boy raised in a city. For down-right misery, and for a nerve wrecking job, a bunch of dogies is the limit. Take my word for it, boys, if you are ever caught out in a howling wilderness, with a bunch of dogies or a bunch of Mormon kids, the bug house is not far away for you. Sheep herding is a picnic in comparison, for the reason that the sheep will stick together.

"I remember having two thousand sheep out, the summer I was sixteen years old, and we drifted to the railroad, when along comes a freight train making about eight miles an hour. The old bell wether that was the leader took a notion to cross the track ahead of the train and every blamed one of them sheep started to follow him. Well, so help me Brigham Young, if that wasn't the worst mixup I ever saw. The air was full of flying sheep, and sheep were jammed into that engine and cars wherever a sheep

could stick his head. When the train came to a stop, sheep were still crossing the track, under the cars, and it took the train crew two hours to get the dead sheep out of the engine so they could go on.

"After I got the bunch rounded up and got them to grazing again I went back to see the wreck of sheep. A section boss and his gang were cleaning the road and counting the dead sheep."

"Say, kid, you started out to tell us about the Mormons."

"Well, herding a bunch of Mormon kids has its drawbacks, like herding dogies and sheep, only it's more like dogies or worse.

"In the summer season, when the wild strawberries were ripe, I would have to take the bunch out on the prairies to let them fill up on the wild strawberries, and that was when the trouble started. Every blamed one of them kids had a notion in his head that the best strawberries were at least half a mile away from where he was at, and the kids would all start in a different direction at the same time. Then I would have to put in some hard running to gather them together and get them home by sundown.

"Say, kids, did any of youse ever have the job of driving the calf wagon up the trail?" the kid wanted to know. "One day I had all the kids out in the prairie, when one of these sudden rain storms came up so quick that I had no time to get them home. All I could do was to round them up like a bunch of calves, and, of course, they all began to squall at the same time; it beats a wagon load of

calves or even a drove of coyotes. Honest to Brigham it does." >

* * * * *

Colonel George Reynolds of Dodge City had a pet buffalo that ran around town and got into all kinds of meanness. He was harmless, and you would not think he was much of a joker; but he played a good many jokes on strangers that stopped off at Dodge. He seemed to know a stranger as far as he could see him, and if he had a chance he would give Mr. Man a run for his money.

One day the Simond's Comedy Company was billed to play in the Opera House, and as they had their own band, they gave a street parade, as is customary with bands accompanying theatrical troupes. When the band reached that part of town where Mr. Buffalo was, he did not like the looks of it. The big hat of the band master did no appeal to him in the least. So after that band he went. I don't think any of the band boys had ever seen a buffalo before. The first thing he did was to charge at them. They made themselves scarce in a hurry. Some went up a telephone pole, some climbed over a high board fence, some went into the ditch, and some ducked under a culvert near by. A lot of little boys that were following the band got some sticks and chased him away. Then the band boys got together, but they did not attempt to parade in that part of town again that week.

One day that buffalo caused more excitement and fun in Dodge than all the buffalo hunters, freighters and cowboys put together. Mr. Buffalo had a habit of going into any yard in the city and helping himself to anything that suited his taste. He was gentle and docile, but he

had such a curiosity to see what was in other people's back yards that he made a nuisance of himself. Lots of women kept tea-kettles full of hot water for his benefit, and most of his hair was scalded until it came off. Still, that did not keep him out of other people's yards.

One day when he was going through everything he could find he discovered a salt-barrel in a back yard, with a few cabbage leaves and a little salt in the bottom. It was too tempting for him to pass without trying it. He rammed his head down in the barrel to get at the cabbage leaves, and when he raised his head up, of course, he raised the barrel, too. Now that was something new to him. About that time some one threw a bucket of hot water on him, and the fun started. He ran over everybody and everything that got in his way. He finally reached the street, and down town he went, through several fences, against several houses. He ran into a wagon, over a buggy, and finally into a millinery store on Bridge Street. Of course, all the girls that were working there and all the lady customers had seen that buffalo hundreds of times; but they had never before seen him with a barrel stuck on his head. They all gave a scream or two, and out of the back door they went. For a few moments he had that store all to himself. He did quite a lot of damage to the show cases and the millinery goods, and then out at the back door he went, just as the last woman disappeared over a high board fence in the rear of the store. Not long after that Mr. Buffalo disappeared for good and Dodge was rid of one nuisance.

CHAPTER XI

THE MIRAGE

"What's this thing you call a mirage?" inquired a tenderfoot one evening as we were sitting around the camp fire smoking and telling stories.

"Well," I said, "I'll do my best to explain it, but only a good descriptive writer could do the subject justice."

"What's a descriptive writer?" chimed in several of the boys, all at once.

"Well, boys," I answered, "a descriptive writer is one who has enough brains and education to pick you up and take you with him into the realm of imagination, and making you see beautiful, thing as he sees them. I cannot do this, for I do not have the education. I only went to school three months, and that was at a little log school house that stood in the timber, three miles from our home. Lots of times I would start out for school early in the morning and meet myself coming home about sundown without having seen the school-house or the teacher. What a world of youthful memories come back to me when I think of that little old log school-house of long ago

"Suppose we take a little excursion back up the River of Time, back to the place where the spring of youth leaped in joy and rippled over the rocks with laughter and song. We didn't think so much about it then, but how beautiful were the wild-flowers that lined the banks, and how clear was the water, and how blue was the sky. Back

to the old-fashioned desks with the puncheon seats. Back to the curley-locked, rosy-cheeked girl—the little sweetheart of Auld Lang Syne. Back to the days when there were no school-bells to sound like a funeral dirge. When ‘recess’ was over, the teacher would appear in the door-way and clap her hands and call ‘Books, books—come to books.’ Back to the days when we were a lot of joyous children, without a care.

“I remember very well my first teacher, Miss Becky Morton. She taught me my A-B-C’s. I suppose she and the great majority of my playmates of those days are sleeping in their graves. It is very pleasant, though, to recall them in our memories.

“In those days about all the book we had was Webster’s old blue-backed speller, that told about Old Dog Tray, and the meadow larks; and, if a kid got so he could spell ‘baker’ by the time he was old enough to split rails in the winter and plow corn in the summer, he was thought to have ‘right smart education.’

“Now, as I said before, a descriptive writer must have some education; at least he must know a good deal about language and know how to use it. Lots of us can see and appreciate beautiful things, but when it comes to describing them we are up against it good and proper.

“If I were a good descriptive writer I could tell you some wonderful things about the mirages we used to see on the plains. I suppose they were optical illusions—that’s what the scientists say. But they certainly did look like the real thing to us, and they surely did fool us till we got used to them. And even then we could hardly keep from believing they were real scenes, from some other part of

the world, being reproduced before our eyes in some mysterious and wonderful way.

"I have seen the most beautiful lakes just above the horizon, with water so clear and sparkling that I could almost taste it.

"I have seen beautiful islands in these lakes all covered with trees and shrubs and flowers.

"I have seen immense mountains covered with snow, their peaks lost in the clouds.

"I have seen magnificent forests, with every variety of tone and color, from deepest green to almost black; forests of evergreens and cedars, of magnolia and live oak, sometimes with mistletoe and festoons of moss hanging from the boughs.

"I have seen great rivers flowing majestically to the sea, their banks lined with flowers of infinite hue.

"I have seen ships sailing, apparently from every maritime nation under the sun, crossing and recrossing the horizon, appearing and disappearing, and then appearing again.

"I have seen soldiers marching and counter-marching, their burnished gun-barrels glistening like shining shafts of silver.

"I have seen orange and lemon groves, their golden fruit hanging in great clusters.

"I have seen, as it seemed to me, the Land of the Midnight Sun, with its eternal snows and its awful silence.

"I have seen splendid cities, with cathedrals and palaces and towers shining in the morning sunlight, like gorgeous temples of the New Jerusalem.

"All this I have seen, and more; and any one who

lived in Kansas in those early days will tell you, as I do, that those sky-pictures, whatever may have caused them, were magnificent beyond any words that might be spoken or written. If, as some say, they were the work of the imagination, then I must say that I have the highest respect for my imagination.

"A peculiar thing about mirages is that they are always a few miles away—not many, just enough to tempt you to go on, and on, and on. Like the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow, the water and fruit of the mirage are his who can reach them; but, alas, no one can reach them. Many a thirsty traveler has been fooled into losing his life by believing what the mirage told him and following its beckoning hand. Many a weary wanderer has become exhausted and lain down never to rise again, the illusive mirage dancing before his eyes and mocking him even in death. It was as cruel as it was beautiful, and had no mercy on its countless victims."

The mirage, like the cowboy, the wild Indian and the buffalo, is a thing of the past. You will not see it in Kansas now. The matter-of-fact settler came, with his plow, his patent stump-puller, his reaping and threshing machines, his wife and children, and various other implements of civilization, and Romance moved on to other places more secluded. Kansas is now a great commonwealth of busy people, given over to wheat and politics, and the mirage, the most wonderful of artists, the most skillful of sculptors, the most exquisite of painters, and the most illusive of earthly glories, has passed away. forever.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DIAMOND ARROW RANCH—TEACHING A CITY GIRL TO RIDE AND SHOOT—A THRILLING NIGHT RIDE OVER THE MOUNTAINS—KILLING A MOUNTAIN LION—TOO LATE.

Out on the Great American Desert, but well up to the foothills of that rugged chain of mountains which leaves the main range between Trinidad, Colorado, and Raton, New Mexico, known locally as the Raton Range, not far from where Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas corner, or nearly so—it was there that Colonel Howard located his Diamond Arrow Cattle Ranch.

It was a fine location. There were no other large ranches near and the pasture ranges were both extensive and good. The only neighbors were a few Mexican "greasers" scattered over the surrounding hills and valleys who engaged in the cattle and sheep business in a small way. They were not agreeable neighbors, to be sure for they were veteran stock thieves, and were very handy with their guns when it suited their purpose. Like most "bad men," however, they were dangerous only when they could take a sneaking advantage. They never engaged in a square, stand-up gun-fight if they could possibly avoid it.

Colonel Howard was a man of some note—in fact, an F. F. V.; for he was a Virginian by birth and related to some of the best and most influential families of his native state. He was a man of considerable wealth and came

prepared to spend a large amount of money in establishing and developing his ranch. It was well he did so, for, as he proposed to make it a permanent ranch headquarters, a lot of money was needed. Corrals had to be built, houses and stables put up, and other heavy expenses incurred, which were absolutely necessary in establishing and putting into operation a well-regulated ranch. Not only so, but as a ranch without an outlet is something like a house without a door, a trail had to be built out to Trinidad, the nearest railroad point, more than a hundred miles to the west. But the Colonel's investment, as well as his foresight, was eventually justified, for in time the Diamond Arrow became the leading ranch in that part of the Southwest. Sometime in the eighties Mr. Howard sold out to an English cattle company for a good round sum, and the name of the ranch was changed.

It was a bright, sunshiny morning in May when Sam Hyde and I rode up to the Diamond Arrow ranch, looking for work. We were a fine pair, Sam and I. He was known as the Millionaire Cowboy from New York, while I had never been known as a millionaire from anywhere. But from the day he arrived at our rendezvous camp at Supply, nearly dead with asthma, and I put him to work at washing dishes, he and I had been just like twin brothers. He had regained his health, and as I had never lost mine, we were as brawny a couple of cowboys as you would find west of the Missouri.

In the good old days of cattle ranching, if there were no one about the ranch when he arrived, a man was expected to dismount and help himself to anything he wanted, in the shape of food for himself and pony. He

should just walk in and make himself at home until the owner returned. No experienced cowboy would offer to pay for such accommodations, knowing the shock might prove fatal to the owner. Being veterans, Sam and I never made that mistake.

Just before nightfall Mr. Howard returned from Trinidad, bringing his wife and little children with him. This was Mrs. Howard's first visit to the ranch, which was to be her home from now on. Soon the men came in from work, and we all gathered around Mr. Howard to listen to his account of the trip to Trinidad. The men found certain sundry articles in his wagon which seemed to please them amazingly.

Sam and I were not long in coming to an understanding with Mr. Howard. He employed us for the season, and we went to work with the other men the next morning.

The foreman, known as Curley, had come with the first bunch of cattle that arrived at the ranch. He was a very agreeable boss, which is more than can be said of a good many foremen, but he was full of business.

The work was hard and there was plenty of it; but we liked it, and that was the main thing. There is always more or less danger in handling cattle, and the cowboy must be on his guard every minute; for, as in other walks of life, the unexpected is very liable to happen, and it usually happens just when you are not looking for it. We were all experts in the use of ropes and branding-irons and in the handling of ponies, and there was always more or less friendly rivalry going on.

There was some diversion in the way of hunting. The country was well supplied with all kinds of wild game.

Mountain lions, panthers, wild cats and antelope were plentiful, and coyotes were too numerous to take notice of. There were a few lobo wolves, and now and then a buffalo would come within range of our rifles. Rattlesnakes, centipedes and tarantulas were sufficiently numerous to make life interesting.

The arrival of visitors is always an exciting episode at a ranch. It relieves the monotony and opens up a world of speculation and possibilities. Especially if there is a pretty young lady or two among the arrivals, the interest is vastly increased. Cowboys are human, and whatever may be their shortcomings in other respects, as a class they have a profound respect for virtuous womanhood. No doubt this is largely due to the fact that their lives are so isolated and that they see so little of female society.

Toward the end of July Mrs. Johnson, a sister of Mrs. Howard, arrived at the ranch for a month's outing. This in itself was a circumstance of interest, but the interest was vastly increased by the fact that she brought with her her twenty-year-old daughter, Miss May.

They were people of importance, as we soon learned, being the wife and daughter of the Governor of the State in which they lived. Miss May was decidedly good-looking, plump, rather athletic in build, dark-haired, rosy-mouthed, and with eyes that somehow appealed to you; you could hardly tell why. This was the ladies' first introduction to ranch life and, of course, they were full of all kinds of expectations and anticipations. Miss May especially was eager for "wild west" experiences. She must have a pony and a saddle and a gun, and wanted to

plunge right into business by helping the boys rope and brand calves.

Of course, we were all very much interested in Miss May, and anxious to appear to good advantage when in her presence—not that we wished to “show off” especially; but we naturally felt that her approval would be a fine thing, on general principles. Along with their admiration for the ladies, however, most cowboys have a certain shyness in their presence, especially if they are young and good looking; and they have been known to blush like school girls when suddenly and unexpectedly confronted by a lovely vision in skirts and flounces. This tendency to shyness is also due, no doubt, to their isolated lives.

Bearing these things in mind, the reader can readily imagine what a commotion there was among the boys when Curley, the foreman, announced one evening that one of us was to be chosen as Miss May’s escort, or chaperone, handy-man, or whatever you might call it. We were all to line up in front of the ranch house the next morning to be inspected. Miss May herself was to do the inspecting and also the choosing. The choice, therefore, would be the one who made the best impression on her; at any rate, the one who would seem to her the best suited for the position.

We were all on hand promptly at the hour appointed; not a man had forgotten or overslept. Everyone had on his best bib and tucker, and some were even newly shaven. We all rode our best ponies and, as we were all about the same age and size, we must have presented an imposing appearance as the eight of us lined up so grandly and awaited the appearance of the young lady.

To tell the truth, I did not have much hope of being the lucky one. I have never been accused of being handsome, and if I had been, no jury would have convicted me. But I did have great hopes of my partner, Sam Hyde. He was easily the best looking man of the lot and he was a fine fellow in the bargain. He was rich, he had a college education, and he was a gentleman. I never knew him to do anything he would be ashamed to tell his mother. I was proud of him. I hoped he would be chosen, and I had already figured out a pretty little romance as a sequel to the present proceedings.

It was an impressive moment when Miss May appeared before us, ready to make her selection. It was absurd, of course, but everyone (except myself) had been speculating on the possibilities in case he should prove to be the lucky one. It must not be wondered at if our hearts were pumping blood faster than usual and our hands trembling a little as they fingered the reins.

Miss May walked slowly down the line, eyeing each of us critically in turn. She seemed no more excited than if she were deciding which rose she should pluck off a rose bush. She had a keen eye, and I thought I could detect a roguish little twinkle as if she were thoroughly enjoying the situation—as I think she was. But not a muscle of her face moved and she showed no more emotion than if she had been examining the pyramids or the Goddess of Liberty.

She gave rather more attention to Sam than to any of the others, and I felt a little flutter of gladness in my heart. But she went on down the line to the last man, then turned and came slowly back. Finally, to my great

surprise and confusion, she stopped in front of me. I felt a blush creeping from my chin to the roots of my hair. She wanted to know my name and asked me a few other questions. After several moments of thoughtful consideration, she said she believed I would do.

I got down off my pony and awaited orders, while the rest of the boys went sorrowfully back to work. They couldn't understand it, but neither could I, for that matter.

Mr. Howard and the two women came out to look at Miss May's choice of a cowboy escort, so I had to undergo a second inspection. The result was quite sufficient to extinguish any feelings of vanity I might have had. "I am very well satisfied with my daughter's choice," I overheard Mrs. Johnson say, "for there certainly is no danger of her falling in love with that freckled-faced, red-headed little runt of a cowboy."

Having thus been chosen as Sir Knight to a fair lady, and that by the fair lady herself, it was up to me to act the part, and I set about it at once. But it was by no means an easy matter, especially at first. In equipping the ranch, no provision had been made for entertaining lively young ladies who arrive suddenly and unexpectedly from the East. There was no such thing as a woman's side saddle in the camp, nor was there any clothing to be found that was suitable for a lady's riding-habit. Various other difficulties presented themselves; but where there's a will there is a way, and as Miss May had the will, it was the duty of the rest of us to find the way.

The two ladies, Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Johnson, came nobly to the rescue. They went to work remodeling sundry dresses in a way that women know about, but



A Cowboy Girl

men never can understand, and in a short time Miss May was well equipped with clothing suitable for lady pony-riding.

As I could not assist at the dress-making, I put in the time teaching Miss May how to shoot and how to use a rope. Cow ponies, as a rule, do not like to have women around and have decided objections to being ridden by them; so it was my business to have one properly "broke" for her use. I had as good a pony as ever made tracks, named "Buck," and Miss May had taken a liking to him. So I put in several days riding him myself with a dress on; or rather, with a blanket tied around my waist, to simulate a long riding-skirt. Buck never knew the difference; at any rate, he raised no objection when Miss May and her genuine riding-skirt were substituted for me and my blanket.

These matters having been arranged, Miss May announced that she was ready to begin her ranch experiences. I showed her how to mount, and gave her some directions about managing the pony. She tried roping a few calves and then tackled a yearling. It was astonishing how quickly she caught on to the various tricks. Buck understood his part of the work perfectly and, of course, that was a great help to her. About two miles from camp a coyote jumped up in front of us and we started after him. I told her to watch me closely and see how it was done, and she might try capturing the next one. She was an apt pupil and learned very fast. I seldom had to show her twice.

Miss May was anxious to do a little mountain climbing, so one August morning we went up into the foothills.

She was also anxious to see a mountain lion, and to shoot him, if possible. She said she would rather come across a mountain lion that day than discover a gold mine. Having met a few mountain lions in my time, I was not so enthusiastic, and would have preferred the gold mine, especially as I had a lady along with me and under my care.

Along about the middle of the afternoon we discovered the tracks of what proved to be the largest mountain lion I ever saw. Of course, Miss May was all excitement. She was determined to hunt up that mountain lion at once, and no arguments I could think of would stop her. Besides, I was only an escort, and had no right to take her away from that dangerous locality without her consent. There was nothing to do but go along with her and trust to luck.

So I put the dogs on the trail and, after about a mile's run, they brought the lion to bay in a rocky canyon covered with cedar trees. She was determined to take a shot at him with my Winchester, and nothing I could say would stop her. I had serious doubts about her being able to hit the side of the mountain; but suppose she should prove a better shot than I gave her credit for, and should wound the beast slightly. In that case, one or both of us might pay the penalty with our lives; for fewer things are more unpleasant to meet than a wounded mountain lion.

I tried to frighten her by telling her I guessed I would leave her to kill the lion by herself. She said that was just what she intended to do and that she wanted no help from me, except as a last resort. I made up my mind to see her through, even if we both got killed.

We slipped up to within about fifty yards of the lion,

she giving me orders not to shoot, as she wanted all the glory of killing a mountain lion herself. He was lying on the top of a big boulder, out of the reach of the dogs, with his head toward us. She took careful aim at one of his eyes, so the bullet would enter his brain and kill him instantly. Just as she touched the trigger I saw him move his head slightly. The bullet went crashing into his shoulder, disabling one of his forelegs. He started for us, and I realized that unless we did something important very quickly, we would have the fight of our lives on our hands, with little prospect of ever seeing the camp again. I had my old forty-five out, ready for business.

"Shall I shoot?" I asked.

"No," she answered.

By that time he was within a few yards of us, and was gathering himself for a spring, when she sent in a death-shot.

I have never known whether she realized at the time the danger she was in or not. She seemed cool and collected, but after the beast quit struggling and lay quite still, I saw the color suddenly leave her face. I barely had time to catch her as she fainted. I laid her on the grass, ran to the creek near by, got my hat full of water and, returning, I bathed her face and hands the best I could. By the time she came to and opened her eyes, I had turned sick and she became the nurse. After I recovered I skinned the lion, as Miss May wanted to take the hide home with her. We reached the ranch about nine o'clock, tired, hungry and played-out.

That day's experience with the mountain lion was only the beginning of things. In our many excursions

after that, she as leader and I as escort, she would often revert to it, and laugh gayly at her "chicken-heartedness," as she called it. I would laugh, too, though under the circumstances I could not very well assume any airs of superiority; for had not I also been "chicken-hearted," and turned sick—not at the thought of the narrow escape, but at the sight of her, so pretty and helpless, after the danger was past? Women are queer creatures—and so are men.

Miss May learned to ride and shoot with the best of us, and I doubt whether there was a cowboy in all the length and breadth of the great Southwest who had a braver heart or a steadier hand than did this delicately reared girl from the East.

But she could do more than ride and shoot. She had a fine education and had read more books than I had even seen. She had traveled a great deal, too, both abroad and in this country, and could describe everything she had seen. She had been pretty much all over Colorado—which I had not at that time—and she told me a great deal about Colorado Springs, the Garden of the Gods, Manitou, Pike's Peak, Cheyenne Canyon, Saddle Rock, and the Rocky Mountains in general. I afterwards visited most of those places and, remembering her descriptions, I found she was correct.

But the finest thing about her was her imagination. She was of a romantic turn of mind and saw everything with a sort of glorified vision. The mountains, the forests, the canyons, the rivers, the clouds, the desert, were for her eyes a continual feast, and she never tired of looking at them. Many a time, in talking of these things she would

seem to forget everything else in her enthusiasm. She would try to get me to see the beauties of Nature, as she saw them. But I guess I was a dull subject, for I had been used to those things so long that they didn't impress me much.

But her earnestness and her charming manner did impress me greatly. No one could have listened to her very long without catching something of her enthusiasm. I never forgot the tones of her voice and her manner of speaking; and many of her descriptions, which I but vaguely understood at the time, remain with me yet. In pondering over them since, in connection with my own observations and experiences, I think something of their true meaning has dawned upon me, the meaning she intended.

I remember one time in particular, when we were standing on the shoulder of a big mountain and watching the dawn come up on the great snow-covered peaks around us. How magnificent it seemed to her, and how earnestly and reverently she talked of it: the morning sunlight gilding the mountain-tops and transforming them into immense shafts of shining silver; the whirling mists in the canyon below us, like an enormous cauldron bubbling; the roaring cataract across the way, plunging hundreds of feet below, and pausing only to gather itself together for another leap; and above, the silent stars disappearing one by one in the unfathomable blue.

Another time, as night was coming on, the great desert stretching before us gradually become slate-colored, and the sage brush turned olive green in the twilight. The mountain ranges miles away seemed to change their

form, and to withdraw behind a pink and purple veil. There was perfect silence—the silence that only the desert knows. It was all so solemn that we felt as if Nature were performing some sacred ceremony for our benefit. It made a great impression on the girl, and she never spoke of it afterwards except in tones of awe.

But most of all she talked of the wonderful and ever-changing colors that invest the mountains and the plains and the desert of the Great Southwest. Millions of acres of flowers—pink, purple, violet, red, blue, yellow, green, and in every conceivable combination and shade. Beyond, great mountain ridges, painted in all the gorgeous colors of the rainbow. And everywhere and all-enveloping, the marvelously tinted atmosphere, always changing yet always resplendent, clothing everything in a garment of mysterious beauty.

I have often wished that I could remember and set down in words—her words—all that she used to express in her delight over these things.

It was the last week in August when Mrs. Johnson announced that she and her daughter must return home. This was sad news for me, for it meant that our pleasant excursions were over. It meant that my very agreeable job of being an escort to a very agreeable young lady was ended, and that I must go back to work. I accompanied them as far as Trinidad and saw them safely on the train.

But there was one consolation. For some reason I have never understood to this day, Miss May asked me if I would not write to her occasionally, and keep her posted as to how things were going on at the ranch. Of course, this implied that she would also write to me occa-

sionally, and the reader is entitled to one guess as to whether I agreed to the arrangement. We exchanged letters for several months, and I enjoyed hers exceedingly, for she wrote very much as she talked.

Suddenly her letters ceased, and I wondered if I had offended her in any way. Then I learned from Mrs. Howard that she was sick, very sick. In her delirium, so her mother wrote, she talked almost incessantly of the ranch and her experiences there. She talked of the people, the ponies and the cattle; but most of all of the scenery, the wonderful beauties of the mountains and canyons and deserts and plains. She seemed to be living over again her vacation days with us.

One night a pony express rider came to the Pool ranch, with a telegram addressed to me. It contained just one word: "COME."

I got to the station next morning, just in time to flag the Cannon Ball train, having ridden Buck a hundred miles in twelve hours.

When I arrived at the Johnson home the blinds were drawn, and there was crape on the door. Miss May had passed over the Great Divide and into the peaceful unknown valley beyond.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE POOL RANCH IN COLORADO—FRANK AND JESSE JAMES, COLE YOUNGER, BILL GREGG, AND THE BERRY BROTHERS—AND THE FIGHT WITH BILLY THE KID.

Less than a day's ride from the Diamond Arrow ranch was another one, owned, or supposed to be owned, by a man named Dave Pool. To this ranch we went, Sam Hyde and I, after Mr. Howard paid us off that fall. We hired to Pool, though Sam did not stay very long. As soon as the bad weather set in he went back East for the winter.

Now Pool had a history behind him; interesting, but not very savory. He first saw the light of day in Lafayette County, Missouri, not far from Kansas City. He was just a young fellow when the Civil War broke out, rather wild in his tendencies, and with a taste for adventure. Guerilla warfare appealed to him as a fine field for the exercise of his talents, so he enlisted under the black flag of Quantrel, and rode with the command of that noted bandit and freebooter from 1861 to 1865. His comrades were as reckless a bunch of bushwhackers as were ever assembled, including such men as the James Boys, the Younger Brothers, and four or five hundred others of that class of young fellows whose names are now forgotten.

Pool was an active and rather important member of the band. He commanded the advance guard at the

massacre at Baxter Springs, Kansas, and took part in the burning and sacking of Lawrence when nearly two hundred houses were destroyed and one hundred and forty of the two thousand inhabitants were shot to death.

Quantrel met his inglorious death about the time the war closed, and the surviving members of his band scattered to the four winds. They were not very well suited to the ways of civilization by nature, and four years of rough-riding had not improved them any in this respect. Some of them, like the James Boys, turned their attention to other forms of activity, and succeeded in attaining a considerable degree of fame.

Pool did not care to go back to the humdrum life of the little Missouri town; anyway he felt that it would be advisable to take up the thread of life again in some distant part, where he would not be bothered by inquiring friends—and others. This picturesque and secluded spot seemed to answer the purpose very well, and here he located.

Those who were acquainted with Pool back in Missouri were quite surprised when they heard that he had embarked in the ranching business; for they knew very well that he did not have money enough to buy a good horse, let alone a ranch. Yet he managed in some way to establish this ranch and stock it up with thousands of cattle and horses; and, it is said, that when he sold out some years later it was for nearly a million dollars.

I got along very well with Mr. Pool. He always treated me right and I tried to give him good service for the wages he paid me. I often wondered to myself where all the money came from to carry on such big ranching

operations, but it was really none of my business and I made no inquiries.

One day along toward Spring a young man rode up to the ranch looking for work. He was a rather good looking chap, more like a tenderfoot than a cowboy. He was a good horseman, however, and appeared to know a good deal about handling cattle. We found out afterwards that he did.

Pool told the young man it was too early in the season to put on extra hands, but if he cared to stick around for two or three weeks, he might then put him to work. This seemed agreeable to the young man, and he stayed. Every morning, though, he would mount his pony and be gone all day, returning in the evening about dusk. This excited our curiosity, but when questioned, he always said he was just seeing the country and getting the lay of the land. We discovered later that this was quite true. One morning after he had been there about a week we missed him. We also missed a bunch of cattle and horses. From the best we could make out, he and they had gone off together.

On the same day the pleasant young man disappeared, six well-mounted and well-armed men rode up to the ranch headquarters. As I was the only man around the place at the time, it was up to me to act as host to the visitors, or at least as a reception committee.

They wanted to know where Pool was. I told them he had gone to Trinidad for supplies, but would return the next day. One of them inquired if I was not Bill Jones. "Yes," I replied "I am Jones."

