

Simcoe's Ghost Returned.

"M-i-s-t-e-r Simcoe M-i-s-t-e-r Simcoe!"

The sharp, metallic, high-pitched voice of a child smote the ears of a man walking along the streets of Bisbee, but he neither stopped in his slouchy gait nor raised his head sunken in his chest, or gave other evidence of having heard it.

"M-i-s-t-e-r Simcoe!"

This time it was a petulant, discordant screech with an appeal in it, and the man withdrew his thoughts from the shadows and looked back to see a little girl with pigtail braids and a sharp hatchet face running after him.

He extended one finger, which she clutched and held while she talked breathlessly.

"You said you was goin' t'ew see Santa Claus. Be you?"

"I reckon," said the man stolidly.

"Be you goin' t'ew tell him 'bout me?" Two bright red spots glowed on her thin cheeks and her eyes burned with excitement at fever heat. "Kase if you dew tell him I want a really truly doll with lots of yellow hair an' eyes that go tew sleep an' wake up like people—Oh my!"

"It'll cost a heap of money, Lorie," said the man as if thinking of something else.

"Yep, but dear good Santa won't mind. Tell him, Mister Simcoe, that I'm a poor little girl what hasn't any mommer an' not much of a popper, an' that you air my friend, sure. Oh, you can make him send me a real Christmas doll, an' I'll pray to God every night to keep you a good man forever-and-ever, Amen."

The man caught the child up in his arms and kissed the top of her little thin head with both affection and reverence.

"Poor little waif," he said, "you shall have your Christmas doll, if I am alive, and it will be the kind you want; Santa will send it all right. And little Lorie, don't forget that prayer every night—to keep me a good man—you know."

"Forever-and-ever-Amen," said the child solemnly and ran home.

That night after supper at the Arizona house, Larry Simcoe sat in the office so silent and dejected that his fellow miners looked at him with some curiosity. One of them asked: "Anything gone wrong pard?"

"Nope. He was puffing away at a blackened pipe. 'Why?"

"You look as down in the mouth as if your best girl had gone back on you. Make a clean breast of it and you'll feel better. Misery loves company."

Simcoe took his pipe from his mouth and said abruptly:

"Boys, it's up to me to tell the truth, the hull truth, and nothing but the truth. Mebbe you've heard or guessed it. I'm no tenderfoot and I ain't a-goin' to squeal. And I'm not going to Nome to see my best girl, nor to Indianny, where a gray-haired woman is waiting to see me again before she dies. I dropped all my savings of \$2,000—the labor of ten long years—in Jim Lacrosse's saloon last night when I ran up against Hi Ransom, the biggest professional in Arizona. Gad! I was a blamed fool!"

"You played on Friday, Simcoe. I'm always telling you to be more observin', but you don't seem to remember. No game on Friday for yours truly. Not on the 13th day of the month. Nor after I've heard a screech owl or dreamed of a ghost."

"Oh, shut up, Walters; always talking of dreams and ghosts. You make me tired."

"Have it your own way," said Walters, good-naturedly. "I ain't afraid of anything a bullet can hit. Why, hello, here's the boss."

"Howdy," said the new arrival, a small, keen-looking man, togged out in blankets and mufflers. "I came in after Simcoe. You're wanted at the bank."

"What's up?"

"Why, the wagon went up today without the money to pay off the men. They want it for Christmas, and have barely got time to get it off to their folks by the mails."

"How much is it?" asked Simcoe, after a moment's pause.

"Two thousand dollars. It should have gone up with the supplies. The boys are screeching around like wild cats, and I told them I'd come down and get you to carry it back to-night."

"Isn't there some one else to go? I can't say I hanker for the job of riding thirteen miles tonight over bad roads and a trail infested with Injuns. Ain't you going back, Casey?"

"Not tonight," said the boss. "Besides, you've got a horse that is safe and sure, and you're a crack shot yourself. What's come over you, man? I thought the job would just suit your dare-devil notions."