They stabled and fed their horses, and then we all went into the house. While I was putting something on

the table for them to eat, one of them wanted to know if I could remember ever having seen any of them before. As I could not, he proceeded to introduce them to me—Frank James, Jesse James, Cole Younger, Bill Gregg, Ike and George Berry.

Probably the reader can imagine something of the effect this had on me. I certainly was not expecting such distinguished company, and could hardly have been more astonished had it been the President of the United States and his cabinet.

But they had another surprise in store for me. After asking me a lot of questions about myself, the ranch, and the other men, they coolly informed me that they were the chief proprietors of the ranch, and that Pool, though the manager, really owned but a small part of it. It seems they had furnished him the money with which to buy the ranch and stock it up. They asked me if I had not noticed that large consignments of cattle and horses were always received at the ranch shortly after a big train or bank robbery.

Pool returned the next day and there was a high old time of hand-shaking and so-forth—especially so-forth.

A day or two later the foreman reported the disappearance of the stock, and the announcement created quite a stir. By this time the robbers had a fine start, and it was necessary to get on their trail without any unnecessary delay.

Were Pool and his partners mad? I think they were. Any way I got that impression from their remarks. If I were to set down their language here it might burn holes in the paper.

But their indignation certainly was justified. I never saw a more flagrant case of outraged virtue. Bill Gregg said a man certainly had his nerve with him who would dare to hold up and rob the James Boys and the Younger Brothers. I thought so, too, and said as much.

Of course the stock must be recovered and the dastardly thieves punished. If they were allowed to go free and escape with their booty, it would be almost like compounding a felony; besides, they would feel encouraged to go on in their wicked ways and commit further crimes against other innocent and law-abiding people. I admired the righteous indignation of the outraged ranch owners very much.

We started after the thieves the next morning. The pursuing outfit consisted of a chuckwagon with four mules to pull it, a cook, the six indignant ranch owners, and five cowboys, including myself. I was taken along as pilot, as I knew more about the Texas Panhandle and No Man's Land than any of the others. It was altogether probable that the band had made for the Pecos River country, a vast and little known country at that time, and the paradise of cattle thieves.

It made me feel very proud to think that I was in charge of such a band of veteran bandits and mankillers; it was enough to make any man swell up with importance.

As we jogged along, I improved the time by laying plans for my part in the battle that was sure to take place, if we overtook the robbers. Some one was almost sure to get hurt, and I felt that it would be hardly fair to the rest of the party for the pilot to be exposed to danger. If he should be killed there would be no one left to guide the

party back to the ranch. I felt a headache coming on already and it would be pretty sure to last several days—till the battle was over, at least. But it would not prevent my helping the cook while the battle was going on, and I could share in the glory, by helping to have a good dinner ready for the veterans when they returned from the slaughter.

The second day out we met some cowboys who told us that one William Bonney had been in that part of the country recently, stealing everything that could be driven away on foot. This news made everyone in our outfit sit up and take notice; for William was none other than "Billy the Kid," known all over the Southwest as one of the most daring and desperate outlaws that ever lived.

I almost fainted when they described him, for I realized at once that he was the smooth young person who had been with us so recently. It made me sick to think how nice and kind I had been to him. I had even tried to persuade him to give up trying to be a cowboy and return to his poor old mother.

So this was the party who had dared to tackle the ranch owners at their own game. They were now more determined than ever to capture or kill him, and thus rid the country of one of the most dangerous enemies of law and order.

We trailed Billy and his band for a week, and finally came upon them about noon one day, just as they were sitting down to dinner. There were ten of them, and they were camped in a rocky canyon, covered with cedar trees.

Having located them, I tried to turn the job of capturing them over to the others. My headache was no

better and I did not feel equal to the occasion anyway. Besides, I had not lost any stock. I offered my services to the cook; but that unfeeling person told me in unscriptural language that he was not needing any help just then, and advised me to run along with the others and help get the outlaws. Still I hesitated. Suppose some of them should shoot me in the foot; then my reputation as a jack rabbit catcher would be spoiled. Or suppose they would shoot me in the excitement; then my beauty would disappear, and the rest of the men would get lost and starve to death. There were a lot of things to think of, and I thought of them. But I had to go just the same.

The outlaws were not yet aware that visitors were approaching. Unfortunately we had not thought to bring our visiting cards with us, and our presence would have to be announced in some other way.

Frank James took charge of the ceremonies. There was no time to get out a printed program of the order of exercises, so we received our instructions orally. We were to surround the bunch, as they sat at dinner, and all fire at once at a given signal. This was the safest plan for us, and we could tell afterwards from the corpses whether they were the men we wanted or not.

When the signal was given, eleven Winchesters sent as many bullets into the crowd. Four of the outlaws fell dead; the rest escaped among the rocks and, using these as a barricade, they began sending return messages.

It was a battle royal all that afternoon. The outlaws could not escape from the canyon without exposing themselves to certain death; and if any of our hats needed

ventilating, we could stick them up anywhere and the job would be done with neatness and dispatch.

About sundown some one called out to the Kid to know if they would surrender. In reply he asked if we had ever heard of Billy the Kid surrendering to anybody.

We ourselves were somewhat scattered, but we could not very well hold a reunion without shortening our roll-call. We knew that some of them would escape when darkness came on, but all we could do was to keep a sharp lookout and shoot whenever an opportunity offered. We got one more about bed-time; that left five. Shortly afterward they all made a break for liberty or death. It was death for three; liberty for two. Billy was one of the two.

Although Billy the Kid escaped our clutches, he did not live to a ripe old age. His ambitious career was nipped in the bud some time after this by an unromantic sheriff, Pat Garrett of Las Cruces, N. M., who was afterwards shot to death by a kid less than twenty years old. The sheriff had sent word to Billy that the world was too small to hold both of them, and that one or the other would have to get off. Talk like this was right in Billy's line, and he cordially assented to the arrangement. But when they met Billy's mind was not on his work, just as it should have been, and the sheriff outlived him several years.

There is no telling to what heights of eminence Billy the Kid might have reached had his life been spared. He was only twenty-three when he died, with a prospect of many years of usefulness before him. But he accomplished much even at that tender age. Committing his first mur-

der at fourteen, he had twenty-three killings to his credit—an average of one a year for his busy life. Considering that he got rather a late start, he did very well, and his later years were unusually active.

It was just three weeks from the time we left the ranch till we got back. We felt that we had done very well in thus ridding the country of eight or nine dangerous characters.

I probably am the only man that worked at the Pool ranch who ever knew that the James Boys and the Younger Brothers owned an interest in the ranch.

CHAPTER XIV.

MYSTERIOUS DAVE AND THE BAD MAN FROM CROOKED CREEK—\$150,000 ON THE TURN OF A CARD—THE FAMOUS COWBOY BAND—THE SWELLEST FUNERAL DODGE EVER HAD—THE SAWED-OFF SHOT GUN.

In the Summer of 188- I was visiting in Dodge. I always liked to stop in Dodge, because the place suited me to a T. At that time it was such a nice little place. Before a man could get halfway down the main street, he could have some trouble. There were lots of men who would not wait to see if you were looking for excitement of any kind, for they were hunting for a little fun themselves.

A would-be bad man drifted into Dodge one day from Crooked Creek, and he was looking for trouble and lots of it. He found just what he was looking for while he was in a saloon, taking a few to keep his nerves steady and his blood warmed up. He wanted to play a game of seven-up. Seven-up was too slow a game for most men in Dodge at that time. Faro and draw poker were two favorite games; but Monte, "Mexican Monte" they called it, because it was played with Spanish or Mexican cards, different from ours, was the old stand-by. I have seen more money piled upon the gambling tables than you could get into a two-bushel gunny sack, and it was there for everybody. If you happened to have a little cash yourself, the required

amount of nerve, and a pair of 45's under your coat-tail, you could just walk right up and help yourself. One time I saw a cow-man walk into the Long Branch Saloon, lay the price of five thousand fat steers down on the table and lose it in five minutes. The dealer bought him a drink. Then he laughed and said it was all right, as he would have five thousand more fat steers in Dodge in about thirty days. They were already coming up the trail from way down in Texas.

That would-be bad man from Crooked Creek—barnyard savages we sometimes called such men—went up to a man that looked easy, slapped him on the shoulder and offered to bet him a dollar that he could beat him the first game of seven-up.

"All right," said the man, "I am not much of a seven-up player, but I am one of the most accommodating men you ever saw." The man happened to be "Mysterious Dave," Marshal of Dodge, one of the quickest and best shots that ever drifted into that "Little Hallelujah Town."

Mysterious Dave had a "rep" as being a very, very bad man. I have heard it said that in addition to his duties as Marshal of Dodge City, he had a commission from St. Peter as an Angel-maker. Whenever a man gets too handy with his gun, thus becomes a nuisance, someone has to take a shot at him, not for what he has done, but for what he might do. "Mysterious Dave" was a Killer of Killers, and it is an actual fact that he killed seven in one night, in one house, at one stand.

The City Marshal of Dodge at that time did not wear a bright shiny blue coat with a gallon of big brass buttons on it, or even a star as big as the top of a bushel

basket nor did he carry a hoe handle to poke hoboos out of barrels, either. About the only thing he carried was a short barreled Colt's Forty-five, with plenty of nerve and know-how to use it. "Mysterious Dave" sat down at a card table, with his back to the window—something that he was not in the habit of doing. That time it was all right and all wrong. The bad man sat down on the opposite side. The cards were dealt and the game started. Just how it happened, "Mysterious Dave" could not tell. When Mr. Bad-man pulled the trigger, Dave threw up his chin. The bullet from a little twenty-two struck him square in the forehead, glanced up and plowed a hole between his skull and skin and lodged in the back of his hat. Before the bad man could shoot again "Mysterious Dave's" gun went off. The bullet went through the bad man, struck the stove, went through it, and killed one of Jim Kelly's dogs that happened to be in the back end of the saloon. There was quite a crowd in the saloon, and the bullet that killed the dog missed me just forty feet. I measured the distance the next day with a fish pole.

Such little things as that happened so often in Dodge that nothing was said about it until some one found the dead dog in the other end of the saloon. Kelley had only a hundred dogs that he kept to chase jack rabbits, antelope, and coyotes. Certain men sometimes called him "Dog Kelley," but that was only when they were out in the sand hills ten miles from Dodge, and alone. Someone slipped out and told Kelley that "Mysterious Dave" had killed one of his favorite dogs. Without stopping to ask any questions as to how it happened, he grabbed up his old sawed-off shot-gun and started to hunt up the man that

had the nerve to do such a thing. When he reached the place where it happened, "Mysterious Dave" had gone out to get his head fixed up. The men in the saloon told Kelley it was an accident, and was done without malice aforethought. Kelley would not listen to anything. He even said "Mysterious Dave" had no business shooting his gun off without first looking to see if there were any dogs of his in the saloon. He went up and looked at the corpse, swore a few swears, and said he would bury that dog with military honors next day; and if there was a man in the town who did not attend the funeral he would hunt him up with that old sawed-off shot-gun.

Then someone sent for O. B. Joyful Brown, the coroner, to hold an inquest on the dead dog. A jury was impaneled and several witnesses swore that the dog had no business in a saloon any way; she ought to have been out chasing jack rabbits, or at least she should have had one eye on "Mysterious Dave," as Dave's gun would sometimes go off unexpected. Other witnesses swore that Dave's gun hung fire, and if the dog had been on her guard she could have jumped out of the window. The jury brought in a verdict that the dog they were now sitting on came to her death by a bullet fired from a gun in the hands of Dave Mathews, better known as "Mysterious Dave," Marshal of Dodge City, Kansas, and that the shooting was done in self-defense and was perfectly justified, as the dog had no business going to sleep in a booze house in Dodge City.

Signed:—

JAMES DALTON, Capitalist, Foreman,
KINCH RILEY, Promoter,
BOBBY GILL, Merchant,

CHAS. RONAN, Speculator,
JOHN GALLEGER, Bone Dealer,
NED GLUBUPSON, Inspector.

A number of the leading business men met that evening and made arrangements to give the dog the swellest funeral that ever happened in the town. Next day the funeral cortege was headed by Dodge City's famous \$50,000,000 cowboy band, a squad of mounted police, and fire companies. They had no hearse in Dodge City at that time, so they rigged up a dray and it was a dandy all right. Someone got Kelley's old white horse, hung a few jack rabbits and a coyote across the saddle, and little Willie led him behind the dray. The Mayor declared a holiday so there would be no excuse for not attending the funeral. Everybody went except "Mysterious Dave;" the doctor said it would be dangerous for him to go. It might spoil the fun, so Kelley excused him for the time.

When the funeral cortege arrived on Boothill, and the box was deposited by the open grave, "I think," said the coroner, "that before we go any farther some brother ought to say a good word for the departed."

Some son of a gun took off his hat and said, "Miss Flora could catch any jack rabbit on the plains." Another man said, "There was not a coyote in the sage brush that she could not catch in a half-hour." Another took off his hat and tried to say a good word, when his voice became husky and the tears flowed from his eyes.

"Will some gentleman give us the Lord's Prayer," said the coroner. Every hat in the crowd came off in a hurry. Every man in the crowd looked toward the river

while the box was being lowered to its final resting place. Someone got an old gun and stuck it up for a head-board.

"Let's give her the Cowboy's Lament," and they sang the song as only a lot of men and boys could sing it:

"Once in the saddle I used to go dashing,
Once in the saddle I used to go gay.
First took to drinking and then to card playing,
Got shot in the neck and now here I lay.

"Beat the drum slowly, play the fife lowly,
Play the Dead March as you bear me along.
Take me to Boothill and throw the dirt over me
I'm but a poor Cowboy, I know I done wrong."

Next day "Mysterious Dave" was out on the street, so was Kelley; but somehow or other they failed to meet. About a week after the funeral Tom Dixon, a friend of Kelley's, took a shot at "Mysterious Dave," and the bullet took off one of his fingers; but he did not notice it and, when he went to take a drink, someone saw the blood when it dropped on the bar and remarked:

"What's the matter, Dave? Did he hit you?"

Then he looked at his bloody finger, with the remark:

"Don't that beat the Jews? That's enough to make any man mad."

Not long afterwards "Mysterious Dave" and Tom Nixon met and shortly afterward there was another funeral in town. "Mysterious Dave" was arrested, took a change of venue to Kinsley, in Edwards County, where he was acquitted.



Dodge City's Famous Cowboy Band

"What became of the bad man who started the row?"

"Oh! somebody took him out to Boothill and planted him along with the other five hundred that died in Dodge City with their boots on. If you don't believe there were five hundred, you can write to the Mayor, enclosing the usual amount of postage, and he will give you the exact number."

It has been said that Dodge was Hell, but I know better. I knew several Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and the usual number of sky-pilots for that sized town, and if that was a fact, what were they doing in Dodge? I always make it a point when I stop in a new town, if there is no place else to go, to visit the churches.

One summer, while I was loafing up and down the I. & G. N. R. R. in east Texas, I stopped awhile in New Waverly. If there was anywhere else to go except to church in that town I failed to find it. So to church I went one fine Sunday. When I went in and sat down everyone got up and took a good look at Willie, and I heard one of the deacons say—and he said it loud enough for everybody in the church to hear—"I wonder where that d—— Dutchman came from?"

CHAPTER XV.

HARDSHIPS OF THE COWBOY ON THE TRAIL—JESSE CHISHOLM, THE MAN WHO WENT AHEAD—THE COWBOY WILL ALWAYS LIVE IN STORY AND ROMANCE—THE FINEST HORSEMAN THE WORLD EVER PRODUCED—THE STAMPEDE—THE BLIZZARD—THE LONELY GRAVE BY THE TRAIL—"BURY ME NOT ON THE LONE PRAIRIE"—DYING OF THIRST—SHOOTING UP THE TOWN—A PERFECT SPECIMEN OF PHYSICAL MANHOOD.

Driving a herd of longhorns up the old Chisholm trail from somewhere in Texas to somewhere in Kansas, in the olden days, was full of adventure and of thrilling experiences. The first man who made the journey and blazed the trail over which hundreds of thousands of cattle afterward tramped their way to northern markets or to other ranges in the North and West, accomplished a feat of daring which required nerve of the first order and the finest quality.

It was a half-breed Indian who made that first trip, and his name was Jesse Chisholm. He drove horses and cattle to the western parts of the Indian nations as early as 1840, long before any one else from civilization dared venture into that country. It was a profitable business for him, for he bought horses and cattle of the lower plains Indians at ridiculously low prices, they being able to "cut rates" because they stole the stock themselves.

To round up a herd of 1,500 or more cattle, drive them several hundred miles, and market them successfully, was a job that required abundance of both nerve and skill. None but brave, stout-hearted men would attempt it.

The cowboys, like the rich cattle kings and the great cattle ranges, are things of the past. Nevertheless the cowboy will always live in story and romance. Seated upon his sturdy little pony, he did a very important work in the settlement of the great West. It is thus that he is embodied in the minds of the people; and as long as the moving-picture business holds out you will be able to see him and his sister, the cowgirl, upon the screen. Thousands have watched him perform his remarkable feats here, and wondered if such things could be done by mortal man. Marvelous indeed are some of his performances in the "movies," requiring unbounded nerve, a keen eye, and excellent judgment as when to act. While in a measure many of these representations are true the cowboy on the screen is as different from the cowboy in actual life as a lion in his native jungle is different from a caged one in a Zoo.

It is the real cowboy of forty years ago that I am trying to depict. The typical cowboy of that day was an almost perfect specimen of physical manhood. His life in the open air was conducive to health, and the hardships and privations he endured only toughened his muscles and strengthened his lungs. He slept on the ground, rolled up in his blanket, using his saddle for a pillow. His six-shooter was always at hand, ready for instant use in case of sudden attack by wild animals or by cowardly and treacherous Indians or Mexicans.

The cowboy and his horse were inseparable companions. 'Apart from the other, neither was of any use in the cattle business. In fact, the tough little broncho was almost as important to the cattle industry as was its rider. It never knew anything but hardship. Even after the hardest ride no blanket ever covered it. No matter how wild the weather when camp was struck it had to hustle for itself. Unless it could find a shelter for itself it went without. But it was tougher than a steer, and had more sense. Often where cattle would be starving to death the bronchos would paw down through the snow and find food.

In one way at least, though, the cowboy expressed his high appreciation of his mount. The horsethief was the most hated and despised criminal in the country. No punishment was too swift or too severe for him. He knew better than to ask for mercy, and none was given.

Next in importance came the saddle. A cowboy was very particular in selecting his saddle, and once suited nothing would induce him to part with it. There has been a change, however, in the style of saddles. The old time cowboy saddle had a horn on it as big around as the end of a salt barrel, while the stirrups were a foot wide and covered with strips of leather that reached to the ground. When I quit the business the saddle-horn stuck up about like a sore thumb, and the ox-bow stirrups had narrowed down to two inches, with no leather strips at all. A good saddle used to cost from \$40 to \$100. To sell one's saddle was a sign of poverty.

The cowboy always carried the latest model of a six-shooter and, as stated before, it was always within easy reach. In addition to his six-shooter he usually car-

ried a Winchester rifle for a saddle gun, and often had a butcher knife in his belt.

The rest of his outfit consists of a slicker, or heavy raincoat; chaps, or leather leggings, a big, wide-brimmed hat, usually white or near-white; boots, spurs, gloves, and quirt, or riding-whip. The spurs were often gold or nickel-plated, and costly. He wanted his boots to be close-fitting, almost too tight to be comfortable. He was very particular about his boots, his hat and his gloves; but inclined to be careless about the rest of his clothes. The fashions did not change much, but when he reached a new shipping point he was likely to throw away his outfit and buy a new one.

Thus accoutered, the American cowboy was a picturesque and an imposing figure, and beyond doubt he was the finest horseman the world has yet produced. The real, genuine cowboy, however, was not nearly as spectacular as he is represented in Wild West shows and in moving picture shows.

From the above description the reader must not conclude that the cowboys were a bunch of rough-necks, or desperadoes, as some writers of cowboy stories would have us believe. As a class, they are kind-hearted, generous, sympathetic, ready to give up anything, even life itself, to help a friend who is in trouble. The best friends I ever had belonged to this class. I never saw a man harmed by a cowboy who did not deserve it. So long as you behaved yourself you were as safe with a bunch of cowboys as with any people on earth. I have seen women and girls roll up in blankets and sleep as soundly and as safely on the ground in cow camps as they would in the

best hotel or home in the land. The unwritten law of the Middle West at that time was never to steal a cowboy's horse or make slighting remarks about his lady friends. If you did either you might as well prepare to pass in your checks.

"Grim, taciturn, hardworking, resourceful, faithful," says one writer, "it was the cowboy of the range who made the mainstay of the cattle industry. Without him there never could have been any cattle industry." And this is true.

The cowboy always liked to pose as a "bad man" for the benefit of the tenderfoot. He always had a nerve-wrecking story to tell the tenderfoot about the dangers and hardships he would have to pass through before he could become a real, sure-enough cowboy. He would advise the tenderfoot that if he had any doubts about his nerve staying with him on such dangerous occasions, he would better quit right now and go back home, while the quitting and going were good. Very often the timid tenderfoot would take the advice at the first opportunity, and have some wonderful stories to tell his friends when he reached home—how they would shoot a tenderfoot's hat full of holes, or shoot at the ground all around his feet, to see how near they could come to them without touching them. In fact, the cowboy's reputation, back East, for recklessness was largely due to these marvelous stories told by returned tenderfeet.

However, the cowboy was never lacking in true bravery. No coward could qualify; at any rate until he had overcome his cowardice, and not very many did that. That is the reason the West was filled up with a class of

men who did not know what fear was. This is the reason also why the tenderhearted boys did not remain in the West very long.

The cowboy's reputation for fearlessness had a wholesome effect in several ways, and sometimes it was an important factor in preserving peace. A few years ago, go anywhere you would in Old Mexico, and the Mexicans would tell you that if it were not for the Texas cowboys they could whip the United States in six months. The great difficulty was, they could not get at the United States without going through Texas, and the pesky Texas cowboys would clean them out before they could get to the real seat of war.

Some of the Indian tribes of the Southwest had the same notion. A story is told of an Indian chief who went to the commanding officer of one of the forts and wanted to buy or borrow a cannon. "What do you want with a cannon?" inquired the officer, "to shoot soldiers?" "Indian no shoot soldier with cannon," replied the chief, "shoot cowboy with cannon. Kill soldiers with club."

The old-time cowboys, or cattlemen, were a class of pioneers we ought to be proud of. They were the men who went ahead and removed the obstacles that retarded the new civilization. Great credit is due these pioneers who killed off the buffaloes, the bad white men and the wild Indian, thus making it possible for the white man to come in and open up farms and build towns and cities with their great industrial enterprises. Time has brought wonderful changes since the days of the old cattle trail, and what was once a great wilderness, stretching from the Rio Grande on the south to Canada on the north, and

from the Missouri River on the east to the Pacific Ocean on the west, has become a great empire of civilization. Let us give a kindly thought to the hundreds of pioneer men and boys who made this empire possible. Most of them have passed over the Great Divide and are sleeping the sleep that knows no waking on this earth.

These, then, are the men who had charge of those great herds of cattle that tramped that long journey often extending from the Rio Grande clear to the Canadian line. It usually took from ten to twenty men to manage a herd while on its travels, the number depending on the size of the herd. Mounted on their wiry little mustang ponies, that seemed to be part and parcel of the rider, they would start out on that hazardous trip, often lasting from early spring till late in the fall, and usually stayed by the job till the end of the journey was reached. Very often the herd would change owners in Kansas, but the boys would hire to the new owners and go on.

The herds varied greatly in size, of course. Sometimes there would be as many as 5,000 cattle in one bunch, or line rather, marching northward. Such large herds were unusual, however, and perhaps 1,500 or 2,000 would be an average size.

The trail led through all kinds of country, from the smooth, level prairie to the rough timbered hills, and over high mountains. Creeks and rivers must be forded, sometimes swift and often swollen from recent rains. There was danger of losing some of the herd, and the problem was to make the loss as light as possible. No matter how stormy the night or how disagreeable the weather, the cowboy had to be on the job.



Dreaming of Home Sweet Home

A great deal depended on the skill and judgment of the foreman, and his was a position of great responsibility. The owner must have absolute confidence in him, for he was putting into his hands a great many thousand dollars' worth of property. He must command the respect of the men under him, for without their obedience and co-operation he could not hope to take the herd through safely.

Cattle, like men, have to become somewhat acquainted and used to one another, before they can work together harmoniously and successfully. Usually it takes from a week to ten days to break in a herd to the trail. Cattle are not of a very high order of intelligence, and it takes that long for them to find out what is expected of them. After they get fairly started, however, they fall into what we may call the regular habits of the trail and measure of the journey with something akin to machine-like precision. After they "get the habit" they will easily travel ten to fifteen miles a day without much urging. In a month or so they will learn so well what is expected of them that they will march with almost military precision, following certain recognized leaders. This fact of their being subject to a certain kind of discipline, one might almost say of self-government, is a great help to the cowboys in their work on the trail.

The question of food and water is of course a very important one on the trail. Cattle on the march need water more regularly than they do on the range, and it often taxes the ingenuity of the cowboys to the utmost to meet this need. Fresh air is always plentiful, and pasturage of some sort can usually be had, unless the ground is covered with snow; but water, especially pure, fresh

water, is always a luxury. Cattle can scent water several miles away, and when a herd makes a break for a water-hole, the boys go along with them—there is nothing else to do—and beat them to it if possible. If they are in the lead, they are usually able to secure a good supply of fresh water; but if the cattle get there first, the water they find is not very satisfactory, to say the least. There are few things more forlorn looking and more disappointing than a dried-up water hole—one of those places where water was once found, but is no longer. On the banks lie countless skeletons of cattle that have come there in the mad hope to find water, only to be disappointed and lie down and die. Still more disappointing, for they are dangerous, too, are the waterless bogs. Sometimes on the horizon there float the strange pictures of the mirage, holding out false hopes of lakes and rivers of pure water. But the cowboys learned long ago that there is no water there; and fortunately for the cattle, they do not know a mirage when they see it—if they do see it.

About sundown every evening the whole outfit would go into camp. After the cattle were stationed for the night and “bedded down,” so to speak, the night would be divided into two watches; half the boys going on guard till midnight, the others from midnight till morning. Ordinarily the night duties were not heavy; the main thing was to keep awake and be ready to meet and handle any emergency that might arise. Above all things, the herd must be kept quiet if possible. Cattle on the trail always seem to be better contented when they know the boys are around. They know that, although they are their masters, the boys are also their friends. There is nothing

that tends more to keep a herd of cattle on the trail quiet at night than the whistling or the singing of the cowboys. They seem to regard it as a token that they are being protected and that all is well.

A stampede at night is perhaps the one thing most dreaded by cowboys on the trail. It is always attended with more or less danger to life and limb, and there is always the possibility of great financial loss. The worst of it is, stampedes are most likely to occur on dark and stormy nights, and the more disagreeable the weather the greater the likelihood of a stampede. At the first alarm every man, whether on night duty or not, must turn out instantly and help round up the cattle again. A stampede in the dark is a wild scene, or would be if one could see it. Hundreds of cattle rushing here and there and trying to escape from some unknown danger. Cowboys on their ponies rushing after them, trying to bring them back and quiet them. In stormy weather, thunder and lightning would add their quota to the pandemonium. In the darkness it was almost impossible for the boys to work in concert, yet they would do so, after a fashion, and it is really wonderful how much they could do in a short time in stopping a stampede and quieting the cattle. But it was dangerous business. Sometimes a pony would step into a prairie dog or badger hole, and down would go pony and man, both in immediate danger of being trampled to death. If the pony should be crippled the cowboy was up against it; for a cowboy without a horse is like a steam engine without water.

Often a mere trifle will cause every steer in the herd to jump to his feet and go on a stampede. Sometimes a

coyote or other wild animal will cause the trouble. Frequently, in the Indian country, an Indian would slip in among the herd, grunt a few times and wave his blanket, when up the cattle would jump and start off at a break-neck speed. Then after the herd had moved on the noble red man would come back and appropriate any animals that might have been killed in the stampede.

Another thing, dreaded even more than a stampede, though not of so frequent occurrence, was the danger of being caught in a blizzard. Ponies will worry through almost any kind of weather, but not so with cattle. When a blizzard comes on, they huddle together in helpless little bunches, in such poor shelter as they can find. They do not try to feed any longer, and simply give up the struggle against the terrible conditions. One by one they sink down in their tracks, and are soon lost in the oblivion of death.

Only those who have experienced the terrors of a genuine blizzard can comprehend what it means and even then they cannot describe it in anything like adequate language. But it is an experience one is not likely to forget, if he is fortunate enough to live through it. Of course, there are preliminary warnings, usually, and the weather-wise plainsman prepares for the oncoming blizzard—if he can. But the storm breaks with surprising suddenness. All at once the whole atmosphere becomes a whirling, seething mass of white, biting particles of icy snow that cut the skin like a set of sharp revolving knives. No living creature can face such an ordeal and live. Instinctively and from absolute necessity one turns his face down the wind, for breathing is impossible in any other position. Driven by the terrific onrushing blasts, the icy particles

strike and sting like a thousand whips. The heaviest clothing does not protect the body and soon it becomes thoroughly chilled, as though it were suddenly plunged into a bath of ice water. The air itself becomes freezing cold. The whole world seems blotted out of existence. The eye can see nothing with distinctness—only a glittering whirl of dancing ice-particles, that strike at one like frenzied demons. All sense of direction is lost. The mountains, the hills, the ridges, the valleys, have all disappeared. Only at one's feet can he see a bit of earth, and he is not quite sure of that. There is a sensation as if the earth and sky and everything else had returned to a state of primeval chaos. The brain grows drowsy and a feeling of utter numbness creeps over the body. There is no more ambition, even to live. Under such conditions a man is no better off than the poor dumb cattle. Like them, he sinks in his tracks, and the merciless snow becomes his winding sheet. Many a poor fellow has thus entered upon his last sleep while in the grip of the blizzard, and they have found his whitening bones long after the storm has passed, mute but eloquent testimony to the power of Nature when she is in one of her hostile moods.

Usually, when one of the old-time cattlemen was killed on the trail, or died from natural causes, a grave was dug by the wayside, his body rolled up in a blanket and laid to rest as respectably and as tenderly as was possible under the difficult circumstances. Of course, there was little opportunity for religious services, but often there was a good deal of suppressed feeling on these occasions.

“O bury me not on the Lone Prairie,”

was the first line of a song that I have heard sung thousands of times by cowboys in camp and on the trail. I do not remember the rest of the words.

In former days it was the custom for each man to furnish his own blankets to sleep in while on the trail, and when ready to retire he could have his choice of sleeping spots, and spread his bankets out on the prairie wherever it suited his fancy. A story is told of an old cow boss who asked a new man if he had any blankets. "No," said the man. "All right," said the boss, "you can sleep over there by the chuck-wagon." Then he asked another new-comer if he had any blankets. "No," said the man. "All right," said the boss, "you can sleep with that man over by the chuck-wagon." Then he turned to a third man and inquired if he had any blankets. "Yes," answered the man, "I have several good ones." "Very well," said the boss, "you can sleep with me, as I have no blankets, and the nights are a little chilly."

One is liable to meet with any and all kinds of experiences while on the trail with cattle—some funny, some pathetic, and all interesting. One day when the herd was strung out over a mile in length, while I was in the lead, I came across a couple of boys, each about twelve years old, lying on the grass and apparently dead. They took no notice when I spoke to them, but I saw they were still alive. They were just about famished for water. We took them in hand, and when they revived somewhat and were able to talk, they told us that they lived at Jacksboro, Texas. They had been very anxious to become cowboys, and as none of the bosses going up the trail would give them a job, they had run away from home and were making their

way to Kansas. They expected to get jobs as cowboys there. They stayed with us till we got to Dodge, and I never saw or heard of them afterward. I have often wondered what became of them.

I once came across a cow boss who carried a pair of ivory-handled, gold-plated six-shooters. They were beauties, and the owner was very proud of them. That was before cartridges came into use, and these were of the cap-and-ball variety. The owner bragged a great deal about what he could do with these pistols. He said a man ought to consider it an honor to be killed by one of them. One day a tenderfoot came along and hired to him. Before the week was out the tenderfoot had taken his pistols away from him and beaten him almost to death with his fists.

Sometimes in going through an Indian country the Indians would demand several steers as compensation for allowing the cattle to cross their reservation. If the owner or the boss was a new man on the trail and unaccustomed to dealing with Indians, they were likely to bluff him out of a few steers in this way. An old hand at the business, however, would very quickly and forcibly give them to understand there was nothing in that line. Usually that would end the matter; though sometimes Mr. Indian might feel revengeful and slip in some dark night and stampede the herd. Or he might start a fight; but it would be at long range, for the Indians do not care much for fighting at close quarters unless they have every advantage. Sometimes when the boys were out rounding up the stampeded cattle the Indians would slip into camp

and kill the cook. It was not safe to be caught out alone in the Indian country in those days.

There were almost certain to be great doings when a cow outfit arrived at a town. The cowboys enjoyed it, whether the people of the town did or not. After having been on the trail from two to six months, fighting Indians, sleeping outdoors in all sorts of weather, chasing stamped-up cattle, sometimes going hungry for two or three days at a time, and often drinking water that would almost turn the stomach of a skunk, the boys could hardly be blamed for enjoying a change of program. It is useless to deny that they would often try to make the towns "dry" by drinking all the whiskey in it and that frequently they were a little too promiscuous in their shooting. On the other hand, many of the stories of their reckless performances were overdrawn. It is not fair to hold the cowboys as a class responsible for the foolhardy and sometimes ridiculous things done by a reckless few. As a rule cowboys are hot-tempered, swift to resent an insult, quick to pull their guns, and not at all slow about touching the trigger. And yet, considering the wild and hazardous lives they live, on the outskirts of civilization, where every man is a law unto himself, they are remarkably good-natured and kind-hearted.

Most of the old-time cattlemen of thirty to fifty years ago have passed over the Great Divide and into the Great Unknown. By the end of another twenty-five years very few will be left to tell the story at first hand of the trials, the hardships, the dangers and the thrilling experiences which they encountered in this great western wilderness which now blossoms like a rose. The romantic

has mostly disappeared from the West, and where it once flourished there sits the commonplace, far more comfortable but not half so interesting. The average ranchman of to-day is in fairly easy circumstances, does not go armed, and wears a nice business suit when he goes to town. If he has no automobile yet, he hopes to have one next year, though he may have to mortgage his ranch or sell off a part of his herd to do it.

For myself, I look back upon those days with a good deal of pleasure and even of satisfaction. If I have scattered any sunshine, if I have been helpful to any man in trouble, I am very glad; and when I shall cross the Great Divide and step into the Great Unknown, I hope to be judged, not by what I have done, but by what I should like to have done, and would have done had it been possible for me to do it.

THE COWBOY.

By the Cowboy Poet Lariat.

It was only a few short years ago
 When we were in our prime,
 When a bunch of us went up the trail
 To have a jolly good time.
 It was hot July when we got to Dodge,
 That wickedest little town;
 And we started in to have some fun
 Just as the sun went down.

We killed a few of the worst bad men
 For the pleasure of seeing them kick;
 We rode right into a billiard hall,

And I guess we raised Old Nick.
The bartender left in wonderful haste,
On that hot and sultry day;
And he never came back to get his hat
Until we were miles away.

We went from Dodge to the town Caldwell,
As we wished to prolong the fun;
When the Marshal there caught sight of us,
You ought to have seen him run.
We rode right into a big dance hall
That opened upon the street;
The music and dancing both were fine,
And the girlies sure looked so sweet.

We drank all the Caldwell whiskey,
We ate everything in sight;
We took in all the dances,
And they say we had a fight.
Charley Screingo was shot in the leg,
Dick Smith was shot in the neck,
Bill Jones was shot in the pocket,
As also was Henry Peck.

We found in the Indian country
We must fight our way across,
For the reds were on the warpath,
Under Old Chief Crazy Hoss.
When we landed back in Texas,
After a lonesome trip,

We met some Texan Rangers,
And I guess we had to skip.

We worked for King & Kennedy,
We worked for Shanghi Pierce,
We worked for the Slaughter Brothers
When they were at their worst.
We worked on many another ranch,
As we wandered to and fro,
And back and forth and up and down,
From Dodge to Mexico.

Most of the boys have passed and gone,
With whom we used to ride,
Into the unknown Valley of Peace,
Just over the Great Divide.
And when the final round-up comes,
The count shall be fair and straight,
As they enter the big corral above,
Through the heavenly Golden Gate.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PASSING OF THE SIX-SHOOTER—AND THE
COMING OF PROHIBITION—THAT RED-HEADED
BISCUIT SHOOTER.

"It sure is hell, boys,"

"What's eating on you anyway, Jim?"

"Have you heard about it?"

"Heard about what?"

"Big Jim, why don't you come out of the gloom and the sage brush and the soap weeds, and tell us what kind of a streak of bad luck you have been having? Did your best girl in Dodge give you the high sign of distress when you were there?"

"No, boys, it was nothing like that; it was worse than you think it was." And Jim then had another fit of some kind. One of the boys got a gunny-sack for Jim to wipe away the tears that were flowing freely down his handsome face. "Honest to Grandma, Jim, you are giving us the shivers. It makes us all feel like you think that you do not have a friend left. If anybody held you up, took your good name and tobacco away from you, stop crying long enough to tell us, and a bunch of braves under the leadership of one of our most trusted war chiefs will start after the rustlers at once, and will camp on their trail until the last one is run down and sent to that place where they won't hold up another cowboy and take all the Bull Durham and cigarette papers away from him."

Then Jim went to blubbing again, so loud that the cook quit his work and came over to see what the excitement was all about.

"Now see here, Jim, if you don't quit your squalling and acting like you were plum locoed, we will have to take you out on the prairie and tie you to a shooting star or a she bear, until you will sit up and take notice that the suspense is becoming unbearable. Can't you see that most of the boys are getting ready to do something bad? Can't you see that some of the young bucks are putting on their war bonnets, and getting ready to go on the war-path? If they make a break for Dodge, God help the Irish—the Dutch can take care of themselves."

"Please do stop long enough to give us an idea of what happened to you on your trip to Dodge."

"Boys, you know that those old grangers in Kansas had a law passed some time ago prohibiting the use of intoxicating liquors, and Bat Masterson says he is going to see that it is enforced in Dodge. He has already had Webster, Bond, Warren and Atkinson arrested, and they are out on a bond right now. When I struck the Barton Brothers' range, one of their boys told me that I could not get a drop of red liquor in Cimarron, and he said you could not do any better in Dodge."

"He told me that two of Bake Hungates's men had been bitten by a walarucus, and pond water would not save them; so they passed away wondering what would become of the rest of the men who have to sleep on the ground among the rattlesnakes, centipedes and tarantulas."

"He told me the only thing you could get to drink in Dodge was soda water, lemonade and root beer; that all

the saloons were closed up and gone, and there were drug stores in the buildings where the saloons were, and all the drug stores had soda fountains in good working order.

"I thought I would come back and let you boys know what bad times there were in Dodge, but concluded it was best to go on and see for myself. Maybe that fellow was locoed (crazy), and was giving me a lot of guff.

"After I had crossed the river I stopped in Cimarron. About all I could find there was a lot of chewing gum and candy. Just think of that—chewing gum for a man who was hungry and twenty miles from Dodge! It was a case of go on or starve, and I headed east. About three miles from Cimarron I found two boys who had climbed up a telegraph pole, and there were about fifty sheep standing under them. When I got close enough for the sheep to see me good, they looked me over, and when they saw I had on my old forty-five, they all commenced to blat, just like you know a sheep can. After the sheep left, the boys came down. As that was a new wrinkle to me I made inquiries of what was the matter.

"They said that their boss would not let them carry guns, so when the sheep caught them unarmed they acted just like bad men. They had to make a run for a telegraph pole to keep the sheep from biting them, and I had come just in the nick of time to save them. Just think of that—two cowboys having to run from a few sheep to save themselves! Is it any wonder that I have to shed tears?" And then Jim went to sobbing, like his heart would break. The rest of us were as quiet as an oyster. In a few minutes Jim went on with his story.

"Boys, this is the story the two boys told me. They

were working on the Allen ranch, about twenty miles south of Las Animas, Colorado, when the foreman posted the following notice on the bunk house:

On and after this date, the carrying of firearms is prohibited under the penalty of discharge.

"Now let that soak in, will you? We sold our guns and the foreman gave us a combination hammer, staple-puller and a wire-stretcher, with orders to ride the line fences and repair them where they needed it. That night I reported to the foreman that the wire was down and the fence posts were broken off in a good many places. The next morning he gave the two of us a spade, an ax, a post-hole digger, several pounds of wire fence staples, and 40 pounds of barb wire, and told us to go fix the fence. He said we need not wear our chaps or spurs. He told us to leave our quirts; all we would need in that line was a willow switch, and a lantern in case it got dark before we finished. We gathered up that hardware store and started out line-riding. The first break we came to, Mr. Goodboy, that's my partner here, took the ax and went to the creek to get some posts, while I took the post-hole digger and dug the holes where the posts were broken off.

"My partner got back about noon with a load of posts. Say, you ought to have seen that load of posts. He had about twenty, tied on the pony in various ways. Besides that, he had about twenty more tied to the pony's

tail, and was dragging them on the ground. It was twelve o'clock that night when we got to the ranch, nothing to eat or drink, hands all cut to pieces from handling that barb wire, and our clothing all cut to pieces.

"The next morning we told the foreman that our nerves were all shot to pieces and we wanted our money.

" 'Going to quit?' asked the foreman.

" 'No, we quit last night about twelve.'

"We got our money, and here we are.

"Boys, get your brones and let's ramble on to Dodge."

When we got to Dodge the next day, we put our horses in Bell's stable. When we started out of the barn, Mr. Bell told me to take my gun over to Bob Wright's store and leave it there, as no one was allowed to carry a gun in Dodge. We went across the street to the store and I left my gun there. I asked Mr. Wright if it was a fact that there was no red liquor in town, and he said it was. He told me that we might get some at Hinze's restaurant, by giving him the annual traveling pass-word and the high sign of distress. I told Mr. Wright that I had just drifted in and did not know the pass-word or the sign. He gave me the pass-word and instructed me in the sign.

"We went down to see Mr. Hinze, and that worthy gentleman asked us if we would have soda water or root beer. I gave him the pass-word, and then he wanted the distress sign. I winked my right eye, but he shook his head. Then I winked the other one, then both eyes, and for about thirty minutes I winked my eyes in every way I could think of. He finally said we could have root beer. It took me two days to get my eyes in shape and the wrinkles out of them.

"It used to be said that when a bunch of cowboys went into a saloon and all of them commenced to hammer on the bar with their shooting irons, the bartender could tell by the noise just what each one wanted. I found out that it was no trouble for a railroad man to get a drink of soda. All he had to do was to slip in and give a telegraph operator's signal, by drumming on a board with his fingers. I put in a week trying to learn the Morse alphabet of dots and dashes, but it was no go.

"When the three of us went to the Dodge House for dinner, Deacon Cox took us in his private office and instructed us in the way he was running the house at the present time. We would have to put on a bald face shirt, a stand-up collar, have a neck-tie and a stick pin that was up to date. We would have to take off our spurs, and pull our pants' legs out of our boot tops. We would have to wash our faces and hands and comb our hair, and when we went into the dining-room we were to remain standing until the waiter showed us a table to sit down to. We must eat slow and not make any unnecessary noise and, above everything, not get mad at anything that might happen. He cautioned us about swearing. He told us if we had to do any cussing to do it in Mexican, so that the old farmers from Speerville would think we were asking a blessing. When we were through dining, we should slip the waiter a quarter, which would keep him in good humor. When we went into the dining-room there stood the most beautiful young lady I ever saw; such beautiful baby-blue eyes, with hair the color of old gold. That young maverick showed us to a table and

told us that she would be pleased to take our order. Just think of that—would be pleased!

“While we were having dinner, I asked the beautiful young lady if she would go to the show with me that evening, and she said she would be very much pleased to accompany me. When we were through I was so excited that I gave her a five in place of a quarter.

“After we got out on the street one of the boys wanted to know what I thought of the biscuit shooter with the red hair. I was so choked up for a few seconds that I could not answer. ‘Biscuit shooter with red hair! Boys, don’t mention that name again unless you are ready to ramble around some. You know that when I get started nothing but a brick wall will stop me.’

“While we were walking up the street we met a sure-enough tenderfoot. He had just drifted in from Chicago, had on a plug hat, eye-glasses, and a pair of red leather shoes with buttons on them. All three of us reached for our guns, but we did not have them. We followed that man around all evening to see some one shoot a few holes in that hat and the buttons off his shoes, but nothing of the kind happened.

“Boys, you can believe me or not, but Dodge is sure becoming some civilized. I saw the Marshal arrest a man for spitting tobacco juice on the sidewalk. I actually saw a man take off his hat to a woman when he passed her on the street. Everybody is getting so good in Dodge that they never think of locking their doors at night. Dick Evans, cashier of the bank, is getting so careless that he just leaves the money laying on the counter. If a man gets mad and wants to do some cussing he takes a

fish-pole and some bait, goes down on the river bank and stays awhile, and comes back with his face covered with smiles.

"I went to Zimmerman's store to buy a box of cartridges, and the clerk insisted on me taking a 50-cent can of baking-powder. He said it was a new brand and was guaranteed to raise things. I wanted to buy a ten-dollar Stetson hat, but he insisted on selling me a fifteen-cent straw hat. He said they were the latest style and all the boys from Kinsley and Speerville wore them. Next day we went up on the hill to see the court-house, and you boys can believe me or not, but here was Mike Sutton, D. M. Frost, Nick Klaine and Bobby Gill pitching horse-shoes for the soda.

"I went into a store to buy a package of Bull Durham. While I was in there a couple of up-to-date cattle men came in and called for cigars. The clerk got out a box. They helped themselves, threw a nickel on the show-case, and the clerk gave them a penny in change. The first penny I ever saw in Dodge. I gave that cattle king a quarter for the penny just for a keepsake. Here it is, look at it yourselves.

"While I was in Dodge I saw a cattlemen from the Saw Log sell his whole herd, consisting of two white-faced cows and a yearling steer, and believe me he got away from Dodge with the money. Boys, you can believe me or not, but I saw the advance guard of the Salvation Army in Dodge, and they were raking in the dimes and dollars with a garden rake. You know the people there are the most generous and free-hearted on earth. Somebody told me that Dog Kelly had been having bad luck with his dog

family. He only had one hundred and seventy-five left. Colonel Geo. Reynolds told me that both of his pet buffaloes died with the doba itch.

"I can tell you boys, that Dodge City and the State of Kansas are going to the eternal bow-wows. Salt won't save them. Prohibition will sure put the whole State out of business. Let me tell you of a sight I saw while I was in Dodge. It was a man carrying a sack of flour, a good, big piece of meat, shoes and stockings for his wife and children. Just think of that—a working man spending his money for such things—when I know he did not have a drop of whiskey in the house! Such extravagance! There ought to be a law passed prohibiting children from wearing shoes and stockings until they are eighteen years old, and a woman ought not to wear them more than three months in the year; that would give the poor men more money to buy whiskey.

"This prohibition law is poor business. It interferes with a man's personal privileges. He can get drunk, go home and whip his wife and children, and the next day they will think more of him than ever. If he was to go home sober and clean out the ranch, he would be arrested and sent up for six months. Suppose the old man of the prairies, better known as the rattlesnake, would slip up to you some night and hit you a crack with his poison fangs, with not a drop of tarantula-juice closer than Kansas City, five hundred miles northeast of here as the crow flies, we would have to roll you up in a good blanket, and the blanket would be a total loss, with a cold winter coming on.

"Boys, I took that red-headed biscuit shooter to the

show that night. On the way back to the hotel I asked her to marry me—and what do you think she said? ‘I came to Dodge to marry a cowboy, and I know that I would not want to marry a preacher or a clerk in a dry-goods house.’ I tried to explain to her that I was a cowboy, but she could not see it that way, thinking I was trying to fool her. If I was a cowboy, how did it come that I had on a white shirt and a straw hat? Where were my gun and spurs? ‘If you are a sure-enough cowboy,’ she asked, ‘how does it come that there has not been a fight in town all day?’ I tried to explain to her that times were changing; that the cowboys were becoming more civilized every day; that some of the cattlemen and cowboys have houses to live in, and that they had quit gambling, drinking and carrying guns. I explained that they go to Sunday School every Sunday.

“Next morning she quit her job and went back east to marry a farm boy. The romance of life in the open is gone, boys; the days of the free range and the longhorns have passed away.”

Shortly after Big Jim came back from Dodge we had orders to lay our guns aside, as we would not need them any more. Most of us decided we would go to Montana, where it is nine months winter and three months late in the Fall; where the cowboys have icicles on their mustaches nine months in the year, and the other three months they put in getting the frost out of their boots. Some of the boys said they would go to Arizona and try the Alkali Plains, where the “heelies” would make life interesting. Others said they would go back to Texas, get married, settle down, and go to raising cotton.

About a month after Jim's return the foreman ordered Sam and me to go over on the Arkansaw River and look after some strays that had left the ranch and gone north. We found them after a hard day's ride. They had taken up their residence at a prosperous looking ranch, and were making themselves quite at home. We admired their taste, for it was a progressive ranch, there being a good-sized frame house, a wind-mill, a big water-tank, and a large barn. In front of the house was a nice lawn, sprinkled with flowers, and in the rear was a vegetable garden. After putting our ponies in the barn and feeding them, we went up to the front door and knocked. The door opened, and there stood two young ladies, pretty as two little red wagons painted blue.

They invited us in, and of course we accepted the invitation. The room was a bit dazzling to our eyes. A piano stood in one corner; there were nice rugs on the floor, lace curtains over the windows, and pretty pictures on the walls. Presently we were invited in to supper. Though we were not quite sure of being entirely up to date in matters of etiquette, we were not turning down any invitations that day, especially to eat. The dining-room was a dream—all decorated with flowers and pictures, and fussed up just like it might be for a wedding dinner. The tablecloth was as white as snow, and it seemed a pity to put things on it. At the side of each plate was a little white towel, all folded up nice, with the girls' initials embroidered in the corner in pretty red letters. It was all so fine that at first we almost forgot what we were there for. But we soon woke up, when the girls began to "pass things." Those girls certainly

knew how to cook, and what we had to eat that day was a plenty, and so different from the chuck in a cow camp.

After supper the young ladies entertained us with music and singing, and for the next two hours we felt as though we had a cross-section of Heaven right there in that room.

When bed-time came we were shown to a room that was fine enough for a king to sleep in. It was some different from anything we had ever been used to in camp. The walls were painted a sort of rosy pink, and the ceiling was a pale blue color, something like the sky looks sometimes, just after sunup. There were two windows, with shades that rolled up and down, and stood hitched just where you left them. Over the shades there were angel-wing curtains that looked like the edge of a stray cloud on a sunshiny day. I was afraid to touch them.

The bed, too, was a wonder. There were springs underneath, and a mattress and white linen sheets, and feather pillows, and a coverlet as soft and fluffy as a tenderfoot's first beard.

It was too good a bed for us. People who are used to sleeping on the ground cannot sleep in a bed, especially a bed like this. About one o'clock in the morning we got up and stole out of the house. Finding a patch of elephant-ear cactus, we stretched ourselves upon it, and slept fine till broad daylight.

CHAPTER XVII.

IF YOU ARE STILL HUNTING TROUBLE COME TO
CHIVINGTON—THE KINGDON HOTEL—WILD HORSE
JOHNSON—JOHN SAVAGE READING THE RIOT ACT
TO SIXTY-FIVE WOULD-BE BAD MEN—MUSIC BY
THE BAND.

When the Missouri Pacific Railroad built on West from Horace, Kansas, to Pueblo, Colorado, word was sent out that any man looking for fun or trouble could find all he wished in Chivington, Colorado. I had been up in that country once before hunting for trouble, and, by the way, I found it in the way of five horse rustlers. As there were five of us, that made it an even break. When they found that we meant business, they just laid right down, and we had no trouble at all getting the ponies back to Texas; and as we had orders when we started not to bring any extra men back with us, we left them in Colorado.

When I got to Chivington, I looked around to see what was there in the shape of excitement. I found it a new hurrah town with one or two restaurants and saloons, and a few other business houses, but no residences or hotels. You could sleep anywhere on the ground that suited your fancy. I found about a hundred people there, mostly railroad men. They were building a big hotel. I said a big hotel. It was a three-story house in a one-story town. George Gould married a Miss Edith Kingdon,

and they named the hotel after her, calling it the "Kingdon Hotel." Besides the railroad men, there were about thirty-five men of all kinds working on that hotel whom the contractor had brought with him from Kansas City, besides about a dozen white men.

The first man I found that I knew was John Savage, a little sawed-off Englishman and a carpenter by trade; then I found Kid McClain and last, but not least, was an old warrior by the name of Wild Horse Johnson—these men you could tie your kite-strings to, and come back next week and find your kite still there. Wild Horse Johnson had a tent and I went to stay with him. The first night when it got dark, I got his lantern and lit it. When he came in a few minutes later, he took that lantern outside the tent and smashed it into a thousand pieces; then he wanted to know if I had gone crazy, or wanted to commit suicide. He said the first night he put up that tent and lit the lantern, seven bullets went through the tent before he could put the lantern out, and he showed me the bullet holes next morning.

About nine o'clock he went out for some purpose, and I thought I would light my pipe and have a smoke. I struck a match and attempted to light my pipe, when bang! bang! went a couple of guns, and from that day on I never had a desire to smoke in Chivington. I never did find that pipe, and when I wanted to smoke after that I went about four miles out in the sand hills.

One day Johnson wanted to know how the two extra holes happened to be in the tent about five feet from the ground. The other seven were only about eighteen inches from the ground, as his lantern was setting on a soap box

when the first seven holes were put there. I was just a little bit different from George Washington on that occasion. I could tell a lie, and G. W. would not; so I told Johnson that I did not know anything about it. I was afraid he would chase me out, and I did not care about sleeping on the prairie, as the weather was a little cold at night.

Johnson got his name as Wild Horse Johnson several years before I met him. He started after a band of wild horses and never let up until he had walked them down and captured the whole band. He was known after that as Wild Horse Johnson. Now, Mr. Reader, you may think this is hot air, but it's a prime article of truth, as any of the old-time plainsmen can tell you.

I asked Johnson what brought him to Chivington, and what he had sent for me for. "I have a job as porter in one of the saloons," he answered, "and I have a couple of hundred saved up. I want to go to Las Animas to meet my wife, as I have not seen her for over a year. I want to see if she will know me, and I want you to take my place until Spring." I made no reply to that proposition, but what I thought for the next few minutes was a plenty. Porter in a saloon, cleaning spittoons, sweeping and scrubbing, building fires, and drinking the slop that accumulated behind the bar—well, that kind of a job is all right for a city man that has a girl to take care of him, but for Bill, I guess not.

"Johnson, I have a good mind to take you out in the hills and leave you there, so that the coyotes and skunks will have a good feed."

Quick as a flash came the reply:

"All right, I am ready to go."

It was so quiet in that tent that I could hear Johnson's watch ticking just as plain at a distance of six feet, as a man can hear Armour's Packing House whistle in K. C. at a mile. At that moment, when the silence was becoming so oppressive that I could feel it, several shots were fired across the railroad track in quick succession. Johnson bolted out of the tent and I trailed after him. When we got to the saloon we found it was a false alarm. I went back to the tent and spread out his blanket, laid down and went to sleep. I knew that he would be in sometime in the night, and I knew that when he got up and had his breakfast, one or the other of us would have to leave the town in a hurry. Was I afraid he would come in drunk and shoot me while I was asleep? Not a bit of it. I got up early, went over to the saloon where Johnson was working as a porter, and had breakfast at the lunch counter. I introduced myself to the proprietor as the man who had come to take Johnson's place.

Then he told me what the duties were. All Johnson had to do was to walk around in the building, look wise, drink at the bar when he felt like it, eat as often as he pleased, and when there was no one in, he could go out and look around. But he must keep an eye on the saloon door, and if more than two men went in, trail in after them—that's all he has had to do so far, and he is paid five dollars a day, drink and feed thrown in.

It was then about eight in the morning. I went out in front of the saloon and looked over toward the tent. Johnson was headed my way, with his hand on the butt of his gun. His teeth were set hard together, and there

was a smile on his face that meant trouble. When he got within about thirty feet of me I gave him the Indian peace-sign, and when I got close enough I gave him my hand and said "Johnson." Then the smile on his face that meant so much disappeared and we were friends again.

Johnson said he would hang around a few days until I got broke in, to see how everybody would take the change from an old hand to a new one. Chivington at that time contained about as tough a mob of rough-necks as it was ever my lot to fall in with. It was no wonder that saloon man kept a man standing around looking wise, with one finger always close to a live trigger.

Savage and the kid had put up the building where the saloon was. The bar was just planks laid on two empty barrels; the lunch counter was no better. There was no table of any kind in the room.

The bunch of men who were working on the Kingdon Hotel would be in that saloon every evening, making a big halloo and criticising the bar. As there were about thirty-five of them and about as many railroad men who sided in with them, they were too many to call the trick on. I knew that Savage was game, but he was outclassed. I had every reason to believe the kid would deliver all the goods he could carry.

Then the five of us put our heads together. That night when the mob got to the worst part of the program, the saloon-keeper would lay his old sawed-off shotgun across the bar, would call time, and act as referee. Johnson would watch the back door to see that none got away. I would watch the front door to see that nobody got hurt

going out. Savage was to put a beer keg in the middle of the room and deliver a lecture, and the kid would stand behind him to act as backstop. About ten that evening, when the mob was doing everything it could think of, except tearing the roof off, the saloon-keeper laid his old sawed-off shotgun on the bar and rapped with a beer bottle. When everything became quiet he said:

"Ladies and gentlemen—The boys have prepared a new kind of entertainment for your amusement to-night."

Some of them yelled, "Good." Some said, "Hear, hear, trot it out."

"I now have the pleasure of introducing to you Mr. Savage, a gentleman from England, who will deliver a lecture on the use and abuse of the English language as shaped up by a lot of rough-necks, late of Kansas City, Missouri, now residing in the state of Colorado; and when the lecture is over—and I hope you will pay close attention to what he says—if any of you get away alive, I hope you will depart immediately for Kansas City a wiser and better bunch of men. Gentlemen, Mr. Savage."