"I'll go," said Simcoe, after a profound study. "What time is it? I've

got to write a letter before I start. When is Christmas?"

His questions being answered, Simcoe tore a leaf from a pad of coarse office paper and sat down to write. As he scribbled a smile came over his gloomy face, lighting it up with a tender glow. Before sealing it he placed some money in the envelope, and still smiling, said:—

"I'll drop it in the mail as I go along. It's none too soon, either."

The men made no comment. That privilege of reticence about one's personal affairs which belongs as surely to the camp as to the court acted as a safeguard against mere idle curiosity. Afterward, when they knew what it meant, it seemed like a silver thread in the dark tragedy which followed.

Simcoe smoked a new pipe before reporting to Casey, while the men badgered him about haunts and hold-ups, and gave him a lot of mock instructions, but one of them said in sober earnest:—

"Carry your rifle an' six-shooter both, lad. I hear there's a couple of hard-looking citizens been a hangin' around the trail. Look out for 'em, and be good to yourself, lad."

Simcoe remembered the warning when he set out that night, the money he was carrying slung across the pony in two bags half filled with provender. His rifle rested across his saddle bow, and his six-shooter was stuck in his belt. He loved those tried and trusty friends and felt safe in their company. He was thinking only of going straight on to the end of his journey, giving the money to the men, getting a glad welcome and a good breakfast. It was a clear, starlight night and there was no snow to leave tracks.

The cool air gave him courage to face his own unhappy situation. The prospect was not comforting. Ten years more at hard labor to pay for his folly. Well, he was a young man and the years would soon go. The girl at Nome would wait. The little mother should not want nor lose faith in her boy.

"Hullo! hullo! Whoa, Dandy, old boy! What's wrong?" His horse had stopped so suddenly in its long, loping gait that he nearly threw his master over his head. He was trembling and sporting with terror. He had come on some bulky obstruction in the mountain road. Simcoe struck a match and saw a man's figure prone in the sand at his horse's feet. It is hard to simulate death, and Simcoe's practiced eye knew that inert stillness and formlessness was death.

But he was wary and did not dismount until he had scanned every foot of ground in the vicinity. Then, still grasping his rifle, he dropped to the ground, his horse's bridle over his arm. The body was that of a man who had been cruelly murdered.

Such a tragedy was not unusual in that wild country, and, having satisfied himself that the man was dead, Simcoe was about to mount and ride on, when he decided to search the man's pockets for something to establish his identity. The face was unrecognizable and there was nothing—not even a name belonging to the poor, shapeless clay. The merest suggestion presented itself that he was a young man like Simcoe himself, and of his station. And then and there the devil of opportunity opened a door into a man's soul.

An hour later Simcoe was riding madly in an opposite direction from that which had been his destination. He left the dead man in the road wearing his clothes, while he wore the torn and bedabbled garments of the stranger. He rode with whip and spur as if furied pursued him. The starlight shone on the awful face of the outcast, a derelict. He had stolen the money intrusted to him and was fleeing from himself, for none other pursued.

But he heard voices. "Be good to yourself, lad." Had he been good to himself? For answer he said he had only done what bank presidents and gentlemen of commerce did every day. Then another voice, cracked and childish: "M-i-s-t-e-r Simcoe!" He jumped and his horse shied. "I will pray to God every night to make you a good man for-ever-and-ever, Amen."

Jim Walters sat down to a game on the quiet that night and won

thirteen dollars. He pushed back his chair and threw down his cards. Later when he looked for his coat he found a black cat curled up on the garment. He turned to the boys.

"Suthin's goin' to happen. You hear me. Suthin's goin' to happen."

A heavy step at the door emphasized his words. Casey, pale and excited, stepped in. The men jumped to their feet.

"What's happened?"

"Simcoe has been found murdered on the trail. The horse is gone and the money's gone. Get a litter and bring him in. It's a bad business."