In rolling out the beer keg, it ran over one gentleman's foot. He drew back to hand Savage one, when the kid promptly downed him, and the entertainment bid fair to break up in a free-for-all. But that old sawed-off looked over that way with both eyes open, the referee called time, and everybody kept quiet. Savage got up on the keg. Before he started, Johnson and I locked the doors, so none of them could go out and miss part of the lecture, and we would push them up close to the speaker, so they could hear all that he said.

"Ladies and gentlemen: I am glad that I have the

pleasure of addressing such an intelligent lot of men, and it makes me feel as if I would like to take each one of you by the hand and congratulate you separately for your close attention to the opening remarks. I assure you from the bottom of my heart that all that I may say will be for your everlasting good. Some of my remarks may seem a little sarcastic and rather pointed, but as the years go past, you will be glad that you were here on this auspicious occasion. When you get back to your wives and sweethearts, stay there until you learn that a little game of bluff, such as you have worked for the last month, don't go any longer in the wild and woolly west. I am fully aware of the fact that there are about sixty of you in the room, and that you have all crowded around me, just as close as you can get, so that you will not miss any of my lecture. I want to call you attention to the fact that my assistant, the Kid, who stands just behind me, has a knife up his sleeve long enough to go through an elephant. I also call your attention to my other two assistants, one at each end of the room, who have locked the doors in order that there will be no going out and in to disturb me in my remarks. And you will notice that the referee has that old sawed-off looking this way with both eyes open. He says there are twenty-four buckshot in each shell, and that he has enough shells ready to kill a carload of jack rabbits at one hundred yards. I wish to call your attention to the fact, before I proceed with my lecture, that when I am through, the doors in each end of the house will be opened, so that you can all pass out quickly to the music of a concealed band. Now drop all guns, knives, knucks, and billies on the floor where you stand, at once."

I have heard cowboys, bullwhackers, and government mule skinnners swear till the air looked blue with smoke right off the brimstone, but I never heard a man who could use cuss words like that man could. He was certainly a past master and no mistake. When he finished, he and the Kid stepped behind the bar and the doors were opened. Johnson and I hugged the corners of the building to keep from being run over. Then the referee and the other four of us shot the lights out, and as fast as we could shoot, we let them go. As long as there was one of them in sight outside, they could hear the music of that hidden band. About fifty of the crowd did not wait for a train, but started for Kansas City at once. They have never been outside of Kansas City since, as far as I know. Three of the carpenters, one lather and two painters came back the next day, and they turned out to be just as nice young fellows as I ever met. But all the rough-necks and would-be bad fellows hit the trail.

Some time during the winter, several of us went to Pueblo to see the sights of that town. While we were in Pueblo, we went to several theatres among those that we went to was the "Bucket-of-Blood." Now that name may sound rather queer to you, but that was the name all right. I have heard several stories as to how it got the name. I will not tell them, but will tell you about our trip back to Chivington.

We left Pueblo in the morning, and when we got outside of the city limits it began to snow. Our train consisted of an engine, a passenger coach and a way car. Dug Hathaway was the engineer. It is about thirty miles from Pueblo to where the Missouri Pacific crosses

the Santa Fe. We crossed the Santa Fe about twelve o'clock that day. A regular blizzard was coming, and I knew we were in for a hard trip. It is about a hundred miles from the Santa Fe crossing to Chivington, and at that time there was not a telegraph station on the road.

By four p. m. the cuts were filling up with the drifting snow and sand, and it was hard work to go through some of the drifts. About nine o'clock that evening we bumped into another train which had stalled in a cut, but not hard enough to do much damage. The stalled train consisted of four or five engines, several cabooses and a few box cars with a dead engine in front and four or five freight crews. They had given it up and were in the cabooses sitting by a good fire when we bumped into them. They jumped out of the cars into the snow to see what was the matter. Then the railroad men had a cussing match among themselves.

By twelve that night every man was played out, and they all gave it up and got back into the cars to wait until next summer to get out. Most of the men in the coach had got to sleep, when there was a crash, and the coach was pretty badly smashed and upset, and lay on its side in the snow. The crash upset every stove in the cabooses and broke them in pieces. The train that ran into our coach consisted of two engines and a caboose that had been sent out from Pueblo to keep the track clear of snow, and the two engineers were giving their engines plenty of sand and steam to go through both cuts when they crashed into our train.

Some railroad man may want to know why there was no flagman out to protect our train. I will tell you. The

storm was so bad that none of the train men could live very long in such weather. Lucky for us, no one was badly hurt and we all got off with a few bruises and skinned noses.

We ate everything in the outfit that morning, and then starvation began staring us in the face. We knew very well there would be no help sent us. The construction company that was doing the work furnished their own locomotives, of which they had only seven, and they were all stuck in that drift and disabled, fifty miles from a telegraph office. We put in the day and night the best we could; by the next evening the storm had let up a little. I started out on a hunt for a rabbit or anything else I could find. I got back to the train just before night with several jack rabbits. The men all turned in and dressed the animals, and we had roast rabbit without salt for supper.

Next morning about ten of the men left the train and started south to make the Santa Fe that day.

I went out with another man, and we got several jack rabbits, an antelope and a coyote. We certainly lived fine that day. There were only six cartridges left in the outfit.

By that time the storm had let up somewhat, and there was a world of snow on the ground, with a cold north wind blowing. Two of us started out after more rabbits, taking along a good club to kill them with, as I wanted to save the cartridges for antelope. That is all we had to live on for a week or more. We had to cook our rabbits on the ground, as there was no way to cook them in the cars. What little sleeping we did was in the way cars.

When the snow quit drifting, every man went to work to dig the train out of the snow. Luckily for us, we had a car of coal along, and with that the engineers managed to keep one engine alive. We finally got the train dug out and the track clear. By hard work we got to a siding, where all the dead engines and cars were set out and left. One locomotive, one car of coal and two cabooses were all we took along. It was buck snow, pack water for the engine, hunt and cook rabbits until we got back to Chivington.

When we arrived at Chivington the Missouri Pacific was fitting out a train to hunt us up. I went through that train and saw several boxes that looked like they would just fit a man who had either frozen or starved to death.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GREEN COUNTRY BOY AND THE WISE CITY
MAN—THE BADGER FIGHT—ATTACKED BY A WAR
PARTY OF INDIANS AND THE RACE FOR LIFE.

You do not have to have much brain—in fact, you do not need any—just a handful of sawdust will furnish all the gray matter that is required to perpetrate a practical joke on a boy just off the farm, on his first trip to the city, looking for some kind of employment. When I was a kid the first thing I struck was a job in a printing office. I remember about that type-louse yet. I have heard of the boy who went to work for the railroad and hunted for the red oil; how the carpenter's cub was hunting for the angle plum bob, the round square, and that pair of ponies tied out in the shed. I have heard the story about the left-hand monkey wrench and the wooden car wheel. After I got wise to such things, I resolved that I would turn a few jokes loose myself—not on the boy off the farm, but on a class of full grown city men who ought to have known better—newspaper men, drummers, preachers, gamblers, saloon men, doctors, actors, and lawyers. The fact is, I never let any get past the first base. Whenever a man gets a “rep” for doing something funny or serious, as the case may be, he is sure to be pointed out to every man that stops in the town where he is as “That’s the fellow that did so and so.”

After Savage called the bluff on the sixty rough-necks

and would-be bad men in Chivington, everybody would come down to that saloon to look that new man over—like a lot of farmers at a fat stock show, looking at a prize-winning pig. Some one usually told me the remarks they made after they got out of sight.

“Did you notice what a bad eye he had?”

“My, but he has a vicious looking face.”

“He looks to me like a young lawyer or doctor.”

“If I had met him back East in some little country town I would have taken him for a preacher with his first appointment.”

“I wonder where he came from, anyway?”

I organized the Benevolent Order of Badgers that winter, and we initiated over a hundred new members. There were no farm boys in the bunch, either. Neither was there a goat. Just the candidate, a dog, the badger, and a few other small articles. A badger is one of the scrappiest scamps for his size I ever saw. It takes a fighting dog to whip him, and very few fighting dogs can do the trick. Every man that dropped off at Chivington on any kind of business wanted to join the Benevolent Order of Badgers, in order to see a dog and a badger fight. The initiation fee was nothing in advance, only what you felt like donating for the good of the Order after the ceremony. To pull off a fight we had to have a dog, a badger, a rope, a box and the candidate. In order that the badger should be at his best, we usually let him have all the water he could drink out of the sink behind the bar beforehand. Then we put him under the box until we were ready for the fight. In order to keep him from digging out, we had him tied with a long rope. When every-

thing was ready, someone was to hold the dog, another was to lift the box up, and the candidate was to give the rope a quick pull, when out would come the badger and the fight was on. The candidate always took the boys into the saloon to pay the initiation fee. After that he got all his friends to join the badgers.

I organized a lodge of Pale Faced Red Men. Every man that came along wanted to join. It was something new—had all the other lodges beaten seven to one. It didn't cost you a cent in advance—just a glorious good time. Every time you meet a brother, and they are scattered all over the country, he would like to have you join. Take you in to-night or the next time you drop in town. "Say, by the way, a lot of the boys are going out to chase jack rabbits. Like to go along? Finest sport on earth. We keep a lot of greyhounds for our amusement. How would you like to get out on the open prairie and get some fresh air? It beats riding in an old smoky car. Yes, we have a good gentle horse that can go some—wont cost you a cent. Yes, we will get back in plenty of time for your train. How soon—right now? Sure. Set your sample case right behind the bar. No one will molest it." While one of the good brothers would be making such a spiel, another bunch would be getting the dogs and horses ready for the jack rabbit chase. When the candidate was ready, the brother gave the signal to come on. Then we would ride up and another talk would be made.

"Say, Bill, here is a friend of mine that would like to go hunting with you."

"Well, all right, get on your horses and lets go."

"All right: say Sam, let Mr. Goldstine ride your

horse—that's the best horse in town for a man to ride that is not used to horseback riding."

Mr. Goldstine with the help of two or three men is finally helped on the horse and away they go. They will get about two or three miles from town and will ride around a hill. Not over half a mile away will be a bunch of Indians, coming that way on a fast run.

"Look there, men, see the Indians! And they are on the warpath! If they catch us they will burn everyone of us at the stake. Everyone of you men go to town as quick as you can."

About that time the Indians commence to shoot and let out a few war whoops. One or two rabbit hunters throw up their hands and fall off their horses. Mr. Goldstine and the rest would certainly burn the grass for a few yards. If Mr. Man had not been so excited he would have noticed that the men fell off their horses easy and always held their horses. The rest would run off and leave Mr. Goldstine to come in as fast as he could on that old gentle horse. All the time he was doing his best to make that old horse keep up with the rest, and here come the Indians yelling and shooting. By the time the Indians catch up with him, he is making every distress signal that he can think of—"Mine God, mine God, what will will become of Rachel and little Ikey? Please, Mr. Indian, don't kill me!"

By the time Mr. Goldstine and the Indians get to the town, he is a pretty good Pale Faced Red Man—ready to buy everybody as many drinks as he can stand. We initiated seventy-five or a hundred that winter into the

mysteries of the Pale Faced Red Men, and I think that I have more than evened up the score a hundred times for every joke that was played on me when I was a green kid just off the farm, and I have a great many others to tell you later on.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE OPENING OF OKLAHOMA IN '89—THE AMERICAN INDIANS—THE BOOMER AND THE SOONER—CAPTAIN PAYNE AND COUCH—THE SIGNAL GUNS—A RACE FOR A HOME—A MULE SEVENTEEN FEET HIGH—A PRAIRIE DOG HOLE AND THE FIRST CLAIM—PARADISE VALLEY—HATCHING LITTLE CHICKENS WHILE YOU WAIT—DUTCH HENRY, A NOTED HORSE THIEF FROM DODGE CITY—DOC—KAFFIR CORN, TURNIPS, RABBITS AND COWPEAS—GEORGE CALLISON'S FAMOUS RABBIT TRAP—ROPING A CRAZY MAN—A CASE OF BLIND STAGGERS—A CASE OF APPENDICITIS—PLEASE DON'T SHOOT THE FIDDLER, HE IS DOING THE BEST HE CAN—"NEVER-MORE"—A BAD CASE—A CYCLONE—FOUR DEAD IN THE MULNIX HOME—A RAILROAD WRECK.

During the first half of the last century the American Indian was much more of a problem than he is to-day. He still occupied a large part of the territory of the United States, and as the white population increased from year to year, the red men became more and more in the way. It was a bothersome question, and various efforts were made to segregate them in places far remote from civilization, where they could pursue their wandering life in their own sweet way. These efforts were never very successful, for two reasons: First, the Indians themselves did not like being moved about in this arbitrary way; and sec-

ondly, the lands chosen for them were almost sure to be just the kind that were best suited for the purposes of civilization, and would soon be wanted by the white men.

Perhaps the most important attempt of this kind was when the Government in 1832 set apart the region that came to be known as "Indian Territory" for the tribes then living east of the Mississippi River. It was supposed at the time that the Indians could be prevailed upon to move to this territory and make it their permanent home, as it was full of wild game and well suited to Indian life. It was already occupied by several small tribes and various others were induced to go there. Some, however, flatly refused to be transferred, and some that did go soon became dissatisfied and made frequent attempts to return to their old haunts. It was a big job the Government undertook—that of trying to "settle" a lot of roaming Indians—and a good many bloody conflicts resulted.

While this was going on the white people were settling on all sides of the Territory. Naturally they looked with longing eyes on this goodly land, entirely too good, they thought, for Indians, and determined efforts were made from time to time to get the country opened up for settlement by white people.

The first open step in this direction was the introduction of a bill into the Forty-first Congress to organize a civil government for that portion of the territory now known as Oklahoma. The bill was referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs and afterward reported to the House, and debated at length, but it never came to a final vote.

In 1882, having become tired of waiting for Congress

to do something, a large number of people in the surrounding States and Territories organized for an "invasion" of the coveted country. They called themselves "Boomers," and attempted to take forcible possession of the land.

This, of course, brought on a crisis, for the Government was in duty bound to resist all attempts at such invasion. For several years the region was patrolled by troops, and there were many encounters between them and the "Boomers."

The notion that these "Boomers" were a lawless horde seeking control of lands belonging to the Indians, is unjust; at any rate there was some justification for their contention. The tract claimed by them consisted of something near 1,900,000 acres, or about three thousand square miles, lying in the center of what was then Indian Territory—now Oklahoma. They based their claim on the "squatters' rights" laws enacted early in the nation's history, to protect the rights of pioneers who had ventured far in advance of the frontier and improved certain parts of the public domain. They claimed that the tract mentioned was unoccupied and unappropriated public domain. The matter was taken before the Secretary of the Interior, and he ruled against them. How the courts would have decided will never be known, for Congress put an end to the claim by decreeing that the Government should settle with them for any damages they might suffer by reason of the Government's ignoring certain deed restrictions.

We must carefully distinguish between the "Boomers" and the "Sooners." The "Boomers," as a class, were good citizens; many of them the children of the excellent pioneers who settled Kansas, Texas, and the

Southwest generally. They really believed, as I have stated, that the lands on which they wished to settle were a part of the public domain, and therefore subject to colonization. While it is true they frequently came in contact with the Government authorities and were expelled as intruders, it is also true that they appealed to the law over and over again, and on one or two occasions even sent delegates to Washington to argue their cause. And most important of all, it should be remembered that when he was tried for trespass on Indian lands, in 1884, Captain Payne, the greatest "Boomer" of them all, was pronounced innocent, and his contention that the lands he sought to colonize were public lands was confirmed.

The "Sooners" were an entirely different class. Thirty years ago the whole Southwest was speckled with bad men and outlaws. Prior to the opening of the Oklahoma country, they congregated in the Indian Territory and Oklahoma, ready and eager to take any advantage that might come their way. These are the men who slipped in ahead of the time set for the race and secured choice claims. They were thieves and outlaws, by both nature and practice, and in stealing Oklahoma lands from honest settlers they were just pursuing their regular line of business. Perhaps not all the "Sooners" deserved hanging, but many of them did.

I trust I have now made it clear, the difference between "Boomers" and "Sooners," and when the authoritative and standard history of Oklahoma comes to be written, I trust the same distinction will be made clear.

The best known of all the "Boomers," in fact, the leading man in the early history of Oklahoma, was Captain

David L. Payne. He had been a gallant soldier in the Civil War, and afterwards served with distinction in the Kansas legislature.

It was about the year 1879 that Captain Payne became interested in the movement to colonize the country known as Oklahoma. He claimed the right to settle on this land, under the treaty made by the United States Government with the Indians in 1866. By this treaty the Oklahoma lands were ceded by the Indians to the United States, and therefore became, Payne claimed, a part of the public domain. Through his efforts a large company was organized for the purpose of entering upon and colonizing these lands. Early in December, 1880, the colony assembled not far from the borders of the territory. The expedition numbered about six hundred men and a considerable number of women and children. They marched for some distance along the border line, but did not enter the forbidden land, as they hoped to receive permission from the Government to do so. They were closely followed by United States troops ready to turn them back if they ventured across the line.

After considerable parleying with Government officials, Captain Payne was arrested, charged with trespassing on Indian lands. Deprived of their leader, the colonists disbanded temporarily. The trial resulted in Captain Payne being placed under one thousand dollars' bonds not to re-enter the forbidden land, and he returned home.

After that Captain Payne conducted four well-organized expeditions into the territory, each time planting a colony, and each time being turned out by the

United States authorities, his property being destroyed before his eyes. Each time he demanded a trial, but did not secure one till 1884, when he was pronounced guilty of no crime; that the lands he sought to colonize were public lands.

Captain Payne then organized a larger and stronger expedition than ever. After delays and discouragements that would have disheartened most men, it seemed as if success were going to crown his efforts at last. His expedition was about ready to start on its march to the promised land when death overtook him very suddenly. His biographer does not say so, but it was generally understood at the time that he was poisoned by his enemies. The cattle barons did not want the Oklahoma lands opened to settlement; their purposes were much better served by leaving them in the hands of the Indians. It was the opposition of these same cattle barons which so long prevented Congress doing anything.

The agitation was kept up, and in 1885 another bill was introduced in Congress, providing for opening up the territory for settlement. This passed the House, but was defeated in the Senate.

Finally an amendment to the Indian Appropriation bill was slipped through both houses and became a law. It provided that the lands should be opened to white settlement, but did not provide for a form of government. This meant that the country should be opened up to settlement under the protection of the army, until Congress could provide some sort of civil government.

Orders were accordingly issued for United States troops to take charge of the opening. General Wesley



Early Days in Guthrie

Merritt, commanding the Department of the Missouri, was delegated by President Harrison to personally supervise the opening. He established his headquarters at Oklahoma Station, now Oklahoma City. A battalion of four companies from Fort Lyon, Colorado, arrived there on April 19. A troop of the Fifth United States Cavalry was also stationed there. Small detachments of soldiers were also stationed at Guthrie and Kingfisher. The territory was completely surrounded by a cordon of troops. The cordon, however, could not have been very strong, even allowing for the assistance of the many hundreds of deputy marshals sworn in for the occasion. As stated before, the territory thus guarded and to be thrown open to settlement comprised about three thousand square miles. Some idea of the magnitude of the tract may be gained from the following statement:—

The eastern boundary was sixteen miles east of Oklahoma City, with an extension eastward north of the Cimarron River to its junction with the Arkansaw River. The northern boundary was the present northern boundary of Kingfisher and Logan Counties. The western boundary was one mile west of Kingfisher and El Reno. The southern boundary was the South Canadian River.

The troops did the best they could, perhaps, to keep out the "Sooners," but to say they did keep them out, even fairly well, would be ridiculous. In illustration, I am tempted to get ahead of my story a little, by quoting from Captain Stiles, who was in command of a company of United States troops stationed at Oklahoma Station on the eventful day of the opening.

"Just previous to twelve o'clock," he says, "not a

person was in sight, and the whole country presented the appearance of unbroken quiet. At high noon the trumpet sounded at the camp and the whistle at the depot blew, when in an instant some five hundred men or more appeared to rise from the ground like grasshoppers and run hither and thither in all directions. I was in camp upon the high ground, watching with a field glass for the people to come in, not expecting the first comers to appear as they did."

Outside the cordon of soldiers, waiting for the grand rush, were perhaps fifty thousand men—all eager to secure homes in this new El Dorado. It was one of the strangest aggregations of human beings ever gathered together. Thousands of them had lost their homes "back east," other thousands had never had any homes. All were determined to secure as good a claim as possible and found a new home.

The largest gatherings were at Arkansas City on the north and Purell on the south. It was about fifty-seven miles from Arkansas City to the strip line, so those gathered there were allowed to proceed to the strip line, under the escort of United States soldiers, before the day of the opening. Thus those at Purell and other points would have no unfair advantage.

The signal guns were fired at twelve o'clock sharp on April 22, 1889, and the great race was on. It has been described many times, by many men, and from many points of view. There are many variations of course, but in the essential features all the accounts agree. Certainly never before, and probably never again, will the world behold such a gigantic wild scramble for land. I shall not under-

take to describe it, except to relate, in my humble way, the part I took in it, including some ludicrous things that came within my own observation and experience.

I was a comparatively young man at the time, with no settled abode, and I felt that I was entitled to a homestead in Oklahoma—the Land of the Fair God—if I could get it. It looked like a golden opportunity and I could at least make a try. Like a great many other young men, I had had my eye on that country for several years. I had been a cowboy in the Oklahoma country and knew its worth. I had been with Payne in two of his expeditions, and had been fired out each time by Uncle Sam's troopers. Hence I felt that I was qualified by experience to enter the race. It was going to be a free-for-all race, with a lot of prizes, and an experienced rider with a good horse ought to be able to secure a good claim.

Along about the first of April I went to Arkansas City and found I was in no danger of perishing from lonesomeness. Thousands of homeseekers were already there, with fresh arrivals every hour. Arkansas City was the busiest town you ever saw. There was something doing every minute. But one thought, and one only, was in every mind—the great race.

South of Arkansas City, and leading to the strip line, was a lane four miles long. This lane, or road, was filled with "Boomers," wedged in so thick that elbow room was at a premium. It had been raining for several days, and the mud in the lane was about two feet deep. There were no roll-calls, and it will never be known how many men disappeared permanently beneath the surface. Everyone

regretted not having brought a fence-post along to pry himself out of the mud.

About a week before the time set for the grand opening the gate at the south end of the lane was opened by one of Uncle Sam's soldier boys, and the first part of the race was on. Away we flew across the Cherokee strip, fifty-seven miles to the Oklahoma line. When we arrived at the Salt Fork River it was bank full, so here the "Boomers" were lined up for the second time. There was just one dinky little ferry-boat, which one wagon filled to the point of overflowing. It had to make two trips to get one "Boomer" and his outfit across. It looked like some of us would have to wait till the next year to get across. But where there's a will a way can be found. Next morning we planked the Santa Fe railroad bridge, and thus got across quite comfortably. At Orlando the soldiers rounded us up to wait for the opening. I went a few miles east of the railroad to make my start, as I wanted to get a claim about where Clarkson is now located.

At eleven o'clock A. M., on April 22, 1889, every Boomer was ready. Another hour and the great race would be on. Eleven fifteen—eleven thirty—eleven forty-five—twelve o'clock—a soldier shot off his gun, and we were off. A roar of voices rose along the line. Instantly the whole border began to smoke with dust, and out of the crowd pushed the noses of the best saddle-horses. Then came men in buggies and wagons, on bicycles and on foot—all rushing forward with one grand impulse. I noticed one poor fellow with his outfit in a wheelbarrow.

Yes, the run was on; and what was poor little Willie going to get out of that mighty race, where a sixshooter

and a good horse were trumps? I pushed my dinky little pony up to the line. On one side of me was a wagon drawn by a yoke of oxen, and on the other was a young man astride a mule that seemed to me to be about seventeen feet high—I think it was fully that many hands high.

That young man and his mule certainly were a sight to see. Even in the excitement of getting started I was impressed with the picture. He had an old human saddle tied onto the mule with a rope, and a wonderful assortment of camp equipage tied onto the saddle. In front was a roll of blankets, loosely strapped together and the corners flapping. Tied on behind the saddle were a feather bed, a two-bushel sack of grub, a dog tent, a small sheet iron stove, a frying-pan, a coffee-pot, an old suitcase, about fifty feet of rope and several other articles I do not now remember. He had an old smooth-bore gun in one hand and a claim-stake in the other. The bridle-reins he held in his teeth. Just before we started I asked the young man his name. He said they called him Jack Hartenbower in Kansas, and that if he succeeded in getting a claim he would still be known by that name in Oklahoma.

It is wonderful how a little thing will sometimes change the whole course of a man's life. A chance remark, a mere trifle, a little thing like a prairie dog hole may do it. If everything had worked out as the young man intended that day, he would have secured a good claim, perhaps right on the spot where they would want to locate the capitol building of the new State. That would be only the beginning. Soon he would be elected the first governor of the State, and beyond that—who knows what might happen?

That old mule certainly did surprise everybody who saw the start from that part of the line. He shot out a full length ahead of any other horse, made half a dozen jumps, and went into a prairie dog hole. The rider went over the mule's head with all that camp equipage, including the claim stake. When I passed him he was standing on his head and holding on to the claim stake, and the claim stake was holding a good homestead. As it was then just one second after twelve o'clock, he concluded it was too late to make a second start to Guthrie, and just stayed on that claim. That gave him the honor of locating the first claim in Oklahoma, and if the voters of Oklahoma do not make Jack Hartenbower Governor, it won't be any fault of mine.

After a hard run, I staked a good claim, not far from where Clarkson, Payne County, is now located. I turned my pony loose to graze, built a fire, had supper, spread out my saddle blanket for a bed, and turned in. As my nerves had been strung up during the excitement prior to the opening, I had slept very little for a month. When I went to sleep that night, I went to sleep in earnest. I dreamed that I was in paradise (and later that township in Payne County was named Paradise), and that St. Peter was telling me if I would settle down on that claim for five years, he would give me a deed to it, and give me a pass to heaven when I died.

Next morning when I woke up the sun was about two hours high, and I was in a strange place. It was all smooth prairie land where I camped that evening; but where I was then, it was all timber and rock and close to a little creek. I got up and looked around, and wondered

how it came that I had changed my location. How did I get here? There was my pony, saddle and everything I had. I was sure I had camped on the prairie on a good homestead that evening, but in the morning when I woke up I found myself on a rough claim, all covered with timber and rock. Some of my readers may think that I got up in my sleep and moved, but I did nothing of the sort. I never have been accused of sleep walking. It was too late then to look for a better claim, so I started out to see where I was and how I had made the change.

I hunted around in every direction, to see what kind of a claim I had, and how many other fellows were on the same piece of land. As I did not find anyone within half a mile of my camp, I stuck up some signs that this was my claim and for others to keep off. That evening I got on my pony and started off to find myself. After a little while I found another homesteader. I asked him who I was and what I was doing in the brush anyway, and if he had anything that I could eat, and if he would go to Alfred next day and bring me out some things I wanted and had to have.

I told him about locating on a prairie claim that evening, and asked him if he could tell me how I had come to make the change. Then he laughed and said that four men passed his house in the night, carrying something in a blanket, and leading a pony that looked like mine. Then a great light dawned upon me. That is how it happened that I changed homesteads in one night without knowing anything about it. Four men had picked me up in a blanket, carried me a few miles, and left me.

After I had had something to eat, he took me out and

showed me around. It was wonderful. No person was allowed to go into Oklahoma before twelve o'clock on April 22, 1889, and here was a man who had built a nice two-roomed log house in twenty-four hours, and had moved his family into it. His wife had made a garden, and had onions, radishes and lettuce large enough to eat, inside of twenty-four hours. That was going some. He showed me a nice little poultry house, and his wife was taking off an old hen with fifteen little chickens. The man had built the house, the woman had set the hen, and the hen had hatched out fifteen little chickens—all inside of twenty-four hours. I would not have believed it if I had not seen it myself.

Then he showed me his barn. He had all kinds of stock. There was a cow with a little calf that looked as if it might be a day old. I asked the man if the calf made the run of twelve miles in two hours, and he said "yes."

"Say, Mister Man," I said, "I will give you a hundred dollars for that calf. I want to train him for the race track, because I can win every race for the next five years and it would make me rich."

When Oklahoma was opened to white settlers, no person was allowed to go in until twelve o'clock, April 22nd; and to see that the law was enforced the line around the reservation was patrolled night and day by the United States Army and a world of Deputy United States Marshals. If any one did slip in and should get caught by a soldier or a marshal, he would forfeit all his rights to a homestead. But there are always rascals and thieves ready to take advantage of the law. A lot of men did slip in and take claims. They were known as "Sooners"

and law suits innumerable arose between them and the honest settlers. I think some of the cases are still in the courts, and if you were to take a spade and dig in the right places, I think you would find a good many skeletons all over Oklahoma—victims of these conflicts. There is a small stream in Oklahoma that goes by the name of Skeleton River. It got its name from the fact that many skeletons have been found along its banks at different times.

The old question between the "Sooners" and the other settlers has not been settled to this day. Payne and his associates spent their time and money for years, working night and day, in Congress and out, trying to have the country opened for white settlement. They were arrested time and again by the United States soldiers, and thrown into vile prisons, but were always turned out, because the Government could not make the case against them stick. Payne was poisoned and died before the opening. Couch, his first lieutenant, made the run, got a good claim, and was shot to death shortly afterward by a man who claimed that he, Couch, was a "Sooner." Most all Oklahoma Boomers, as they were called, stayed out and made the run. Is it any wonder they were infuriated when they got to the claim they had worked for years, and found some infernal thief of a "Sooner" on it, who had never spent a nickel or a minute of his time to get the reservation opened to the white man? The "Sooners," every mother's son of them, ought to have been shot or hung on sight—that is what Little Bill thinks of it.

I made arrangements with my new neighbor to go to Alfred on the Santa Fe next day and bring me a supply

of grub and a few things that I had to have. I went back home, and such a home! It consisted of a tin cup, a saddle blanket, plenty of wood to burn and abundance of creek water to drink. However, I settled down to business, like all the homesteaders. The first thing I had to do was to find corner stones, so that I could discover the number of my claim. There was an old hollow tree about six feet in diameter close to where I camped, and after looking it over carefully I decided to make a home out of it. I got my neighbor to help me saw three cuts off the trunk, each about eight feet long, and we rolled them together, in the shape of an L. One section I lived in, another I slept in and the third one was for my pony. I think I was as well fixed as any man in Oklahoma the first week. I lived in that hollow tree seven years, as it was better than the house I built.

I put in that summer building a log house and making other improvements. I raised all kinds of garden sass, and I had ten acres of sod corn that did well.

About that time I ran into Dutch Henry, once a noted horse thief at Dodge City. Just what Henry and I did that first winter I will tell you in my next book. We never got hung or put in jail; neither did we cut much cord-wood.

Oklahoma at that time was the natural home of the diamond rattlesnake, and there was a good big supply of them everywhere. I have seen them eight feet long and twelve inches in circumference. The biggest one I ever killed had twenty-eight rattles and a button. That fall one of my neighbor's boys was bitten by a snake while his father was in Guthrie, and his mother was too badly excited to do anything, except send an older boy after me

to come and doctor the patient. I went in a hurry. There was not a drop of whiskey to be had, but I went to work like I did on big Jim, when the tarantula bit him. What I did was a plenty, and the boy got over it. The boys gave me the name of "Doc," and a lot of people there thought I was a sure-enough doctor, and this got me into all kinds of scrapes.

The second year everybody started out to raise a big crop, but there was not much rain, and the crops were mostly failures. But we raised plenty of Kaffir corn—that is, everybody that planted it. As we had plenty of fall rain, everybody raised a big crop of turnips. Any of the old Boomers can tell you about the turnip year in Oklahoma. We lived on turnips, we traded turnips for anything, from a bushel of Kaffir corn to a lot of rabbits. Many a time that winter I went to bed without supper, and did not have any breakfast next morning until I could catch a rabbit. On Sunday we had squirrel pot-pie

We ate Kaffir corn, turnips, rabbits and cow-peas. We talked about them and we dreamed about them at night. We made kraut out of turnips; we had turnips and rabbits boiled together; we had them fried; we made bread out of Kaffir corn meal.

When Christmas time came we had a Christmas tree. Kaffir corn, turnips, cow-peas and a few rabbits were hung on the tree. Old Santa Claus was dressed up to represent a full-grown jack rabbit. Turnips was the joker, Kaffir corn was the right bower, cow peas was the left bower, and the rabbit was the king pin, whole hog or none.

When we met any of the neighbors, the first question would be: "How are your turnips holding out? Have

you found any other way to serve them?" Tom Ewert told me that Ben Jenkins over on Stillwater Creek fattened fifteen hundred hogs on turnips; but Jim Hunt told me that Ewert was mistaken about that; he fed fifteen hundred bushels of turnips to one old sow, and finally had to kill her to keep her from starving to death.

I kept six dogs that winter to catch rabbits. Everybody was too poor to buy powder and shot, so we just had to get the rabbits some other way besides shooting them. Along towards Spring rabbits began to get scarce and hard to catch, and Oklahoma was close to a meat famine. A young fellow over in Clear Creek Valley by the name of George Callison solved the rabbit question in this way; He was out in the woods one day, chopping wood for his wife; he took a piece of charcoal and made a black ring on the end of the log, just to be doing something. He did not realize at the time that he was doing something of more importance to the people of Oklahoma than anything that Edison, the great wizard, had done up to that time.

Callison kept a few dogs himself, and he had two boys that could track a rabbit through a snowbank. On this particular day his boys and the dogs were out catching rabbits for their mother to cook with the wood that their father was chopping. An old rabbit they were chasing headed that way, and seeing the black ring on the log, and thinking it was a hole, he made a dive for it. He went against the end of the log so hard that it broke his neck.

They say that nearly all great discoveries have been made by accident; and this is true of the greatest rabbit trap known to the people of Oklahoma. Did George Callison rush to Washington and get a patent and make

himself rich selling county rights? No, he did nothing of the sort; he just showed everybody how to make a rabbit trap, and thus was the means of saving thousands of people's lives that winter. The old Boomers of Oklahoma ought to erect a monument over his grave when he dies for saving so many lives, and he ought to have one of the Carnegie medals.

Along towards Spring there was a great deal of sickness in the country, and as there was only one doctor in that part of the country, he had all he could do and more, too. When he could not be had in a hurry they would come for me, as I had doctored a few simple cases with success. As I was not a doctor anyway, I never made any charges, except in one bad case.

Whenever I was sent for I made inquiries about how the sick person was acting before I started to see the patient; and as I had always kept a supply of calomel, rhubarb, fig syrup and quinine on hand for myself, I would put some in my pocket and take it along.

One day a great big six-foot boy rushed up to me and said his pa was acting very queerly, and he wanted me to come and see him. I grabbed my medicine and a quart bottle of skunk oil that I had fried out that day, got on my pony and away I went. When we got to the house where the boy lived, the old man was running around in a circle, and groaning so you could hear him a mile away. He was wild and had a club in his hand. It was not safe to get close to him. When I spoke to him at a good safe distance, he did not know me. We tried to get him to stop and talk to us, but he just kept on waving that club over his head and making that funny noise. Everybody

said he had gone crazy. As it was not safe to get close to him, he had things his own way for about thirty minutes after I got there.

We held a council of war, and it was decided that we would have to rope him to keep him from hurting himself or someone else. There was no one else in the crowd that could throw a rope on a blind cow, so I had to put the rope on the old man myself. I laid out a program in my mind: I would get on my pony and throw the rope on one or both the old man's feet, and drag him over the ground until he let go of that club. Then the rest of the men would jump on him and tie him, so we could give him some medicine. I had come to the conclusion that it was a case of blind staggers, caused by eating too much wormy Kaffir corn mush the night before, and my quart of skunk oil would do the job in a hurry, if anything would. I told his wife and boys that it would be hard on the old man if he did not drop that club pretty soon after I put the rope on him, as I would have to keep him moving pretty lively to keep him from getting on his feet and catching me and beating the life out of me. They said to catch him and drag him around until he dropped the club, so they could tie him. I got on my pony, let out the rope and made a run by him. I dropped the rope on one of his feet, and as it tightened up, he went down on the ground. The noise he made and the way he acted for another half-hour were certainly something nobody else ever heard or saw, except the crowd that was there at that time. I dragged him around over the plowed ground; I pulled him up and down the road; I hauled him over a pile of fence posts and over the wood pile a few times, through a

barbed wire fence, over a new iron harrow, and every time I would stop he would jump up and make for me. He acted just like I have seen men in Texas act with a loco jag on.

It is a fact well known among cow-punchers that when you rope a steer and bump him against the ground he will lay still long enough for you to tie him. But that is not the case with a buffalo; he will jump to his feet every time you bump him. That was the way with the old man; every time I would bump him against the ground he would jump to his feet.

I was getting tired, so was my pony. I had to do something and do it quick. I brought the pony in a half-circle and in a dead run around two trees, and jerked the old man in between the trees so hard that the rope broke and he lay still until the rest of the men grabbed him. They tied the old fellow, and he was a sight to see. All his clothes were torn off, and part of his hide. There was a red ring around his leg where the rope was tied, and his head was on crooked where he lodged in the trees. I gave him that quart of skunk oil the first thing after we got him quiet. All we could do was to wait for an officer of the law to come and get him. After about half an hour I gave him a spoonful of calomel. In another half hour I administered a dose of castor oil which they kept to grease the wagon with. In about two hours after I gave him the first dose of medicine he began to feel easier, and it was not long until he was much better. He went to sleep and by midnight he was all right. By the time the deputy sheriff got there the next day, the old man was sitting up in bed, mad as a wet hen, but laughing about the fun we all had at his expense.

Kind reader, if you ever happen to be on the head of Wild Horse Creek, in Paradise Township, Payne County, Oklahoma, and run on to anybody who was there at my wild west show, ask him how I cured the old man of a bad case of blind staggers.

Not long after that I thought I would call on a young lady who was holding down a claim about two miles from mine. As she was a good cook, I arranged it with myself that I would happen in about dinner time. I got to the house and knocked on the door, but received no answer. I tried the door and it was locked; then I knew she was not at home. I turned around to go, when I saw her big dog headed my way. As he had a very bad name among the boys, I thought it would be best to do something. There was nothing in sight but the log house and that big dog. I got up on top of the house to wait until the lady came home, and stayed on top till she did come, about ten o'clock the next morning. I never called on her again.

One day I had a call to go see a sick man, not far from where I lived. I told the man who came after me that I had quit practicing medicine. I advised him to go and get Dr. Johnson at Clarkson. He replied that they had already been after him, but he was in Stillwater, and would not be back until next day. As I was the only man they knew about, they wanted me to come and do what I could, as the old man was very sick. He insisted so hard on my going that I went and took along my medicine. When I entered the house the old man was laying on the bed doubled up like a jack knife, having cramping spells. I asked him how he felt, and what was the matter with him. He said he felt very bad, and if I could not help

him he would die before morning, as he had appendicitis.

"Had what?" I asked.

"Appendicitis"—well, that was a new one on me, as I had never heard of it before. He had been reading about it in the newspapers and had made up his mind from the way he felt that he had it, and that nothing but an operation would save his life. I tried to talk him out of an operation, and told him there was nothing the matter with him but an overfeed of Kaffir corn and turnips. Nothing I could say would change his mind, so I finally consented to operate. I told him I did not have any tools to work with, and that it would take a doctor to put him under the influence of ether. When nothing else would do, I made him believe that I could do the job all right. All he would have to do was to lie still and take his medicine. Everything I did that night was to gain time, and put him off until morning.

I commenced by giving him a pint of skunk oil; then I told his wife to get the tools that he said I could use, and she got me an old hatchet, a butcher knife, an old saw and a pair of pliers that he kept to fix wire fences with. I told the old man I would have to have an oil stone and a file to sharpen up the tools with. It was anything with me to gain time, and to give that oil a chance to work. I put in about an hour sharpening up those tools. Then I told the woman that I would have to have a lot of hot water, and she went to work to heat the water. I told her I would have to have quite a lot of old rags or an old gunny sack to stop the blood with. I did all I could to gain time, but the old man had another bad cramping spell, and began to get mad and wanted to know if I was going to let him lie

there and die. I gave him a half tea cup of soda, and another half cup of vinegar. After he got quiet again I put him on the table and told him to shut his eyes and pray to the Lord to help, and I would do the best I could. In place of sharpening that old butcher knife, I filed all the edge off of it and made it smooth so it would not cut butter.

I unbuttoned his clothes and gave him a good rubbing, all the time pretending to locate the appendix, so I would know where to commence; for I knew that if I could put him off until that skunk oil worked, he would get all right; then I rolled up my sleeves, picked up my knife and drew it across his stomach pretty hard, for I knew it would not cut him. Then I asked him if he thought he could stand it, and he said he did not know whether he could or not. I took the old knife, gave him a jab or two, and drew it across him a little harder; then I picked up the hatchet and let on as if I was going to chop a hole in him. Then I changed my mind, and put a rag on him so hot that it made him grunt. I told him the water would soften up his skin, and would keep him from bleeding too badly. I gave him a few more jabs with the knife, and by that time he was getting easier; and when I gave him an extra jab in the side with the knife, he wanted to know if I could not see better in the day time. "Sure, I could," so we put it off until morning, and by that time he was all right. About a month after that I sent him a bill for \$400 when I knew that he could not pay six bits. We finally compromised by him giving me a bushel of Kaffir corn and cutting my hair.

I played the fiddle for most all the dances that winter

and had a fine time. About Christmas the boys secured a lot of booze from somewhere, and one night they got on a spree and did considerable shooting. It looked for a while as though someone might get hurt, but it turned out all right. When it was all over they found the fiddler under the bed, with eight or ten other fellows on top to keep out of the way of the stray bullets.

After that I had a sign printed, "Please don't shoot the fiddler, he is doing the best he can," and when I went to play for a dance I always took my sign along and hung it on the wall for the boys to see it. Sometimes the boys would give me a rabbit in exchange for a number to dance; and the girls would give me a cookie or a piece of pie about midnight. Sometimes some of the boys gave me a little smoke makings.

Some of those pies were wonderful specimens. There were pies made out of rabbits and Kaffir corn meal; pies made out of persimmons; pies made out of wild grapes; pies made out of black haws; pies made out of buck berries; pies made out of wild currants, which were so sour they would spoil a vinegar factory; pies that broke up many a happy home; pies that put the old man in the hay; pies that sent more than one man through the divorce mill.

One cold, rainy night, just after I had gone to bed—that is, if you would call a pile of hay and a saddle blanket a bed—there came a gentle tapping on the door. I knew what was coming, and I said to myself, "Never more." Just then a voice said, "Bill, are you at home?"

"Sure, come in."

"Well, get up. There is trouble. Dr. Johnson is in

Guthrie, and my sister's husband is in Stillwater on the jury. Sister is sick and wants you in a hurry."

After making my usual talk in such cases, I wished that I was dead. I wished that I had never heard of a doctor or of a bottle of medicine. I was not a doctor anyway. I was just helping sick people out of trouble when there was no doctor to be had. In this case I thought I was being imposed upon and I told the young man so. While I was dressing we talked it over, and much as I disliked to go, there was nothing else to be done, and I went.

I had never met this man or his wife. An old German woman who had come into the neighborhood was my only hope. Would she go out on a night like this? Would she be of any help if she did come? I was ready to go. The young man who had come after me went after that good old German woman, with orders to bring her or never come back. When I got to the house I went in without knocking and there was the woman in bed. The fire was out and the room was cold. I went up to the bed, saw that she was just a young girl, and not yet out of her teens, and not another soul within a mile.

The first thing I did was to build a fire and put on some water to warm. The woman told me where to look for just such articles that I knew I would need. By the time grandma came I had a good fire, and the room was warm. Grandma could not speak very good English, but she proved to be one of those dear old ladies who know just what to do in such cases. It took her only a few minutes to remove her wraps and get warm; then we went to work. That is, grandma did. I stood around and looked



City Choir, Graham, Okla.

wise, just like a sure-enough doctor. When the sun came up next morning there was a pair of as pretty little girl babies in that home as any man ever saw.

I put in about a year after that baby call doctoring sick people, horses, cattle, hogs and chickens, plowing Kaffir corn, chopping wood, teaching a class of youngsters at Sunday school, playing the fiddle for the boys and girls to dance by, keeping batch, fishing in the Cimarron River, preaching to the people, serving on the jury, and lots of other things.

There was a case not far from the Cimarron River that had baffled the best physicians in that part of the country, and there were as good doctors in Oklahoma as there were anywhere. But this was a very peculiar case, and it fell to the lot of little Willie to solve the problem, after the other doctors had given it up. One doctor said it was doby itch; another said it was smallpox; another said eczema; another said measles; one said one thing and the rest said something else. As a last resort they sent for me.

One Sunday morning I went to see the man, for two reasons. One was, there was a young lady there that the boys said was as pretty as a sunkist peach; and the other was, she was a good cook. Now, Mr. Reader, if you have ever had to eat your own cooking for a few months, and nothing to cook but rabbits, Kaffir corn, cow peas and turnips, you will know what a few feeds cooked by a pretty young woman meant to me. When I arrived at the house they were all glad to see me. I found the old man very sick, but still able to walk around the yard. We talked about everything in general until after dinner—and such

a dinner! I can taste it yet. Baked possum and sweet potatoes, sweet milk and sure-enough butter, coffee that would make whiskers grow on a base ball, and biscuits that were good enough for John D. I was sick myself for a week after that feed.

After dinner we began to talk about what ailed him. I asked him a thousand questions, to see if I could guess what was the matter. He had a bad cough. His body was all covered with red pimples, with a little white spot in the center of each pimple, rather hard and sharp. Before going home I promised to return and give him a treatment. I put in the next day reading Almanacs, the Life of Jesse James, Bill Nye's "Baled Hay," Brick Pome-roy's "Red Top," and everything else I could find that would give me an idea what was the matter with the old man. I made up my mind that as none of the doctors could kill or cure him, there would be no harm in my trying.

I went out and killed a few skunks that I had been saving up for an occasion like this. I fried them out and got a half gallon of oil. I packed my medicine in a jug and went to see him. I took another man along to help me. I took the old man in a room where I could have him to myself, and at him we went. His old hide was hard and dry as a horse's hoof. I had my helper build a hot fire in the stove. Then I greased the old man all over with that skunk oil as hot as he could stand it, and wrapped him up in a blanket or two, to soften him up. I gave him about a quart of oil and slippery elm bark mixed together to drive it out, wahtever it was. In about an hour he was perspiring pretty freely, and was softening up



George Callison's Famous Rabbit Trap

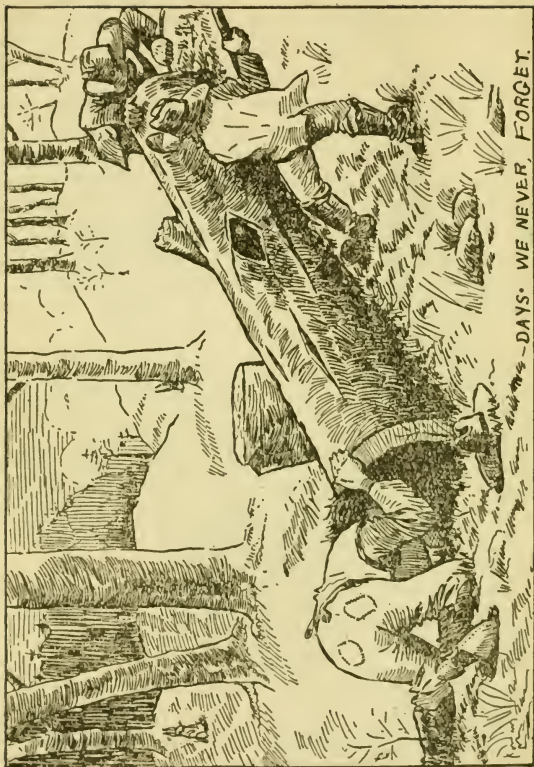
some. I took the blankets off and gave him another coat of oil and slippery elm bark, rolled him up again and put him back in bed. Then I would look wise, feel his pulse, and look at the othe man and wink.

While I was examining his arm I felt something like sharp needles sticking my hand, and I looked to see what it was. It looked like a lot of fish bones; I asked him if he had swallowed any fish bones, and he told me that he had eaten a good many hickory shads that summer and fall, which they had caught in the Cimarron River. After that the job was easy. We put in a day or two picking the fish bones out of his hide, and after a few weeks he got all right.

Kind reader, if you ever eat any hickory shad send for me at once.

One evening as I was coming home from Perkins, a little town on the river east of where I lived, I noticed that the wind suddenly stopped blowing. I looked up and saw the unmistakable signs of a cyclone. If I had been out on the prairie where I could see how things were I could have side-stepped and let it go past. But I was in the timber, where I could not see very well, until it was too late to make my get-away.

I rode down into a little gully and tied my horse good and fast to a root that stuck out of the bank, and then I laid down to let the cyclone pass over. When it struck the gully where I was, it jerked me out of that hole and up I went through the tree tops, sailing around in a circle. The air seemed to be full of all kinds of wreckage; first, I would bump into something, then something would bump into me. They say that a drowning man



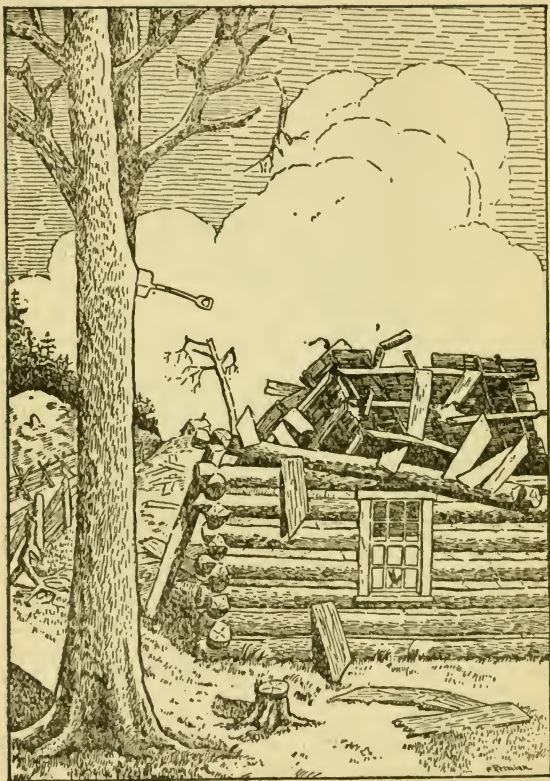
What do You '89ers Know About This

will catch at a straw. While I was sailing around watching for something to catch hold of, an old cow came flying along, and when she got close enough I grabbed her by the tail and away we went. From my position I could not tell whether it was an old-time Dutch waltz, a two-step, the grizzly bear or a Cheyenne Indian war dance; but there was plenty of excitement while it lasted. However, I did not enjoy it a little bit. I was not feeling well when the dance started, and as the music just kept on, the old cow never gave me a chance to catch my breath or to take a drink out of a bottle of medicine that I had bought of a boot-legger in Perkins, and I was pretty dry, too.

I don't think I was over thirty feet from the ground at any time, but what if that cow had let loose and jerked me down against the ground and hurt me? I never gave her a chance to leave me up in the air, though; I just held on, and when she lodged in the top of a tree which the cyclone had not blown down, I got hold of the tree and slid down to the ground. I landed about half a mile from where I had left the pony. He was still there, but the wreckage had whipped him nearly to death. My saddle was gone, and I never did find it. I went on west and stayed all night at the first house I came to, as I was pretty well battered up and my pony was in a worse fix than I was.

The cyclone came from the southwest, just missing the house where I was stopping. Then it went due east for a ways, and after it passed the Mulnix home it crossed the road and went about two points north of east, nearly across Payne County.

The greatest damage was done at the Mulnix home,



A Cyclone in Paradise Valley

where the cyclone seemed to center. Mr. Mulnix was in Stillwater on jury duty. Someone brought the news the next morning and I went back to see the wreckage. Their substantial log house and other improvements were completely wrecked, and when the twister passed on it left, if I recollect right, four dead in the Mulnix family.

The dead had been removed before I got there, but one thing in particular attracted my attention. That was a red oak tree about thirty inches in diameter that stood close to the house and was too solid and strong for the cyclone to blow down. About fifteen feet from the ground the tree forked, and in the most solid part of the fork the wind had driven a shovel more than six inches into the tree.

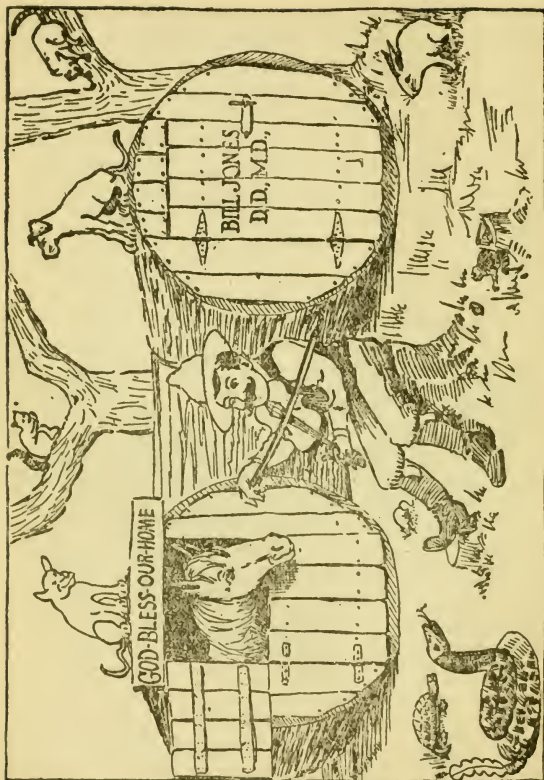
I will let the reader figure out for himself how fast that shovel was going to bury over half of the blade in a solid oak tree, and never bend the blade or damage the handle.

The tree was cut down afterward, and a section about four feet long was sawed out with the shovel in it, and sent to Guthrie to be placed on exhibition. The proceeds were to go to the stricken family, but some scoundrel, without the love of God or fear of the law, stole the souvenir, and as far as I know it never was heard of again.

Kind reader, if you have ever seen such a curiosity in your travels and can give any information that will lead to its recovery, write to the State Historical Society, Oklahoma City, where it ought to be.

Just one more, and I will leave the rest for my next book.

I sold my homestead in Paradise Township and went further west, looking for another farm that I could buy.

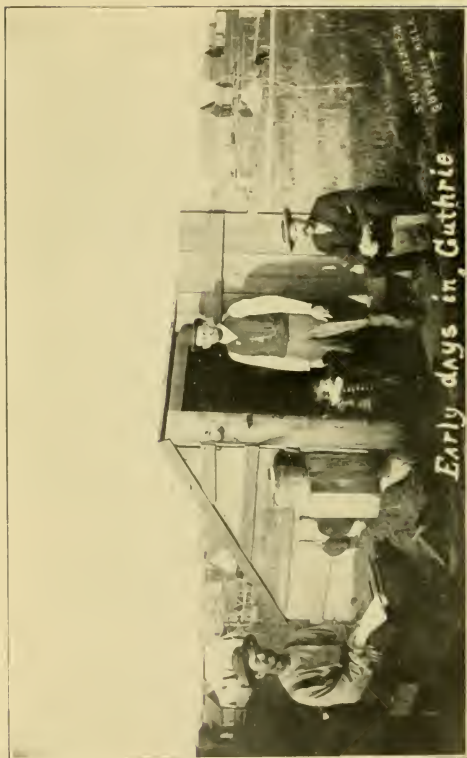


"Please Don't Shoot the Fiddler, He's Doing the Best He Can"

One day in October I boarded a northbound Rock Island train at El Reno. Nothing unusual occurred until we got to the bridge over the Cimarron River, north of Kingfisher, or rather to the place where the bridge ought to have been. It was not there and we went off the track into the river. The first thing I knew after we made the plunge was when the water began to come into the coach. I managed to come to myself, like the Prodigal Son, and felt that I wanted to go home. I wanted to go in a hurry, for the water was coming into the coach. It was wet and cold water, too; and it had a bad smell, as if it were just out of a K. C. packing house. I gave the young lady who had landed on me a jab or two, and asked her if she was not ashamed of herself, to be sitting on me in that way. She turned up her nose and said something about a nasty, mean man pouring water on her when she could not help herself. About that time someone gave her a pull and I was able to get up.

Most of us got out of the car just in time to keep from getting drowned, and I found myself in the river along with a lot of other passengers. We held a council of war and decided that we would not wait for the Red Cross ambulance, but would swim out, as there was plenty of water, such as it was.

About eight or ten of us were swimming along, talking about which is the best way to swim. One fellow said that a dog can swim longer than a man, and hence dog-fashion is the proper way. Another said he had heard that the best way is to throw yourself on your back and just float along; another said the over-land stroke is best. While we were thus swimming along discussing the



Holding Down a Town Lot in Guthrie

way to swim, and whose fault it was that the bridge was gone, and what was the matter with the engineer that he run his train into the river, one fellow offered to bet that he could dive down and touch bottom. Another fellow said he would bet five that he could not. We all stopped to see the fun.

They put up the money, but just then Press Love, Sheriff of Kingfisher County, came swimming along with one eye full of sand and water and his gun strapped on top of his head to keep the cartridges from getting wet. He also had a warrant in his pocket for an old farmer at Dover who could not pay his road tax. He stopped long enough to hear what the row was about, and then arrested three of the men for gambling and the rest of us for being caught in the swim, and took us all out to the bank.

During the excitement and while the sheriff was putting on a dry pair of sox and arranging his necktie to suit the occasion, I slipped into the brush and made my get-away. Consequently, I do not know whether they saved all the people that were drowned or not. One man who was supposed to be on the train is still missing. He was a bill-poster for the Sells-Floto Shows. The insurance company refused to pay his life insurance, and I think they proved that he ran off with a rich widow who lived close to Dover. It will never be known, perhaps, whether he is in the bottom of the Cimarron River or raising cotton on that rich widow's farm out in the jacks east of Dover.

CHAPTER XX.

A RIVER PLOT—BITTEN BY A GILA MONSTER—THE WHARF MASTER AT LIPSCOMB—THE LANDLORD OF THE GOOD CHUCK HOTEL—BURIED ALIVE FOR THREE DAYS—CARRYING MORE THAN TWO GUNS PROHIBITED IN TEXAS—TICKS, JUST TICKS—MISTER, HAVE YOU A SNAKE THAT WILL BITE A WOMAN?—A SIXTY-FORTY CUT.

“Wanted—A pilot for a small river boat to run on the Canadian River to Camp Supply and up Wolf River to Ochiltree, Texas. Write or call Rapid Transit Packet Co., El Reno, Oklahoma.”

After reading the above advertisement I put in my application for the job. I went to El Reno at once and had no trouble in finding the manager of the company. After a few hours of preliminary skirmishing, I was employed to pilot the boat on its first trip up the Canadian and Wolf Rivers. About May everything was ready to start on the trip. Our cargo consisted of a miscellaneous assortment of everything that the natives were likely to want, from a corkscrew to several gallons of prime oldsnake medicine that was guaranteed to cure the worst case of snake bite that could be found in the Panhandle of Texas.

Our boat crew consisted of a captain, first mate, pilot, and several outriders. The captain's business was to look after the welfare of the crew and see that the cargo or stock in trade was put where it would do the most good. The first mate usually went ahead of the boat to hunt up the openings between the sandbars. All I had to do was to run the boat whenever he could find enough water to float us up stream.

The outriders were the real business agents of the outfit. They would start out from the boat and beat around the brush, over the hills, and when they ran into a native who had been bitten by a snake they would proceed to doctor him. They always effected a cure, and it was surprising how many people they found who had been snake-bitten. One of the old natives said snakes were so plentiful that it was hard to dodge all of them. Another old fellow said he had been bitten by a gila monster about ten years before, and every once in awhile he would have a bad spell, and he would have to take a big lot of snake medicine to relieve him. He said the only thing that saved him that time was that he had been to town and was pretty well jagged up on soda that he had drunk at a dance hall. He said the gila monster lived but a short time after it bit him.

The gila monster of Arizona is said to be one of the most poisonous reptiles in the United States, but I do not remember of ever hearing of anyone dying of its bite in my vicinity. It always happened about twenty-five miles away, and I never ran on to any man who knew personally of a man dying of its bite.

We got along very well and made good time until we

ran into a wire fence that Bill Merydith had stretched across the river a mile or so below Lipscomb to keep the catfish from going up or down stream. In making a big effort to pass the fence, I bent the engine's walking beam and broke our main drive chain. It began to look as if we would have to stay there all night, but Norris, the ranch foreman, got a pair of mules and towed us on up the river to Lipscomb. We tied up just below the suspension bridge at the port of Lipscomb about ten P. M. The wharf master immediately came aboard and inspected everything on the boat, including a two-bushel box of Bibles and Sunday-school tracts that we took along for gratuitous distribution. After he had looked the boat and crew over, and could not find anyone with the small-pox or yellow fever germs, and no cold-storage eggs, he gave us a clean bill of health and said we could land at any time.

I remember when the wharf master first came aboard there appeared to be something the matter with him. He looked like he was just ready to cry about something or other. The mate noticed it, too, and took him over to the other side where he always kept a tear jug made for a man with one eye to cry into. After he had looked that jug over several times, he was well satisfied, and a smile came on his face that you never see outside of a prohibition state or a local option town or country. He told the mate that he surely had saved his life, as he had come down to the river to drown himself. But when he saw the boat, it being the first one he had ever seen, he wanted to look it over. As he was city marshal as well as wharf master, he gave us the glad hand of welcome and said he would

recommmend us to the county officers and the city officials.

In fact, he said he would just turn the town over to us as long as we wanted to stay, and if we wished to get married and settle down, he had a friend who was in the real estate business who would sell us a town lot or ranch that he knew would suit us. As Lipscomb contained some of the prettiest girls and widows in the State of Texas, he knew we would be satisfied to get married and settle down. After we looked the women over we knew he was a gentleman and a good judge of feminine beauty. But as I had already been married I told him he would have to excuse me until I could get the judge to unhitch me from the last one I had married.

I went up town to see if I could find a hotel where I could stay all night. After running around for a time I found one and went up to the door and knocked. Someone up-stairs raised a window and asked what I wanted at that time of night.

"Is this the hotel?" I asked.

"I don't know. What do you want?"

"I want a room and bed." I answered.

"What do you want with a room and bed?"

"I want to stay all night," I replied.

"Well, why don't you stay all night where you are?"

"Say, Mr. Man, are you the landlord?" I asked.

"What do you want to know that for?"

"I want someone to open the door so I can get in."

"Where did you come from, anyway?"

"I came from El Reno."

"Isn't that a good town? Are there no good hotels in El Reno?"

"Yes—lots of them."

"Then what did you come to Lipscomb for?"

"I have some business in connection with a railroad that we are going to build from Oklahoma City to the coal fields in Alaska."

"What do you want to build a railroad for, anyway?"

"We want to build a railroad through this town, so you people can ship out your farm products and we can ship you in cheap lumber and coal."

"We have no farm crops to ship out—don't raise anything in this country but bull calves, and we can make them walk to Higgins."

"Say, Mr. Landlord, are you going to let me in?"

"What is your name?"

"Jones, William Jones."

"Jones, are you married, and are you any kin to Jones Bros., of Kansas City?"

"Say, Mr. Landlord, are there any other hotels in this town?"

"None that I know of. Did you try the livery stable or the lumber yard? They have good boards and lodging there."

"I will try that livery stable and lumber yard if you will kindly tell me where they are."

"Over on the corner by the windmill."

"It's dark out here and I can't see the windmill. I'll give you a dollar if you will come and show it to me."

"Why don't you get the blacksmith to show it to you? He knows where it is."

"Well, where can I find the blacksmith?"

"Over on the other side of town."

"Which side of town is this?"

"The right side; say, are you going to build the depot on this side of town?"

Thinking that I might get him to open the door, I asked the landlord if Lipscomb would not be a good place for a man to come who wanted to go into the hotel business.

"I don't know," he replied. "Does he want to come here to build a hotel?" he asked. "Do you think I could sell him this one?"

"What do you want for it?"

"I want four thousand dollars. What would you give for it?"

"How much did it cost you?"

"Three hundred and fifty dollars."

"How much will you take for it right now?"

"How much will you give?"

I was getting tired and sleepy, and I had to do something, as it was after twelve o'clock at night.

"If you will come down and let me in I will give you two dollars for a room and bed to-night. And if you want to sell out in the morning I will buy it for a friend of mine, for I know that the location so close to the depot will make the lot worth more than twice what you ask for it."

He slammed the window down and pretty soon I heard him coming down the stairs. He opened the door and let me in, then wanted to know why I did not come to Lipscomb in the daytime.

"Well, if you will show me the room I am to sleep in I will go to bed at once."

"I have no vacant rooms, but I can put you in the same bed with a crazy cowboy. Maybe you can keep him quiet."

"Say, Landlord, how much will you take to let me sleep in your cyclone building?"

"How did you know that I have a cave?"

"I guessed at it."

"Well, you are a pretty good guesser, and you can sleep in it to-night for two dollars."

As I was almost played out I gave him the money. He showed it to me, and I went to bed and tried to sleep, but the boll weevils nearly ate me up. Kind reader, if you ever go to Texas, take a pile driver with you to kill the boll weevils.

Next morning bright and early the mate started out to find a blacksmith to make the needed repairs on our main drive chain and have the walking beam straightened. While we were tied up I thought I would look the town over to see what kind of a place it was. I found it to be a nice little village with several wide-awake people. There were two hotels—the Lipscomb Hotel and the Good Chuck House. After dinner, while sitting on the porch of the leading hotel, a man came running by without a hat on, swinging a baseball bat over his head, and shouting and swearing at some one I did not see to stop, and he would make an angel out of him in a very few minutes. After he got out of sight, another man came running along as fast as he could. It looked to me as if some of his folks were very sick and he was going after a doctor, but he had a Winchester in his hands. I asked the landlord what it meant. He said it was the way the citizens settled any

trouble between themselves, and advised me to just sit still and watch the fun. These two men, he said, always managed to keep on the other side of the block from each other, and as they put in most of the evening chasing each other it would be some fun for me. I never could tell which of them was ahead, as they kept just so far apart. If one stopped at the post-office, the other would be at the livery stable; and if one stopped at the lumber-yard, the other would be sure to be at Howlette's store. I never saw two men try to get together so hard in my life. They would perhaps be chasing each other yet, but a couple of cowboys happened to come into town and roped the two warriors and pulled them together. Then they all went down to the river and had a drink of salt water and that settled it. The trouble was all over.

Lipscomb is the best watered county in the Panhandle. In the dry season it is only sixteen feet straight down to water, and in the wet season it is only sixteen feet straight up through the water. One of the old natives told me that it rained so hard there at times that it was not safe to leave anything loose for fear it would wash away. He told me about a farmer who left his mowing machine up on the hill, south of town, one evening. That night a big rain fell and washed the machine clear across the town, and as it moved along it cut down a wire fence and half the city expenses, and threw the city's cleaning department out of a job. It cut up several cords of wood, just the right size to fit a cook stove, cut and piled up two tons of hay against the livery stable, cut down every sand burr around the Court House, and saved the county several dollars. It also cut a gully through the lumber yard.

While we were in Lipscomb the sheriff resigned because the jail would not hold baled hay or even sand burrs. The new sheriff kept his prisoners in the church, and he said it was the best place in the county to keep them, and it was cheaper, too.

Every man in Lipscomb has a cyclone building or cave—fraid-holes they call them. Every time they see a bad looking cloud forming in the west, that looks if it might be a cyclone, they all run and jump into their fraid-holes. While I was there I saw some of these holes so full that they could not all get in. The last ones to get there would just jump in head first and let their feet stick out. The city council had a fraid-hole dug in the middle of the town, just behind the opera house, for people who were not able to have one of their own, and especially for hotel guests.

I was told about a bad windstorm that struck the town about five years before I did. They said the wind was going about seventy-five miles and hour, and there was about as much sand, dust and gravel as there was wind. Four drummers were stopping at the hotel that night, and when the wind struck the house they made a quick get-away and jumped into that cave. The sand and gravel drifted over the cyclone hole until it was about ten feet deep. Everybody was too busy looking after himself and getting into a safe place to be concerned about anybody else. Next morning when they got back on top of the earth everyone was accounted for except those four drummers. As no one had noticed them that night, it was taken for granted that they had gone to the railroad. Two days later someone suggested looking into that hole in the center of the town. After a couple of days spent in

moving the mountain of sand and gravel, they found those four men nearly dead from fright and starving. When they got back home they had some big stories to tell about that cyclone, and about being buried alive for four days, and none of their hair turned white, either.

Everybody in the Texas Panhandle has two hats—one to wear while he is chasing the other. Lipscomb is twenty miles from the railroad. One day while I was there the wind was blowing pretty fierce and it took my hat along. I just watched my chance and reached up into the sand and wind and grabbed a hat that proved to be a good J.B. It had a conductor's station check in the band, so if you know of any one who lost such a hat, tell him about it, as I wish to return it. What Texas needs is good roads, more people, less wind and fewer dogs.

When the mate of the good ship "Little Buttercup" could not get that blacksmith to fix the main chain drive, he sent by the overland mail to Higgins for repairs. The mail was carried in an old motor-car that had gotten so it would not run on the Wichita boulevards, so the owner sold it to the mail contractor at Higgins to carry the mails and what few people who wanted to go somewhere, but were in no hurry to get there. We waited two days for the motor car to come with our repairs, and the post-mistress got uneasy about it and sent out a couple of cowboys to bring it in. They found the car about half way between Higgins and Lipscomb, stuck in a sand bank. The chauffeur and one man were under the car, sound asleep; and the other two passengers were down on the creek bank fishing. They took turns hunting and fishing for something to eat. The two cowboys tied their rope

to that car and the four men pushed. They got to town about sundown.

They had no repairs for river boats in stock at Higgins, so the mate got a team and buggy to go to Glazier for them. It is eighteen miles across the country to Glazier, no roads, and twenty-seven wire fences to go through or over, as you think best. They don't have roads in that part of Texas, because it takes work to make them, and that is something the natives are not guilty of. Besides, it takes money to build bridges, and as they have nothing to haul in and nothing to haul out, they don't need any bridges. One of the natives told me that the tax collector did not get enough tax money the year before to hire a man to cut the sandburs down around the court house. He said they had not painted the court house in twenty years—and it looked it. While I was there the sheriff resigned his office and went to farming to make a living. I asked the lady at the Good Chuck Hotel if it got very warm there in the summer. "Mister," she replied, "we have to set our hens in the ice box to keep the eggs from hatching out before breakfast is ready."

Somebody was building a house while I was there, and I watched the lumberman deliver the lumber from the yard to the house. He put his son on a pony and tied the lumber to the pony's tail and dragged it to the job. I saw Mr. Wheat delivering groceries to his customers the same way, except he had them in a boy's express wagon.

The Texas Panhandle is a dry country in more ways than one. They don't have saloons there, and if any one gets thirsty he goes out on the prairie and gathers a bushel of loco (crazy weed), pounds it up in a dish pan to a

juicy pulp and puts it into a two-gallon jug. Then he pours in a gallon of gasoline, and some prune juice to give it a rich color. In about a week it makes a drink that would have surprised Solomon in all his glory. I watched a few men under its influence while I was there. I am not going to tell you how they acted, as I don't know how. When two or three would start out on a loco jag everybody else moved out in the sandhills for a week or two.

Most of the old cattlemen have quit raising cattle, as it is easier and cheaper to raise dogs. They have to have the dogs to catch the coyotes to keep them from eating the calves. That's what the old-time cowboys carried a smoke wagon for—to shoot the coyotes. It's against the law in Texas now to carry more than two guns. When the old ranchmen come to town Saturday evening they ride a pony. The women, children and dogs have to walk in.

It is all pasture land from Lipscomb to Glazier, and some of the pastures are full of cattle. When the tenderfoot comes along the cattle have some fun at his expense. While going through a fence on the way to Glazier the mate's team started off without him. He was running to catch the team when a bunch of cattle started after him. It was three miles to the next fence and the faster the mate ran the faster the team and cattle ran. They all got to the fence about the same time, and what he said when he got back to Lipscomb was a plenty.

I attended a ball while I was in Lipscomb and was introduced to a young widow. After the ball I went home with her, and after that I called on her every evening as long as I was in town. One evening I noticed there was something wrong with her; about the same time I felt

as if some one had stuck me in the small of the back with a pitchfork. It made me move rather suddenly. I looked around, but did not see any one, so I tried to make myself believe I was mistaken. But no, I felt it again; about the same time the lady had a nervous attack of some kind—I could tell by the way she bit her lips and rubbed her hands over her face. I began to feel as though I wanted some one to help me out, and I think the lady felt the same way, for she excused herself and went into another room. I went to the hotel as soon as I could and began to look for the place where I was shot or stabbed. After a few minutes I discovered a pair of ticks—yes, ticks—just the kind they have all over Texas. I think I know something about ticks, as I have been hunted by them all the way from the Rio Grande to Montana. A tick can make life a burden to you, and there is no use trying to make love to a girl when there is a tick on you that is attending to business. And that is what they are there for, every time.

Ticks are natives of Texas, but I found them also in Oklahoma and Kansas. But they will not bother a Kansas man like they will a Texan. Most Kansas people have the mange, or doba itch, is the reason. An Oklahoman smells too much like a coal oil barrel to suit a tick. So they do best at home, in Texas. A tick was never known to stay at home when there was a picnic anywhere in the county. Every boy and girl that ever attended a picnic will tell you so. Every time they have a picnic in Lipscomb county they have a tent put up where the girls can go to get the ticks off. The boys go down behind the creek bank. The boys and girls use a different lan-



Opera House, Lipscomb

guage about ticks, but it all means the same thing. I have said a few things about ticks myself, but you need not look into a Sunday school paper to find it.

After I married that young widow she went with a crowd of young people on a fishing expedition, and I haven't the least idea how many ticks or fish she caught that day; but I know it took me half the night to pry the ticks loose. I tried all kinds of tick medicines. I first used a curry comb, that got the most of them; then I tried coal oil, that loosened up some more; then a pair of nippers and some turpentine; then carbolic acid. I tried to smoke them off, like a painter takes off old paint; then I tried rough-on-rats and skeeter scoot. After about four hours of work, mentally and physically, I used a box or two of vaseline, wrapped her up like an Egyptian mummy and put her to bed. If there was anything she failed to say during that few hours I have forgotten it—but she said a plenty. The judge said I was entitled to a divorce, and if I would make an application for one he would gladly grant it. Every time she goes fishing now she puts on a pair of new overalls and ties the bottoms to her ankles, as tight as she can stand it—that's where the hobble skirt started.

About the only place you can find ticks in the winter time is in the hotels, the rooming houses, and at the stock yards in Ft. Worth. They all seem to know that Ft. Worth is a good place to winter. Last summer while I was in Wichita I went into a joint to get some snake medicine (I think the joint was in the basement of the city hall). There were a bunch of fellows in there, and one fellow came up and asked me if I was just

up from Lipscomb County, Texas. He said he could always tell a man from the Panhandle. That made me a little mad, and I asked him how he knew. He said a man from the Panhandle always had a tick on him. I told him he was a liar. I told him that I could lick him in three minutes.

"Now, see here, Willie—I know your name is Willie—I used to live at Texline myself, and I know that everybody down in the Panhandle has a tick on him. To prove to you that I am right, I will bet the drinks for the crowd that you have a tick on you about six inches below the breast bone. To prove to you that I am right, I will bet you ten dollars that I am correct, and that I know what I am talking about."

With that he laid a ten-dollar bill down on the bar, and I put a ten on top of it. Then I unbuckled my belt and pulled up my shirt to show them, and I will be dog-goned if there was not a dozen ticks in place of one.

Besides our regular stock in trade, we took along quite a collection of small animals and all kinds of snakes that we could get—some for curiosities and some for real business purposes. We had a pair of gila monsters, a big diamond rattlesnake, several prairie rattlers, black snakes, garter snakes, hoop snakes—in fact, we had good and bad snakes—all kinds, sizes and colors, and we certainly did a good business in the snake line. Every town we stopped at the people would come down to the boat to see the snakes. One day, by accident, a little, no-account snake got out of his box and bit a preacher who happened to be on our boat. He got excited and thought he was going to die sure, but the mate got out a bottle of prime old

snake medicine and gave him a big dose. In fact, he gave him several doses, and after the mate pronounced him cured he said he would be back next day, and wanted the mate to let a bigger snake get out of the box.

After that every good preacher and all the good church people would come aboard and wanted to see the snake that bit brother Bill. One day an old woman came aboard and wanted to know if we had any snakes that would bite a woman. She told the mate that her old man had been down to our boat, that a snake got out and had bitten him, and they had given him some kind of medicine that had brought a smile to his face that would not wash off. The old man told her that she ought to try some of that medicine sure, and see if it would not put a smile on her face once more that would not come off for a year or two.

One day there came aboard at Lipscomb a hard looking old sinner who wanted some snake medicine. As it was against the rules and regulations to sell snake medicine to any person unless he had been bitten by a snake, he wanted to know how much we would charge to let one of the snakes bite him. The mate told him that would depend on the size of the snake; a little one, a dollar; a medium-sized one, two dollars; a big one, four dollars; and if he wanted one of the gila monsters to bite him, that would cost him five dollars, with enough medicine thrown in to cure him. After looking him over, he said he guessed he would try that big fellow from Arizona. The mate told him to roll up his sleeve, rub the little one on the back, and the big one would do the rest. After that our business got better right along.

While I was in Lipscomb I attended a play at the

opera house. The name of the play was "Forty Miles from Broadway," but the bills did not say what one—New York, Kansas City, St. Louis, or Higgins. But from the way some of the actors acted I think it was the one spoken of in the Good Book; and from the way most of the people talked that night, all of them would be on the Broadway to the river after the performance was over. The standing room sign was hung out early in the evening. The reason the sign was hung out so soon was because a couple of drummers who happened to drop into Lipscomb that evening bought four reserved seats, which came very near causing a riot. Some of the people who lived in Lipscomb said it was not right for outsiders to slip into town that way and buy up all the good seats in the house—that they ought to have waited to see how many that lived in the town wanted to go. The papers stated that the star or leading lady received a weekly stipend of seven hundred dollars—that her salary was five hundred, and the other two was for expenses for herself and her dogs. The old man could look out for himself.

When the box receipts were counted up they amounted to thirty-five dollars. It was a 60-40 draw—that is, the manager got 60 per cent and the house got 40. Then the sheriff hit them for another 60-40 rake-off; then the city marshal stopped them for another 60-40; then the hotel man got excited and hit them for another 60-40. The man who hauled them from Higgins also demanded his 60-40, and by the time they settled with him the company was in debt.

There were only seven in the company—five dogs and two people. The stage manager made an awful roar

about the size of the stage; said it was not half large enough for a big troupe like his. Next day the boys passed the hat and made up enough to pay for five seats in the hack back to Higgins, so the dogs could ride. The man and the woman had to walk.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOHNSINGER'S WILD WEST SHOWS, EL PASO, TEXAS
—A NIGHT IN SANTA ROSA, NEW MEXICO—WITH
OROSCO'S MEXICAN SHARPSHOOTERS, \$10.00 PER—
ON OUTPOST DUTY—CAPTURING AN ENEMY—THE
FIRST BATTLE AT JUAREZ—A MOUNTED BURRO
BATTERY—WITH MADERO AT CASES GRANDES—
CHASED OUT OF MEXICO BY THE SOLDIERS AND A
BUNCH OF COYOTES—BACK IN GOD'S COUNTRY.

"Wanted—50 able-bodied men, must be
crack shots with a rifle. \$10.00 per day.
Apply to Johnsigner's Wild West Shows,
El Paso, Texas."

The above advertisement appeared in the papers in the winter of 1910-1911. After reading it over several times and studying the question both ways, I decided that I would go to El Paso and join Johnsigner's Wild West Show. As I had traveled one season as a champion crap-shooter with Col. Zach Mulhall's Wild West Show, I thought I would have no trouble in joining, even if I was not young and good looking.

While I was with the Colonel we had plain sailing until we struck a little village at the mouth of the Kaw River, called Kansas City, in the State of Missouri. I

had always thought the people of that part of Missouri were half-civilized and all white; but that is where the Colonel and all the rest of us were fooled. It was raining when we arrived there, and all our cartridges got wet. I told the Colonel that he better get some good ones, as we might need them. He laughed as only the Colonel can laugh and remarked that it would be all right. We were just having a glorious good time, and were giving the people at Convention Hall a rattling good exhibition when, without warning, a bunch of red savages slipped in out of the brush and captured the overland stage coach and got away with it. I heard afterwards that they sold it for \$250 and spent the money for snake medicine.

I bought a ticket to Santa Rosa, New Mexico, in the famous Pecos River Valley, as I wished to see an old friend of mine who had been with Colonel Rosie Tedfelt's Rough Walkers in Cuba and other places. I only stayed one night in Santa Rosa. If I remember right the name of the hotel where I stopped was the Wright House. At least, it was the right place to stop. District Court was in session and the town was full of lawyers, ranchmen and Mexicans. As there were only a few hotels in town, it was hard to find a room at that time of night. The landlord said he would fix me up some way. About twelve o'clock he took me up to a room that was but a little worse than a cotton pen made of fence rails. There was a bed and a dresser, an old soap box to sit on, and a lot of nails driven in the wall to hang anything on that you might have along with you. After the landlord went out I looked around to see what kind of a room I had anyway. I found all kinds of women's clothing hanging on

the nails, and there were a few things there that I had never seen before. As the names and price-marks had been removed, I had no way of finding out just what they were used for. About 5:00 A. M. the landlord woke me up and said the lady that used that room had returned on an early train and wanted the room, so I had to give it up. I asked him if he did not think that a dollar was too much for the use of a room, under the circumstances, and he said that if he had waited two minutes he could have let it to a drummer for two dollars.

As my friend had gone farther west, I took the first train to El Paso. I arrived there about 9:00 P. M. I walked up town with a young fellow who got on the train at Amarillo. We joined forces and went to the same hotel. We walked around the town awhile that evening and made some inquiries about that Wild West Show, but no one seemed to know anything about it. We began to talk about what brought us to El Paso. I told him what my business was, and he told me that he had come to join the Mexican Insurrectos—that they were paying Americans \$10.00 a day to help fight the regular Mexican soldiers. I began to think that was what someone wanted with fifty crack rifle shots.

Next morning bright and early we were out on the streets, hunting someone who could tell us about it. As it was not safe to talk about it on account of the Mexican spotters, we had to pretend that we were hunting work and wanted to go to Mexico. We ran into an old colored man who had a G. A. R. button on, and I knew it was safe to talk to him. He appeared to be very ignorant at first, and to know nothing about it. But I assured him

that I was all right, and let him read my discharge from the United States Army. Then he loosened up, and told me I would have no trouble in getting in as a scout, as that was his business, hunting recruits for the Insurrectos. He took us around to the Mexican Junta—that's what he called it—and there they put us through a course of questions that would make a civil service examiner feel like two bits. But we passed and graded ninety-nine. We would have made an even hundred but they asked us how long we could live on hot tamales. We both missed that question several days. We signed up and were in it. That night we crossed the Rio Grande and were regular enlisted Insurrectos in the northern army of Mexican sharpshooters.

All next day we were hid in the mountains across the river from the smelters above El Paso. That night they sent me in charge of half a dozen Insurrectos to hold a picket post so we would not be surprised and the whole outfit captured or run to death. The night was fairly dark, but we could make out a man fifty steps away. I understood about as much Mexican as they did English, so I called them all Umbra and they called me Juan (Whan). Everything passed off nicely until about three A. M., when we heard something making a noise, and before I could say hist! (whatever that stands for) one of the men shot off his gun and they all lit out for camp. I started, too, but I soon stopped, as I wanted to see what I was running from—besides I might run over a bank and break my fool neck. Pretty soon it came in sight. It proved to be a little burro with a pack on his back. Just what he was doing out that time of night he did not say,

but I captured him and also a good pair of blankets, a frying pan and a tin cup.

After that I was transferred to the cavalry. That burro was just thirty inches high, so I could walk or ride as I pleased. Next day they took us all out to drill as cavalry. I found about thirty men in the company. Some had ponies not much bigger than the burros, but they could get around better. When I would get in a hurry to go some place I would get off and walk.

After drilling for a week or two we got to be very good soldiers, or at least we thought so. We received notice once or twice a day about what the federal soldiers were doing in Juarez. There was no doubt but what they were going to come out of the town and give us a fight to see us go some, but there is where they got fooled. The federal soldiers started up the river to find us, and we all hunted a good place to hide. The general said I could fire the first shot, as I was one of the skirmishers about two hundred yards in front of the main bunch.

When we discovered them leaving the town, I began to feel like El Paso would be a good place to be. Everybody who could get away from El Paso was lined up on the north side of the river in automobiles, carriages, on horseback or afoot, to see the fight between the insurrectos and the federals. First came the cavalry, then the burro mountain battery of three guns, then the infantry. When they got within about four miles of us they sent out skirmishers to feel the enemy—that is what I found out afterwards. They got within about three miles of us, and as I had orders to fire as soon as I thought they were ready, I told the boys to cut loose as soon as I took a shot at them.



Prosser Orisco, Insultrillo Chief

You just ought to have seen them hide out when we all began to shoot. There was not a soldier in sight in two minutes, and our bullets did not go half way to them either.

In about thirty minutes they brought up that burro battery. It's not likely you ever saw a burro battery in action. If you ever do see one you are likely to laugh yourself to death. I did, for I was just as safe in front of it as the man behind the gun. We skirmishers were lying just behind a ridge where we could see the whole sight. I will not try to describe a burro battery in action; I cannot. You can look at the picture, as the artist can beat me. They were all backed up, and after everything was ready the trouble began. It took about thirty minutes to prove to everybody that a mounted burro battery was a failure as far as killing insurrectos was concerned. We made a first-class Wild West Show all that day for ourselves and the crowd on the other side of the river. No insurrectos were killed and only a few wounded. One federal was killed and a burro kicked another to death, or at least they said he was dead.

I am not going to tell you whether we whipped the federals or whether they whipped us. I think we wasted several tons of war material that day. They say it takes five tons of lead to kill a soldier in time of war, but I don't think so. That evening the federals went back to Juarez and we went farther west and went into camp. Next day we started south to join forces with some other company of insurrectos. We had lots of fun—that's what I called it. One day we would be after the federals, next day the federals would be chasing us, and as the country was hilly and rough it was hard to get around.

We finally brought up at Casas Grandes. Madero had, all told, about eight hundred men. About one hundred Americans were with him. We surrounded the town, and at daylight the fight started. We were in some old adobe houses. I think the federals knew where we were, for it looked as if the whole federal fire was directed at the place where we were located. The way those Mexican soldiers threw the hot stuff into those old adobes was not slow. We were doing a little business in that line ourselves, but they had a three-pound field gun and several machine guns. That three-pounder soon began to knock holes in the adobes, and the rapid fire guns and the Mausers fairly rained the bullets into our men. We saw it was all off as far as we were concerned, and we made a break to get away—that is, the few of us who were left. I was the last one to leave the house I was in—not that I wanted to stay and fight, but I was afraid I might get run over and crippled if I started ahead of the other men. I wanted them to go ahead and get the barb wire fences out of the way so that when I started I could get out of range of those rapid firing guns. It is about one hundred and fifty miles from Casas Grandes to El Paso.

After I made my getaway from that old adobe house, I saw Kelley and three others running like a bunch of jack rabbits, headed for the river. By the time I overtook them they were at the river. When we saw the federal cavalry coming, I realized it meant every fellow look out for himself. All our cartridges were used up, and we left our guns at that old adobe house, as we did not care to be bothered with anything that would hinder our flight. However, I still had my old short-barreled "forty-five"

Mexican Catdlymen

and six cartridges which I was saving for an emergency. If I could only have had that bunch of Mexican soldiers stand still in a line for a few minutes I could have gotten a pony for each of us. I knew that just as soon as they could get close enough to us they would commence to shoot; I did not care how much they shot at me, but I did not want them to be wasting their cartridges that way.

Besides, some of the other men were not used to such rapid walking, and they might fall behind and get run over, or worse still, be shot. I just got down to a gait that I knew would leave the cavalry in Mexico. I had business in the United States that needed my attention, and I did not propose to let a lot of Mexican soldiers stop me. I could hear them shooting and yelling. I did not understand just what they were yelling about, but it sounded to me like, "Why don't you run faster?" "Look at him fly." "Look at him run over the jack rabbits." "I guess he is going to the north pole to look for Dr. Cook." "I bet he is dry and is goin' to El Paso to get a drink of tequila." If they had talked white man, and said "Stop!" I would have known what they wanted. But such a noise and such a lot of shooting kept me busy going to the hills. I knew all the time that their ponies had not been fed that morning before they had started after us, while I had had a good feed two or three days before starting, which made my chances good to get into the hills before they could overtake me.

When they got to the river I saw some of them get off their ponies and begin to measure my tracks so they could identify me from the other fellows. I knew enough about a Mexican pony to feel satisfied that it could not



With the Mexican Insurrectos, A Burro Battery in Action

carry one hundred and fifty pounds and out-run a man who was in a hurry to get some place. Looking ahead, I could see—about two miles distant—the hills toward which I was hurrying, while only about forty rods behind me and getting nearer every minute were ten or fifteen Mexicans. I thought I would try a shot at them. I never stopped that fast walk of mine and when the smoke cleared away I thought I had killed or crippled the whole flock, for they were all on the ground. They gave up the chase right there, and I went on toward the hills. Upon my arrival there I made some coffee and had my dinner.

While I was headed for El Paso at a moderate rate, a lot of coyotes thought I would make a good feed for them, so about a dozen of them started after me. All I had to do was to let out a little and it was easy to keep ahead of them. I let them get within about twenty feet so that they would think they could catch me. Then there was another reason why I wanted them to be trailing along—I would get to El Paso sooner. After about a five-mile run I could see that some of them had given up the chase. After all except one hungry looking seamp had quit me, I let him get within about ten feet when I pulled out my gun, side stepped, and let him have one. I then took out my knife and cut off some nice steak. Went on to the creek and had my supper.

Next morning I finished that coyote and continued my journey. The second night all I could find to eat was a big fat old skunk that was so careless as to let me get close enough to kill him with a club.

Some people may think that a skunk is not good to eat, but I can truthfully say that that skunk was cleaner

and tasted a whole lot better to me than lots of the mixtures you get from a modern packing house. And that is no josh, either.

Next day I got my dinner with some Mexicans, and that night I crossed the Rio Grande River and was once more in God's country.

Roy Kelley, an insurrecto arrives in El Paso, bringing the story of the fight at Casas Grandes on Monday. "Noted soldiers of fortune die in bloody battle. Some from the United States sink under fire from Diaz troops." The members of the foreign legion killed at Casas Grandes were:

Raul Madero, brother of President F. I. Madero.

R. A. Harrington, Captain of American Legion, Soldier of Fortune, formerly of New York City.

Guiseppe Garibaldi, Ranking Major and member of Staff.

John Greer, at one time a Deputy Sheriff at Lincoln, New Mexico.

Lieutenant A. Valencia, of El Paso.

Rorieriguez Guterrez de Lara, from Los Angeles, Cal.

Captain F. J. Cascantes, Engineer from Guerrero.

George Moore.

Sergeants Heath and Bidwell.

Madero, with a force of eight-hundred men, was located at a ranch about three miles from Cases Grandes, and a column of two hundred and fifty men was ordered to go forward to the town. We arrived Sunday night at ten o'clock, and surrounded the town, waiting until daylight. I was with Captain Harrington's command of Americans. The column was headed by Major Garibaldi.

We took position on the east side of the town, and the Mexicans completed the circle.

Firing began at daylight. Most of the Americans had entrenched in adobe houses, where we cut loopholes. The fire became terrific. It was from Mausers, machine guns and a three-pounder field piece. As soon as the three-pounder began to play I knew it was all off with us, for the shells ate away the adobe and left us exposed. At daylight we saw the machine guns on the roof of the church and the field piece in a plaza.

As soon as the sun rose it was hell. The field piece smashed in the walls and roof of the adobe and the machine gun fanned the opening. We were thirty men when we went into the house and only five of us got out. As I was running I saw young Madero and Garribaldi fall, and I had to jump over their bodies. Sergeant Heath and Lieutenant Valencia were killed early in the fight. De Lara was dead. I saw the poor fellow lying there on the ground. That was tough, for he was a fine fellow and the Americans all liked him. When we got through the barb wire fence and to the river we were five Americans. I started for El Paso and the rest beat it for the hills.

CHAPTER XXII.

FROM EL PASO TO ALPINE—\$50.00 FOR A CARLOAD OF WATER—A REAL ESTATE AGENT AND THE STEAM ROLLER GANG—SAN ANTONIO, ONE OF THE GLORY SPOTS IN TEXAS, AND THE ALAMO—LUNGERS AND THE LANDLADY WHERE I STOPPED.

After hanging around El Paso for a few days I bought a ticket over the Sunset Line to Alpine, Texas.

From El Paso to Alpine is one of the most desolate pieces of country I ever saw. There is absolutely nothing. The railroad has water cars standing at every siding for the Mexicans that work on the railroad. If anyone else wants a car of water it costs him from twenty to fifty dollars a car. The railroad over the mountains is so crooked that you can't tell in what direction you are going, or whether you are going straight up or down.

As I was riding along, looking out of the car window, I saw a lot of crows, or ravens, flying west. Everyone of them had a tin can or a little sack hung to its neck by a string. At one place where we stopped to let a train pass I saw a lot of ants going west. They were rigged up like a lot of Indians moving camp. At another place where we made a short stop I noticed a freight train standing on the side track. Lots of the passengers got out to rest themselves while we were looking at that freight train. We discovered that nearly every truck had a few tramps or hoboos on it. All were going west. We also saw several

coyotes on the trucks going west. Each tramp had something to eat along with him. Someone threw a stale loaf of bread out of the car window. Then the coyotes and a bunch of hoboes had a fight over it. When the train started I looked out of the window and saw them still fighting over that piece of bread.

I asked an old Texan who happened to be in the car what made the crows and ravens carry the can and the little sacks? He said the country between San Antonio and El Paso was so poor that they had to carry along something to eat and drink. He also said that the ants had to do the same thing, and that was the reason why the coyotes rode the freight train.

I asked him why they were all going west. He said the crows, ravens, ants and coyotes in New Mexico had more sense than to come to Texas. He said that as soon as they get their eyes opened they all left Texas. He said there were so many suckers coming to Texas from the North that an honest, hard-working, respectable ant or coyote could not make a living in Texas any more. He said that down in east Texas, in the pine woods, where he lived, they had quit trying to raise anything except goats and frogs. He said "Befo' de wah" they could raise a few Arkansaw hogs, until some man brought in a lot of goats and they ate up all the pine cones, as well as all the young trees and shrubs. Then a lot of men from Chicago, the location of which place might be in Oshkosh for all he knew, came to Ft. Worth and built a big slaughter house, the smell from which had killed all the fish in the Trinity River. Then Bill Bailey, Governor of Texas, and one of owners of the Standard Oil Company, went to Washington

and got Uncle Sam to let him have six million dollars to dig the Trinity River deep enough to allow a few sharks to come up the river as far as Dallas. He said that most all the sharks in Texas lived in the Gulf Coast country, with headquarters at Houston, and if they could get the snags pulled out of the river as far as Dallas the sharks could meet all the suckers from the North at Dallas. He said there were a big lot of men at Havana, Illinois, who do nothing else but hatch out thousands of fish every year, mostly of the sucker variety, who come to Texas to buy big farms, and that all the suckers do not come from Chicago, either. He said they come from every place except Kansas. The darn Kansas suckers have gotten too smart to swallow anything except a lot of barb wire whiskey. He said the only way you could catch a Kansas sucker was to put the cork on the hook. There was no use putting the cork on the line and the bait on the hook; you had to change things a little to get them to bite. He said there were so many Kansas people in the Texas Panhandle that the ticks were all coming farther south. He had a brother at Waco who wrote and told him that the ticks and boll weevils were so bad in the Brazos River Valley that the people could hardly live there any longer. He said the boll weevils would eat up the cotton in the summer and fall, and then in the winter they would all move to town and get in the hotels and boarding houses, so thick that a Dutchman from Chicago only lived a short time after staying at a hotel a few weeks. They just acted like an Iowa hog with the cholera; went to bed feeling fine and woke up the next morning dead as a mackerel. He said it was different with a tick. All you

had to do to get rid of the ticks was to take a bath in crude coal oil once or twice a week. Or you could take a bath in that new tick remedy, called Car Sul, and the ticks would quit you and go on the hunt of another tenderfoot from the North.

About dark I got to Alpine. When I got off the train I thought everybody who lived in that town was at the depot to meet me. That is the way it looked to Willie. I had to shake hands with almost a dozen before I could get away to find a hotel.

I met one of the most crooked real estate agents in Alpine I ever saw in my life. He was so crooked that he could not sleep in a fence corner. He was so crooked that you could not tell by his tracks which way he was going. He had a barrel of snakes beat a country block. You could not tell by his city plot whether you were trying to buy a lot in Alpine or in a prairie dog town four miles out. He dug a well that was so crooked that the water ran out at both ends. He had to have his shoes made to order at the blacksmith shop in order to get a fit. He was the same old scout who found the way through Arkansaw for the most crooked railroad in the United States. He was the same man that discovered the hogs in Arkansaw that have hoofs like a mule. His writing was as crooked as the streets in El Paso. He said that in San Antonio, where he used to live, the streets are so crooked that he could not tell in what part of the town he lived, so the policeman had to take him home. He was so crooked that he had to put his hat on with a monkey wrench. He was so crooked that he could not go through a round house.

Liberty still survives. You can locate in Alpine if

you wish to, but life is too short to stay there over a week. When I was in Alpine there was a water famine, but as far as I could see everybody had plenty to drink.

I noticed that the real estate agent always kept his fore finger close to a live trigger.

While I was in Alpine I noticed that the steam roller gang and the city street cleaning department were always working around the free lunch counter.

A guest at the Alpine Hotel broke his jawbone eating a spring chicken.

After a few days spent in the magic city I went to San Antonio. It is a fine farming country from Alpine to San Antonio—if you look at it with your eyes shut. But if you happen to open your eyes and look out of the car window it's not so good. I would advise you to travel through Texas by night, or keep your eyes shut, especially after you have been reading all the good things the real estate agents, hotel keepers and immigration agents have said about the State. Then you will not be disappointed.

San Antonio is said to be the glory spot of Texas, and from what I saw of it I think it is—not. I think Huntsville has San Antonio beat seven to one. Huntsville is where Sam Houston used to live. I think he is there yet. Most of the people in San Antonio, when I was there, were wearing soldier's uniforms. I noticed a great many Northern people there. They all had coughs, "lungers" they call them in Texas. Most all of the hotels, boarding houses and rooming houses are full of "lungers." In reading over the Furnished Room for Rent advertisements I noticed that nearly all of them said "No sick." I asked a man what that meant, and he told me that those

were the places that do not want to be bothered with sick people. I picked out a house that I thought would suit me, and as the advertisement said "No sick," I went to hunt it. When I rang the door bell a woman came to the door. I told her I wanted a room. She said she had one that would just suit me, and the price would be seven dollars a week. I asked her if that was not a little high for a room four by six on the first floor coming down. She said that was cheap, and that they always made a Dutchman from up North pay a double price. That was the only way they had to get pay for the "Niggers" the North took away from them.

I asked her how I would get my clothers off when I went into that room, and where I would set my suitcase. She said the last man who occupied the room took off his clothes in the alley and climbed up the fire escape when he went to bed. She said he left his suitcase out in the back yard close to the alley. I asked her if there were any sick people in the house. "Lord no," she responded, "I would not have any sick people in my house." To make a long story short, I rented the room. I asked her if she would give any of the money back if I only stayed a few days.

"No, you bet your life I won't. I will have to charge you extra if you do not stay a full week."

The first night I stayed there the boll weevils nearly ate me up. You see, a Texas hotel or rooming house never has such things as bed bugs or fleas in them. A state law of Texas says that the bed sheets shall be nine feet long. That keeps out every kind of a bug except the boll weevil. After a boll weevil eats up the cotton crop, the cactus and

the mesquite brush they take to the hotels and boarding houses for the winter.

A boll weevil will not bother a native Texas woman. That's why the Texas women use snuff—to keep away the boll weevil. A coyote won't eat a dead Mexican because the Mexican eats chili.

Some time in the night a man in the adjoining room commenced to cough. From the way he coughed, and the length of time he was at it, I thought he must have jarred the foundation of the house. Of course, there was no "lungers" in that house. After he quit, I had just gotten to sleep again when a woman in the other room adjoining mine began coughing, and I thought she would jar the windows out. Of course, there was no "lungers" in that house. When she quit, another one across the hall commenced, and I looked next morning to see if the roof was still there. "No sick" in that house. Then it dawned upon me why the landlady wanted to charge me extra if I did not stay a week.

Next morning she wanted to know what ailed me that I had come to San Antonio. I told her there was nothing particular the matter with me. She said she would have to know, as the health officers required her to make a report of all suspicious characters stopping at her house. This was done so the doctors and undertakers would know about what amount of business they could count on from each house in the town. I told her I had a very severe headache all the time; I was partly deaf; had a cataract in one eye; had a bad case of catarrh in my head; one of my arms was nearly shot off in the fight at Casas Grandes; I was suffering with mountain fever

I had contracted in coming over the mountains from El Paso to Alpine. I said I was suffering with appendicitis; that I had rheumatism in my hips and knew that I had a very weak back; and I had to stay in bed about half the time on account of the gout I had caught in Kansas City; that I had eczema, doby itch and a few ticks that had gotten on me at Lipscomb. Then she wanted to know if I had been scalped by the Mexicans, as there was no hair on my head; also if I had a cork leg, as I limped when walking. She wanted to know if I had ever had smallpox and how long I had been doctoring for the asthma. She wanted to know how many times I had been in a bug-house; if I was a moderate or hard drinker; how many times I had been married and if my last wife was living; how long it had been since I was divorced, and how much of a reward was offered for me in the United States, Canada, Mexico or Arkansas. She wanted to know if I was a republican, and if I expected to run for an office of any kind. She said that the last republican that ran for office in San Antonio got across the Rio Grande before daylight. She wanted to know if I really had a glass eye.

I tried to break in several times, but she cut in so fast that I saw there was no use. I just backed out of the door, ran around to the alley reached over the fence, grabbed my old suitcase and lit out and hid in a box car for fear she would have me arrested for slipping off without paying extra. If I had stayed half a week the doctors would have gotten me, and if I had stayed the week out the undertakers would have gotten me, and that was the reason

she wanted extra if I did not stay a week. They aim to get all you have in some way.

To be on the safe side, I just stayed in that old box car till I got to Houston. When I got up town I bought a "San Antonio Express" to see what they had to say about me. The only thing I could find that covered my case was a two-column piece about Teddy Roosevelt, "The Rough Rider," coming to San Antonio in disguise, meeting a lot of the boys and having a big time. It said that he got so bad that to keep from getting arrested he had gone down to the river and drown himself; or at least he had made a complete get-away, like he did at San Juan Hill.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BEAUTIFUL GULF COAST COUNTRY—\$2,000
WORTH OF OYSTERS TO THE ACRE—A TOOTHPICK
GARDEN AND A CORDWOOD FARM—PEARL BUTTONS
AND THE G. A. R.—GRANDPA ALWAYS RAN—BLUE
RIBBONS, SALT WATER, A SHARK, AND A PRETTY
GIRL—MR. MC., CONDUCTOR ON THE SEA WALL
SPECIAL.

When I left Houston I went to Galveston on the sea wall special, expecting to see one of the beauty spots of the new Southland which I had read and heard so much about. I expected to find both sides of the railroad lined with orange and fig groves as far as the eye could see. I expected to see a nice house and a fine home surrounded by flowers of every kind that would grow in that semi-tropical region, the famous Gulf Coast Country.

I expected to see fruit and truck cars standing on every siding. I expected to see people busy loading these cars with all kinds of early fruits and vegetables for the northern markets. I expected to see a nice home on every five- or ten-acre tract of land.

The country from Houston to Galveston is as flat as a pancake. I could tell by the crawfish holes that it was sub-irrigated. I could tell by the looks of a few houses that the people had been trying to farm it since the time Davy Crockett and others had mauled the stuffin' out of Santa Anna and a few Mexicans at the battle of

San Jacinto. That was about seventy-five years ago, and the farmers have been trying ever since to find something that would grow on that salt marsh. The real estate agents called it the beautiful Gulf Coast Country, where anything would grow from—well, anything that you would plant.

I was told that you could buy a dime's worth of tooth-picks and stick them in the ground, and the first year you could sell a thousand dollars worth of cordwood off an acre of ground. Also that the soil was so rich that all you had to do was to buy some oyster seed, sow it in drills a foot apart, and the next winter you could gather from \$1,500 to \$2,000 worth of oysters to the acre, ship them to Galveston, as that was the nearest home market, and get the cash for them.

I asked the man on the train why the people did not raise something on the land, and he said the old natives of Texas were too lazy to work, and the negroes were all busy out in the brush shooting craps. What the country wanted, he said, was more Dutch and more money from the North to do the farming. For a few years after the Civil War every man from the North that went to the southern states was a Yankee. For the last ten years every man who went south was a Dutchman. I guess that was a better name than "Yankee." Then I was told that at Texas City they were all button men.

I wanted to know if all the people at Texas City were making pearl buttons out of oyster shells that they are called button men. He said no, that they were called that, because they wore a little bronze button with the letter G. A. R. on them. I asked him what those letters meant,

and he said that he didn't know for sure, but he had been told that they stand for Grandpa Always Ran.

The country from Houston to Galveston is laid off into town lots and five- and ten-acre tracts. I could tell that by the corner stakes sticking up everywhere as far as I could see. Also there was a lot of big bill-boards on both sides of the railroad, telling people that they could buy five or ten acres for orange or fig farms. All you would have to do was to buy a farm and in a year or two you would have to send for your wife's relatives to come and live with you to help spend the money, as it would be too hard on one family to spend all you could make off a ten-acre orange or fig farm in the beautiful Gulf Coast Country.

I found Galveston located about halfway between the devil and the deep blue sea. I went down to the beach to see the people go in bathing, and I thought I would try that game, too, as I am always looking for trouble. I went into a hole in the wall to take off my clothes. The man gave me a paper collar and about a yard of blue ribbon to put on. I got the collar on all right, but there was something wrong with the ribbon. I knew that the minute I came out of that hole in the wall. Everybody commenced to laugh at me. I thought that was part of the game—to laugh—and after I went into the water and a big wave hit me I swallowed a tub full of salt water, and I laughed, too—nit.

After awhile I began to get the hang of things. I went out a little farther, and was just having a hog-killing time when I noticed a young girl about twenty years old that kept hanging around me. She looked as if she wanted

to say something to me; sometimes she would look at me and smile in a different way from the rest of the bathers. I had gotten out quite a way where the water was about three or four feet deep, and that little girl was still hanging around, when something happened to me. I don't to this day know what, but something grabbed me by the leg and I jumped about ten feet out of the water. Everybody commenced to yell "Shark! the shark has got the man!" When I hit the water, a big wave buried me and I thought I was dead to the world.

I thought the shark would have a feed at my expense, but that little girl dived under the wave and when it passed over her she had Bill by the top of the head and was holding his breathing apparatus out of the water. I got on my feet and we left in a hurry.

After I got those bathing rags off and into my own clothes, I was watching the rest, when that little girl came up to me and wanted to know if I was not Doctor Jones from Oklahoma. Well, to save my neck I could not place that little girl. But I was glad of one thing; she had saved me from being eaten by a shark. "Don't you remember Mr. S., who lived in Payne County?" I surely did. She was one of the twins—Wilma was her name. She was named after Willie, and the other twin, Paulina, after grandma. When the twins were eight years old their father sold out in Oklahoma, went to Galveston, went into business and did well. Paulina was married and lived in New Mexico.

I went home with Wilma, and for a week that little girl and her parents certainly entertained Willie right royally. Wilma showed me all the sights in Galveston.

I found a man who had an oyster farm to sell, and we got in his old oyster boat and went out to see it. I was a little doubtful about that old boat, but he said it was all right. Just what direction we went and how far I don't know. But we got there, and we loaded that boat with oysters. The water was about four or five feet deep. He had a contrivance that looked like a post-hole digger with forks on the end. We would push that down in the mud, then close it up, and lift out about a dozen big oysters. But the trouble happened going back. That old boat with the help of a big wave tipped over and spilt all our oysters and the two of us into the bay. We managed to hang to the boat and, by wading and swimming, we finally reached land.

I went back to Houston, and I must say that I rode with one of the most peculiar conductors I ever saw. So different from all the rest. When he came in the car he actually closed the door—something I never saw a train-man do before. They usually slam the door so hard that it gives most people a nervous chill. When he came in he raised his cap and said, "Good morning, ladies and gentlemen; I am glad you are on my train, and I will see you safe in Houston in about two hours." Someone called him Mr. Mc., the laughing hyena. Well he was all smiles, anyway. This old world would be better off if it had a few more such men as Mr. Mc.

CHAPTER XXIV.

409 AUSTIN STREET—REAL ESTATE AGENTS AND
THE BANANA FARM—ORANGE AND FIG ORCHARDS—
A DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN CONROE AND A MONTH IN
NEW WAVERLY.

When I got back to Houston I found a hotel at 409 Austin Street that suited me and, strange to say, I was not bothered by boll weevils or any other kind of bugs. There were a few real estate agents boarding there, and other land men would drop in to talk to me about the prospect of Texas. Most of them were selling orange or fig farms. But they had different kinds of get-rich-quick schemes to separate the Dutch from their money. Here is the way one land agent laid it out to me: "For only two hundred and twenty-five dollars an acre I can sell you a five-acre farm that will grow the finest bananas in Texas. All you have to pay down will be ten dollars an acre. Then you can pay the rest just to suit yourself. Here is the way that banana farm will pan out for the first five years, if you are lucky enough to live that long. You can set the plants or trees five feet apart both ways, and the second year they will bear their first crop. You can cut a bunch of bananas from each tree and sell the bunch for one dollar. The first cutting will amount to \$1,681. Then at the end of ninety days you can cut the second crop, amounting to another \$1,681; and you can cut a crop every ninety days for the first three years. By that

time the trees will be big enough so you can cut a bunch every thirty days. A banana orchard will bring you the fifth year 20,161 bunches at one dollar a bunch. That will be \$20,161, with a grand total for the first five years of \$40,160, and your banana orchard will be just in its prime. A banana orchard will live, in Texas, for one hundred years and get better all the time."

He said about a dozen Chicago commission merchants were killed last year fighting among themselves to see who would buy up the bananas from the farmers. He said that is how it happens that all the land in Texas is owned by a few men. He said that the average farm or ranch in Texas contains ten thousand acres, and that they made the money to buy the land raising bananas, oranges and figs. He said that an orange farm does not pay quite so much to the acre as a banana farm, but is more certain, as the crop is ready to gather every working day in the year. He said they had found out how to keep the frost from killing the fruit. Professor Green, of the Experimental Farm, advises farmers to plant ginger between the rows, and when you are not gathering oranges, you can be digging ginger and selling that. He said you could sell enough ginger off the ground to pay the expenses of raising and marketing both crops. He said a fig orchard had to have a lot of hay or straw scattered around it every fall for the tramps to sleep in when the weather gets too cold for them to sleep in the city jail. They would all go out and sleep in the straw in the fig orchards, and the smoke from their old pipes and cigarettes would keep the frost away. He told me that in the winter of 1911 and 1912 there were not half enough tramps come to Texas

to keep all the fig orchards alive; he said that by another winter that they were going to advertise in all the tramp centers for men to come to Texas to sleep in the straw. He said a pile of straw beats a snow bank to sleep in; he said in some places there was a premium on tramps; that some of the fig farmers would furnish the tobacco and matches; he said there was always enough cabbage stalks and potato tops left on the truck farms for tramps to live on through the winter.

Conroe, Texas, is a nice little town, and I found it a very small place. It had been visited by a very destructive fire just before I went there and there was a very little of it left. About all that remained was a lot of dogs and several barrels of mosquitoes and fleas. You would not think that fleas would live in a country that is under water half the time, but they do, and everything is fairly well supplied with them. I don't know but what a handful of fleas on a person will cause more trouble than a handful of ticks or boll weevils.

I don't know whether it rains all the time in eastern Texas or not, but it rained all the time I was there. When the rain would let up a little I would go out of the hotel to see how the fleas were getting along. At first I thought they would all be drowned, but I found them all alive and doing nicely. Their appetites, however, were never satisfied. They would get on a chip or a stick of stove-wood and go floating around like an excursion steamboat in Galveston Bay. I don't think you could find any fleas in the hotel in Conroe; or, in fact, in any hotels along the I. & G. N. R. R. in east Texas, for the mosquitoes keep them out.

I have watched mosquitoes and fleas fight for hours at a time. Whenever a fight starts between fleas and mosquitoes it is a fight to the finish and, as there is a world of them, it is hard to tell sometimes which will be the winner. After a hard day's battle between them I have seen the floor covered almost an inch deep with the dead and wounded. The mosquitoes usually come out victorious, as there are more of them, and they are better armed than the fleas. For hours at a time I have watched people sit around fighting mosquitoes and scratching for fleas. I certainly did enjoy myself watching the boys and girls making love to each other and, at the same time, fighting mosquitoes and scratching for fleas.

I stayed in Conroe two days and then went to New Waverly, another nice little town—what there is of it. And I found lots of nice people there. I think, however, there are more fleas and mosquitoes in New Waverly than in Conroe.

CHAPTER XXV.

HUNTSVILLE AND THE STATE PRISON—RAISING PEARS, PERSIMMONS, GOATS, CRAWFISH, FLEAS, MOSQUITOES AND TELEPHONE POLES IN EAST TEXAS—SLUGAN WEEK IN ST. LOUIS AND THE VEILED PROPHETS.

The next place I stopped at was Huntsville, where the State Prison is located. I went through the prison to see just what kind of a place I would have to stay in if I ever got caught again in Texas.

East Texas is a very flat country and covered all over with pine timber that is just large enough for telephone poles and so thick in some places that the mosquitoes can scarcely get through. It is a great country for truck farming and fruit growing. One old colored man told me that he sold seven dollars' worth of persimmons off four acres. He said that was the largest crop year that they had ever had. He told me about a man who had a persimmon farm that he had caught and sold one hundred 'possums off of in one year, for which he received one dollar apiece. He was going to set out twenty acres more to persimmon trees, so that he could get more 'possums.

Most of the people in East Texas keep herds of goats, as goats can live on anything they can get hold of. I made it my business to inquire why the people raised nothing but goats. One old native told me they could raise nothing

except goats and crawfish. He said the country was so poor that the only things that would grow there was telephone poles. He said a man set out twenty-five acres to pears and in twenty-five years he had not raised enough pears to pay the taxes on the ground, though the land was assessed at only one dollar an acre. He said the only variety of pears they could raise was the Le Count and Keiffer. And he said that no goat, and no negro, would eat a Kieffer pear that was raised in Texas.

When I got to Trinity City about all that I could find was a few sawmills. I discovered that Uncle Sam was trying to dig the Trinity River wider and deeper, but for what purpose I could not find out. One old native said he guessed Uncle Sam wanted to spend a lot of money that he could not spend for anything else.

I found Crockett and Palestine two thriving towns, but what they were thriving on was more than I could discover, as no one seemed to know. I finally got back to Dallas, and from there I went over the Iron Mountain Railroad to St. Louis. About the only thing I could strike in St. Louis was a job—painting High Street. A man told me he would pay me four dollars a day to whitewash High Street for three blocks north and south of Franklin Street. I went and looked it over and told him that whitewashing it would do no good, as it was too black with negroes.

It was Slugan week on Franklin Street when I was there. About the only people living on that street were a lot of foreigners from southern Europe. If there were any Americans living on that street they were ashamed of it.

About that time St. Louis was having her annual

Mouth Shootzen Feast. The Veiled Prophets and the tenderfeët were having a big time, and I can say from what I saw that the Priests of Pallas in Kansas City and the Portola Festival in San Francisco have St. Louis beat several county blocks. If I were the boss in St. Louis I would either get up a better street parade of the "Veiled Prophets" or I would send to Mexico and get a lot of Orosco's Insurrectos for a change.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, AND WINDSOR, CANADA—
MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES, GREEN TRADING STAMPS,
BABY WAGONS, BURIAL CASKETS WHILE YOU
WAIT—SOMETHING TO EAT FIRST, PLEASE.

One winter I was sawing wood and seeing the sights in Detroit, Michigan. I went across the river to Windsor, Canada. On the boat going over I noticed a good many young men and women who looked like they were on their wedding tours. After I got off the boat and was going up town, I thought I would just follow the crowd to see the fun. A lot of fellows were lined up on both sides of the street. I thought at first they were hotel drummers, but I found out different. One old fellow stopped me and wanted to know where my woman was. I asked why he wanted to know that. He said he was a solicitor for a marriage broker; that he would sell me a marriage license for only two dollars, and would also give me five dollars' worth of "green trading stamps." I went on a little ways, and another fellow stopped me and asked me if I did not want to get a marriage license and six dollars' worth of "green trading stamps" for only two dollars. I started on, when another fellow offered to sell me a license for two dollars, payable twenty-five cents down, and twenty-five cents each week thereafter until the debt was liquidated. The next fellow I met made a still better offer. He said he would sell me a license for two dollars and not

require a down payment, the first payment of twenty-five cents to be made one month from date of purchase and the balance payable in installments of twenty-five cents per month. Then a still more liberal offer was made me by a man who said he would marry me for nothing. Still another fellow said he would go him one better—that he would give me five dollars' worth of "green trading stamps." Another one offered to sell me a license for twenty-five cents down, furnish the preacher, give me five dollars' worth of stamps, and allow me to stop at his shop and get a hair cut and a shave. The next one offered to furnish the license, a preacher, five dollars' worth of stamps, and throw in a nice baby carriage. Still another offered to make out my first papers as a British subject. The last was quite an inducement, as I could then go to the northwest part of Canada and take six hundred and forty acres of government land, and could stay and freeze to death the following winter, if I wanted to.

By that time I was up town. I looked down Main Street, and it appeared to me as if everybody in town was selling marriage licenses. I wrote down a few of the street signs in my book, so I would not forget them. Here are a few of them:

"Furniture, Undertaking and Marriage Licenses."

"Dry Goods, Marriage Licenses and Notions."

"Cigars, Tobacco and Marriage Licenses."

"Marriage Licenses and Laundry."

"Barber Shop and Marriage Licenses."

"Lightning Lunches and Marriage Licenses, Made While You Wait."

"Carpentering and Marriage Licenses—Quick Service."

"Get a Shoe Shine and Marriage License Here."

"Horseshoeing and Marriage Licenses Here."

Seeing almost everyone in town selling marriage licenses reminded me of early days in Oklahoma, when each tent had on it this sign:—

"Filing Papers Made Out."

I went down Main Street, and in every place one or more couples were getting licenses and being married. Soon a fellow grabbed me by the arm and wanted to know if I did not want to get married. I told him I did, but had forgotten to get a woman. He assured me that he could fix that part very easily, as he had several on hand that he had gotten off the remnant counter of a Chicago mail-order house. I went in and looked over the bunch, but did not see any that suited me. He said they were all guaranteed to be city broke, would not take fright at a street car, and would stand still without hitching. I noticed one lady in the bunch that looked to be seventy-five years old; I told him she would be all right if she had any teeth.

"Laws, Mister, I have teeth," she said, opening her mouth, but I could see only two. He told me to call again early the following day, and I could have my choice. But he said I had better come early and avoid the rush, as several men were crippled in the jam the week before.

When I went to the hotel for dinner the waitress asked me if I wanted two orders, and how long it would be before my wife came in. Whereupon I told her I was

not fortunate enough to have a wife. She advised me to get the marrying habit. Accordingly I asked her to be my wife.' So she put on her hat and said she would be ready in a few minutes. I told her not to be in such a hurry, as I wanted to get something to eat first. She then hung up her hat and went on about her work. After I had finished my dinner I slipped out and headed for the boat at a two-forty gait.

On the trip back across the river there were about twenty-five of the most spoony couples aboard I ever came in contact with at one time. I decided to get a divorce and try it myself. I made it my business, thereafter, to cross the river every few days, just to see the fun. Anyone can get married in Windsor who can dig up thirty-five cents. It takes ten cents to get across the river. You can get your marriage license on the installment plan—twenty-five cents down and the balance payable twenty-five cents each week thereafter until the entire amount is paid. And you get ten cents back if that is not cheap enough. Now, isn't that a bargain—a wife and enough "Green Trading Stamps" to buy a burial casket for only two dollars, payable twenty-five cents a week?

They have two nice boats going in opposite directions that carry passengers across the river. I was told that many of the school children play hookey and go across the river into Canada and get married. If people could get divorcees in Detroit as easily as they can in Reno it certainly would be a paradise. You could get a divorce in the morning and go to Windsor in the evening and get married. I was told that they do not publish the marriage

licenses in the papers—everything is kept on the quiet. If there were a few towns in the western states like Windsor, there would not be so many old bachelors in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and several other states I could mention.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HUNTING TROUBLE IN OLD CHICAGO TOWN—IF YOU WANT TO GET RICH SEND ME \$100 AND I WILL TELL YOU HOW—TRAVELING WITH A MUSICAL COMEDY COMPANY—CHORUS GIRLS—TOM AND JERRY—A DRUNKEN MIXUP AND THE POLICE STATION.

In the spring of 190— I was in Chicago, looking around to see if I could dig up trouble of some sort. As I had been a good little Sunday-school boy for more than three months, I was not looking for fights or anything like that. I am getting too old for that kind of excitement. But I was looking for something that I could do that would keep me busy and out of jail. I read the Want Ads. in the papers every day to see if I could find anything that looked inviting. I had come to the conclusion that I had to have a certain amount of trouble in order to live. Here is what I concluded I would try:

WANTED—A man to act as treasurer of a Threatical Company; a small amount of money required to show his good intention; can handle his own money. Address P. D. Q.

I was an actor myself for a week once in Kansas City. I put in one season with a Wild West show as cook,

wagon boss, animal tamer and short-stop—that's what the boss called it everytime I hit the ground. Sometimes the ticket-seller would drink too much river water; then I would sell peanuts, popcorn, and red lemonade, and when the police were not looking I would shoot a few craps for the star's breakfast.

I learned to shoot craps in Oklahoma at the same time I was learning how to catch a wolf by the tail and turn him inside out at one flip, like Abernathy did to amuse President Roosevelt. If you want to learn how to do the wolf trick, send me one hundred dollars by express prepaid and I will forward full directions, so you can do the same thing, or your money will be refunded. There is big money in doing the wolf trick, and the territory is not all covered yet. There is plenty of room in the United States for a few men who have plenty of nerve and one hundred dollars to get rich showing the people how it is done.

President Roosevelt spent over seventy-five dollars of the people's money riding on a pass from Washington to Oklahoma to see Mr. Abernathy do the wolf trick. Also he appointed Mr. Abernathy United States Marshal for Oklahoma for showing him how it was done.

I answered that advertisement, and was asked to call on Mr. Bones. That was not his real name; there was not enough of him to have a real name. He was about six and a half feet high and weighed eighty-seven pounds. He was dressed to suit the occasion. I did not say anything at the time about his personal appearance for fear he would become offended and jump through the key-hole, and I would lose the chance to become treasurer where I

would have nothing to do but get the souvenirs with the eagle on and put them where they would do the most good.

He told me to be seated. Then he handed me a cigar that would have killed any man who is in the habit of smoking in the Y. M. C. A. building. We discussed the good qualities of that particular brand of cigar. I even wrote the name of the cigar in my day-book, so I could buy a few in case I wanted to kill a man or two. It would be cheaper than shooting them.

After we had smoked awhile he asked me how much life insurance I carried; how many wives I had; how many more I thought I could stand. He told me that every actress wanted to marry every good looking man she met, especially if he was an old-time cow-puncher or a millionaire's son with money to burn. Then he wanted to know how many times I had been bitten by rattlesnakes, coyotes, tarantulas and centipedes. He asked me if I had ever bought a gold brick. Then he drifted into the show business by degrees, until my mind became bewildered; I could not half keep up with his talk. I used to think I could outrun any jack rabbit, antelope or buffalo that ever made tracks on the ground, but my brain, if I had any, was three hours behind in a four hours' talk with that man. I had to go; I needed rest. But he insisted on my going to supper with him. I went, thinking he would talk about something else—and he did. On the way to the restaurant he borrowed a dollar to pay for the meal. I eat fifteen cent's worth and he spent the rest for his snack, as he called it. After the meal we went to his room. By that time I had found out why the treas-

urer of a Show Company has to have a small amount of money.

Well, the bait looked good to Willie, and I swallowed it, together with the hook and about seventeen feet of line, I was in such a hurry to get started as treasurer of a Show Company. Before I went to my room that night I spent two dollars advertising for chorus girls—experience not necessary.

Next morning we visited the booking agencies—that's what he called them; anyway, that was the place he was going to hire the stage hands, all except the chorus girls. I could hire them myself, subject to the stage manager's approval, when he could find that worthy gentleman.

After dinner the girls wanting a job on the stage to sing and dance commenced to come in, and by two o'clock his room was jammed full of girls, also the hall was full, and the yard—everything was full of girls, including little Willie. Two big, fat girls, who would have kicked the beam at 175 pounds, sat down on me and wanted to go; twenty dollars a week and car-fare looked good to them.

I promised seventy-five of them a job. About half a dozen came near getting into a scrap among themselves, as they wanted Bill to go home with them and take supper with their mammas. As I could not go with the whole bunch, I declined to go with any of them. Bones said it was not good policy to show any partiality.

Next day the booking agent said he had found us a piano player, a stage manager, and a leading lady—all of which he knew would fill the bill. Besides, he had nine hundred applications from actors and actresses wanting jobs for the other places in the company.

The leading lady and the stage manager were in Timbuctoo or Hoboken, and he said we would have to wire them tickets, as they had just invested all their money in Standard Oil Stock. That's why the treasurer had to have a little cash. I paid seventeen dollars and four cents for two tickets to get them to Chicago. You see, I mention the four cents to show you I am honest, and so you will know I am not trying to short change you. They got to the room where Bones hung out about 1:00 P. M. A few minutes later a baggage man came with a trunk, a suit-case, and a two-bushel sack, and I had to dig up one dollar and six bits more.

About that time Bones wanted three dollars, he did not say what for, and I had to go down to the lake and dig some money out of a sand bank. When I got back it was four o'clock in the afternoon, and the leading lady was having some kind of a fit. Right then I wished I had brought a barrel of skunk oil with me, as it was a plain case of blind staggers. Bones said he wanted three dollars in a hurry. I would not dig up until he told me what he wanted it for. You see I wanted to find out just what the treasurer of a big corporation has to do. He said the lady had gone without food for three days, as she was too excited over the prospect of getting a job to eat anything.

Bones gave the lady and the stage manager the money to get something to eat, and when they went out, I changed my mind, so they would not know me, and watching my chance, I slipped into the restaurant to see if she had got over her excitement. When they presented their checks to the cashier, her's was for two dollars and his for the other one; and I heard the waiter say that



A Tenderfoot Back East

both of them were mad because they could not eat the dishes and the furniture. When we all got back to the room, Bones hit me for two dollars more to pay for a room for them.

About that time I began to think I had found quite a lot of fun and trouble mixed together; so much so that I called the stage manager and the leading lady Tom and Jerry.

Then I hired a hall for four bones a day to rehearse in. Bones, Tom and Jerry, the Pianist and the Angel put in about a week cutting out and branding that bunch of young heifers; Tom and Jerry selected a dozen of the most likely ones, and we all got down to business. Rehearsing a bunch of new actors puts me in mind of a monkey drill among a lot of rookies in a cavalry company in the United States Army.

After Tom and Jerry had picked out six of the best girls (subject to the angel's approval), he let the rest go back to the range; and when he got the six so they could chase each other around the room without crippling each other, we were ready to go. Of course, nobody had to rehearse except the six chorus girls, no experience necessary. All the rest knew their business—that is, if it is a business.

While the chorus girls were learning to sing and dance, Bones hired the costumes at twenty-five dollars a week for the six chorus girls; the old stage hands furnished their own make-up. He also got dates for nine weeks; then he secured a lot of second-hand wall paper for the bill boards.

It was a mixed bunch. I put the road brand on them, and we were ready to go. I think that booking agent

owned most all the railroads running out of Chicago, and was trying to raise the dividends. At least it cost me over a hundred dollars every time we moved camp. It used to be the custom in a cow camp to move when it got too dirty. It is the same with a musical comedy company. I will give Bones the credit of being a good press agent, both on and off the stage.

Before we left Chicago I had to go around to the various pawn-shops and get the girls' and boys' trunks and suit-cases, containing their stage clothes. This cost me upwards of one hundred dollars.

When we arrived at the first town and opened up for business, there was a big crowd outside waiting to get in. I let down the bars so they would not climb over the fence, and Bones took in the tickets. In thirty minutes after I let down the bars that Air Dome was full to the overflowing point. And every tree and house-top within a mile of it was full.

Before we got to that town Bones had told me that I had better take the six chorus girls (no experience necessary) to one hotel, and that he would take the other ten to another hotel, as Tom and Jerry did not like to associate with an angel or a bunch of chorus girls (no experience necessary). It would look better to divide up our patronage; it would make business better for the Air Dome. Bones and the old stage hands got along very well at their hotel the first day; but the second day they had some kind of a mixup, and about half the bunch were arrested and taken to the city jail. They sent for me to come and get them out so the show could go on that night.

When we got to the next camping place, one woman and two men were missing. Then Bones got busy using the wire to find three more to take their places; that took another five dollars.

Before we started on the road everyone had insisted having a contract requiring two weeks' notice before I could fire any of them. Whoever heard of an angel firing anybody? I asked Bones what would keep them from quitting on any pay-day. He told me that all actors have a professional honor that keeps them loyal to the company. After nine weeks' experience I discovered that they have more professional honor than they can pack, and when the burden gets too heavy they just lie down and quit.

At the next camp Tom's and Jerry's burdens got too heavy to carry and they laid down. Just as fast as the actors got the wrinkles out of their old hides they quit. After that Bones hired everybody that knew the difference between an air dome and a tobacco warehouse. Sometimes we would have a bunch of twenty-five or thirty; then again we would not have ten. At the end of nine weeks, Bones, the six chorus girls (no experience necessary), and the angel were all that remained of the eighteen that left Chicago. During that time I had over a hundred names on the pay-roll. As far as the old stage hands were concerned, they never had a pay-day. Car-fare to the company hotel, laundry and make-up (that's what they called it) bills kept them and their salaries on the wrong side of the book; and when the nine weeks were up everyone of the rascals owed me from two to fifty dollars.

And now let me say a good word for the six chorus

girls. Everyone of them had a pay day every week, and everyone that started was with me when we quit. The seven of us always went to the same hotel, usually a good dollar-and-quarter-a-day house, and there is not a hotel where we stopped that would not welcome us back. As to the others, no hotel where they stopped would let them stay again at any price. The six chorus girls were nice and well behaved and saved their money. When we quit I paid their car-fare back for their good behavior and loyalty to the company.

When I wound up the business I was out three months' time and three hundred dollars in money. But as I had had seven hundred dollars' worth of fun, a thousand dollars' worth of excitement, and over a million dollars' worth of experience, I retired from the business a millionaire theatrical manager, slightly disfigured but still in the ring.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HUNTING TROUBLE AND SEEING THE SIGHTS IN OLD CHICAGO TOWN.

The last time I was in Chicago hunting trouble I put the following advertisement in one of the daily papers:—

WANTED—A housekeeper on a ranch.

I received quite a lot of answers to that advertisement. No doubt most of the letters came from women who were honest in their intentions, but at least one-third answered through curiosity, and several of them were just grafters of the worst kind. All of them wanted to see what a millionaire cowboy from Texas looked like. I met several of them out in the alley behind the livery stable. It seems to be the custom in Chicago to meet people everywhere except at their homes, for some reason or other. I guess they were afraid I would scratch the furniture with my silver-mounted spurs. One of them sent word to please leave my horns at home, as her children were afraid of a man that had horns like a cow.

I had an engagement with one woman to meet her at her home on Sunday evening. I had to walk a block and a half after I got off the street car, and when I got off the car I thought the people in that part of the town

were having a street picnic. At least that is the way it looked to me.

Both sides of the street were lined with men, women and children, and I noticed several big dogs in the crowd. Every door and window on both sides of the street was full of people. I asked a man what was going on, that everybody should be on the lookout. He said they were watching to see that millionaire cowboy that was coming to see Mrs. So and So.

One fellow that looked like he might have been an ex-champion prize fighter stopped me and wanted to know if the millionaire cowboy got off that last car. I told him no; that he was in the car all right, but when he saw the crowd on the street he went on, and probably would get off at the next stop. I went on past the house to the street corner, turned around and came back, and went into the house without being noticed.

I went to see another one who said she was of German decent. When I rang the bell I noticed the window blinds were all pulled down, and there were one to two persons peeping out to see who it was. Presently the door was unlocked and a man opened it just enough to see out.

I asked him if Miss Schmidt was in. He wanted to know if I was Bill Jones.

"Yes, I am Bill Jones," I replied.

"Wait a minute and I will see."

In about a minute I heard a door slam, the front door was opened with a jerk, and someone I did not see bade me come in. I noticed that there was a good sized cord tied to the door knob on the inside. When the man pulled

the front door open, he shut the other door and locked it, as I heard the lock snap.

I went in and Miss Schmidt looked me over. She was very much disappointed. I could see that at a glance. I could see by her actions that she had never seen a cowboy before except in the picture shows. I guess she expected to see a man with a big white hat on his head, a pair of leather breeches with white hair a foot long on them, carrying fifteen pounds of rapid fire artillery, a quirt in one hand and a long rope in the other, a pair of silver-mounted spurs and star-topped boots. A mustache that would measure eighteen inches from tip to tip, and his hair hanging below the waist line.

After we had talked on various subjects for awhile, she wanted to know if the Indians were very bad in Texas, and if I was not afraid to live out there. Then she wanted to know if Uncle Sam kept a regiment of soldiers in all the big towns to keep the Indians from killing the people, and if the Texas fever tick is as bad as she had heard it was.

I told her the ticks in Kansas were the cause of more cattle dying than any other disease, but the people had found out how to dip their cattle in a tank of water mixed with tick medicine.

Then she wanted to know if the ticks would get on people and kill them. I told her they hardly ever kill a white man, but are hard on a dago from Chicago. She wanted to know what kind of an animal a boll weevil is; if they have horns like a cow, and if they kill people. I told her a boll weevil is a little bug or beetle that destroys the cotton crops by boring into the pod or boll. This

causes the boll to drop off before it is ready to gather, and they only bother people in the winter time.

Then she wanted to know if there were many prairie dogs in Texas, and if they would bite a person, and if they would chase people like the wild dogs and wolves do in Russia.

I told her the prairie dogs would only attack the settlers once in a great while, but we always had to be on the lookout for them.

She wanted to know if the coyotes were as bad as she had heard they were, and if the coyotes were as big as a Jersey cow. I told her that nearly everybody in Lipscomb and on the staked plains kept a drove of coyotes to kill the prairie dogs. I told her some people keep coyotes for pets, just like some people in Chicago keep French poodle-dogs.

Then she wanted to know if there were many rattlesnakes in Texas. I told her there were only a few of the velvet tailed variety, but there were thousands of the common prairie rattlers; that the rattlesnakes, the prairie dogs and the owls live in the same town and in the same house together, or at least Horace Greeley says so in his book. "What I Know About Farming," and as the college professors and school teachers have been telling the kids so for the last half century, there was no use in my telling her differently.

But just think what would happen in Illinois if a big hungry snake should find a nest of young birds or a half-grown rabbit. I guess they would disappear soon, if not sooner.

She wanted to know why I called some snakes the

velvet tailed variety. I told her the diamond or timber rattlesnakes have about eight inches of velvet on their tails, or at least it looks like velvet, and an Indian always says good-bye to his pony when he is bitten by a velvet tail. But it is the little prairie rattlesnake that raises Cain, for he is more active and vicious than his big brother. I have seen them jump twenty feet and they will get you every time.

I told her that some of the ranchmen in Texas had quit raising cattle and had gone to raising rattlesnakes, as there was more money in snakes than there was in cattle or sheep. I told her we could get from fifteen to one hundred barrels of rattlesnake oil and several carloads of rattlesnake hulls off a big ranch in Texas every year, and there is a big factory in Peoria, Illinois, that buys all they can get at big prices. They made it into snake medicine and they sold the medicine to the Jews in Chicago. I told her a quart bottle of snake medicine would cure the worst case of blues there was in Chicago, and a quart would kill a Kansas farmer in less than no time. All the best brands of snake medicine, I told her, are guaranteed by the "Pure Food Laws of the United States," and the daily consumption of snake medicine is greater in Chicago than any town I was ever in, unless it was Topeka, Kansas.

The next day I went to see another lady who said she would like to have a position as housekeeper on a ranch in Texas, as she was tired of life in a big city. Then she commenced to ask questions about ranch life faster than a dozen men could answer, all talking at the same time. She wanted to know if I was a real cowboy from out West; how many men I had killed, and if all cowboys

were as bad as they were shown in the moving picture shows. I told her that all the cowboys out West have private graveyards of their own, and some of the old-time cowboys had men planted all the way from the Rio Grande to Dodge City, and there was one old cattle trail that could be followed for hundreds of miles between a row of graves, just like passing houses on both sides of the street in a city.

I told her that part of the Great American Desert in Texas is called the Llano Estacado, which in Mexican means "Are you ready to die?" Staked Plains is the name given it by the white man. Then she wanted to know what "Staked Plains" meant. I told her that in the early days some of the old-time Spanish explorers got lost and finally died for the want of water. In some places it was five hundred miles from one water hole to another, and the sand was ten feet deep all the way. It was so hot you could kill a jack rabbit, lay him on a board in the sun, and he would cook and be ready to eat in half the time it takes to get something to eat in a Chicago restaurant, and we always done our cooking at night to keep the sun from burning the handles off the frying pan and coffee pot.

Then she wanted to know how it got the name "Staked Plains." I told her there were a lot of cattlemen who wanted to drive cattle from Texas to New Mexico and Arizona, and they employed a lot of cowboys to lay out a trail across the plain, so they could follow it without getting lost. It was the contract to drive a stake in the ground every eighty rods, and the stakes were to be eight feet long.

The boss of the outfit hired three or four hundred Mexicans to carry the stakes, as that was the only way he would get them carried, and every eighty rods they would kill a Mexican and plant him. Then they would drive the stake in the sand, according to the agreement.

Then she wanted to know if there were any sand storms out there like they have in the deserts of Africa. I told her I once helped drive a herd of cattle across the Staked Plains and one night the wind commenced to blow a gale at the rate of one hundred miles an hour. By ten o'clock next day the sand had drifted in our little arroya from five to twenty feet deep, and all the men, horses and cattle were covered with sand. It took us over a week to scratch out, and it was two weeks before we got all the horses and cattle together.

She wanted to know if I had ever held up and robbed a stage. I told her I was with some of the boys in Dallas one time, and they said it would be a good joke on the passengers if we would go to a point about halfway between Dallas and Fort Worth, hold up the overland stage coach and secure all the express packages and the mail sacks. We could hold the passengers for ransom, and make the Governor pay us a thousand dollars apiece to turn them loose. I guess the boys did pretty well that trip, as they all had plenty of money when we got back to Granbury in Hood County.

The next one I went to see said she had heard the toads in Texas all had horns, and she wanted to know if a horned toad was very bad. I told her they had horns just like a rhinoceros, but that they are not quite so big as a rhinoceros's; that the toads made the nicest kinds

of pets and they could sing equal to a canary or a mocking bird, and I told her there were a lot of women in Texas engaged in the business of raising and training horned toads for the northern markets, and everybody who ever heard a horned toad sing would not do without one at any price. A horned toad certainly is a fine singer. She wanted to know if there were any Gila Monsters in Texas. I told her that a Gila Monster is just a big over-grown lizard; that they are very active and mean, always looking for trouble, and they are more poisonous than a rattlesnake. If they get within thirty feet of you and stick their tongue out at you, you are just as good as dead right then. Only one thing keeps the Gila Monster from depopulating the West; and that is, they can't catch a man on a good horse.

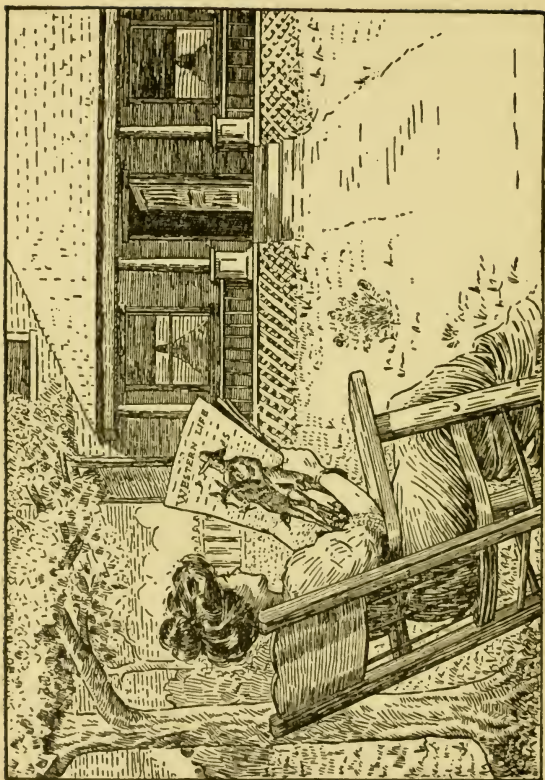
She wanted to know about a tarantula. I told her a tarantula is just a big over-grown spider and very poisonous, and some years in Texas there is a world of them. She wanted to know if they can fly. I told her a tarantula cannot fly, but a man with a tarantula after him can. Then I told her about the centipedes, or the worm with a thousand legs—that they are a great pest all over the Southwest, and the meanest of all poisonous things. In that country there is a world of them, and every home has from one to twenty in it. They get into everything. I told her about one of them getting into a coffee-pot, and that pot of coffee killed fifteen Mexicans and the family dog. It is impossible to keep them out of the bed. I have seen them crawl along the ceiling until they would get over the bed and then let loose and down they would come. A centipede has sharp claws on the ends of his legs,

and that is how he does his meanness, just sticks a claw in you and you are dead right away.

I told her the State of Texas is as big as Chicago, as far as the number of people was concerned, about three million in each. But Texas is different from Chicago: if a man would fall off a high place, or his horse, he would only kill himself; if he fell off a high building in Chicago, he would kill a dozen bohunks; but a white man in Texas was worth half a hundred dead bohunks in Chicago.

I went to see a good old soul who said she was eighty-five years old, without any home, without any children, or any one else in the world that cared anything about her, except the people where she was living. She was tired of city life, as she was raised on the farm and wanted to spend her remaining days in peace and happiness. She had read about the Texas people—how kind and generous they are. She was too old to do any hard work, but she could take care of the baby, if I had any, and could stay at home and look after everything while all the rest went to town or to church, and could teach the little ones how they ought to grow up to be good men and women, and in case of sickness she was a good nurse. After listening to that good old mother for about an hour I came to the conclusion that I was the meanest man in Chicago. She said before she died she wanted to get away from Chicago and get some place where there was plenty of room to bury people. In some of the cemeteries in Chicago they bury people five and six feet deep, and that did not suit her.

I went to see a young girl who said she was a school teacher. She was not much of a cook, but was willing to learn, and hoped I would consider her among the rest of



A Vision of the Boy Out West

the applicants for the position of housekeeper on a Texas ranch. I wanted to know how she got the idea in her head that she would like to give up a good home and a good position, at a good salary, to go to Texas as a house keeper.

"I have been to see the movies so often," she said, "that I would do anything to get out on the flower-bedecked prairie, away from the city, where life would be one glad song, where the bluest of the skies are in evidence all the year round; where the prairies are covered with all kinds of flowers two feet deep twelve months in the year; where the sun shines all the time; where there is no ice or snow; where the magnolia and the orange trees bloom constantly; where the mocking birds sing all night; where the whip-poor-will is heard at all times; where everybody has a smile on his face and a glad hand of welcome is extended to the stranger from every State in the Union; where you could know everybody in a day's ride on a good pony.

"How nice it would be to get on your pony and go out and shoot a jack rabbit or a mountain lion, or rope a coyote for pastime. How nice it would be to go to a party and dance all night with the cowboys and the cowboy girls, and have everybody say—'That is Miss Lillian, the cowboy girl, Queen of the Circle D Ranch.' How nice it would be to ride over the now historical battle grounds, where the cowboys, the buffalo hunters, the soldiers, and the Texas rangers meet the Indian chief and his warriors dressed in their war bonnets, painted in all the gaudy colors that were so dear to the Indian's heart!

"We could visit the unknown and almost forgotten

burial grounds! We could scatter wild flowers over their graves. How nice it would be to ride over the sun-kissed plain into the valley, the present-day ranchman's home and pride where the prairie schooner was drawn by the ox, in the days that are past and gone; over the vale in search of gold and the new Eldorado, where the elk, the deer and the graceful little antelope with his beautiful eyes come down to drink the clear and sparkling water from the little brook while the morning skies are rosy. How nice it would be to visit the place where the buried city, inhabited by unknown tribes, once stood in all its magnificence and glory, where relics of a forgotten age can be found in the valley now covered with grass and flowers; where the welcome camp fire burns slowly, fading like a summer dream."

She kept up that kind of talk for two hours, and did not seem in the least fatigued. I, however, was gasping for breath. Here was a young lady who had never been within a thousand miles of Texas who could tell more about it than I could, though I have been there more or less for forty years.

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