"Simcoe murdered? Old Simcoe dead?" The men crowded about Casey asking for details which he was unable to give. A ranchman had found the body and brought in the news—there was not a clue to the thieves and murderers.

Jim Walters was sent to Albion for a casket, an errand he much disliked, but he made the trip speedily and was returning with his unwelcome load when his fears got the upper hand of him and he saw the "ghost" for which he was always looking; it came out of a clump of bushes by the roadside and halted him in the voice of Simcoe—at least Walters declared in his oath that he thought it was the voice of his dead comrade. He ran his team into Bisbee and was in an acute chill the rest of the day.

Casey smiled grimly when he heard of it. "Get the funeral over, boys. Simcoe's ghost won't haunt anyone when their remains are under ground. Have a short service and get back to camp."

That was a dreary Christmas for everybody but Lorie, Simcoe's little friend. A box came to her by mail, bearing a doll the exact copy of the one she wanted, and some of the men remembered the letter Simcoe had written that night and told the child it was sent to Santa Claus. And if there is any potency in a child's prayer, then Simcoe must have been benefited, alive or dead, with her nightly repetition of his name.

Christmas Eve Casey sat alone in the camp—moody, as he had often been of late, a smoky kerosene lamp making weird shadows with its flickering light a thick atmosphere of gloom enveloping all things. The men were going to Bisbee, but they were discontented and sullen, still feeling the loss of their holiday funds. Casey was thinking deeply, and he started at a sound that caused him to look up and find himself covered by a revolver. He had no time to speak until the figure confronting him had backed away to the outer entrance. As the white face and gleaming eyes of the apparition receded he found his voice.

"Simcoe, come back!"

He sprang after him, but no one was there. The men, hearing him, gathered around him. Casey was pale and trembling, for on the table by which he had been sitting were the original packages of the men's money. Every dollar was intact.—Mrs. M. L. Rayne in Chicago Record-Herald.

Becomes Very Insane

London, Aug. 10.—D. S. Fannin, of New York, a passenger on the North German Lloyd steamer Frederick der Grosse, which reached Southampton yesterday, from New York, July 31, arrived in London yesterday and was taken to St. Giles infirmary this afternoon under the lunatic act. Mr. Fannin is connected with the firm of Haas Brothers, of New York City, and his parents are spending the summer at Newport.

Mr. Fannin startled the guests who crowded the court yard of the Hotel Cecil at noon today by driving into the court in an automobile, and declaring he was the Saviour and had just come from Heaven on his machine. He insisted on shaking hands with all the guests present, until he was finally taken to his room by the hotel people.

Mr. Fannin developed a mania on the Frederick der Grosse on the way over here. On the ship he declared he owned all the yachts in the world. Upon his arrival in London his friends had difficulty to persuade him to leave the railway station and go to a hotel. This morning he started in an automobile back to the railroad station, saying he was going to run down and kill all the pedestrians he met on the way. He fell in with and picked up an English lance corporal, with whom he drove to the Hotel Cecil.

Mr. Fannin was known to have had a large sum of money in his possession when he arrived in London. He threw this money about the streets and returned to the hotel penniless.

Kaiser Makes Silly Move

Berlin, Aug. 9.—The Kaiser has over-reached himself. All the American residents in Berlin declare it, and most of the Germans strongly suspect it. The Emperor's offer of imperial decorations to citizens of the United States, it is agreed here, was a false step that will offset many of his previous tactful efforts to make himself personally popular with the new commercial power.

Frederick the Great did not offer to decorate George Washington, the father of a republic. Any one would have seen the absurdity of such a proposition. As a famous soldier of the old world, he sent a sword as a mark of recognition to the greatest soldier of the new world.

The excuse being made for the Kaiser is that the immense growth and power of the United States having

placed that government on a par

with any in the world, its origin in protest against monarchy is naturally overlooked. But the Kaiser's apologists are not helping matters much. His subjects fully understand that the giving of decorations is a family matter, and that the relationship between empires and republics is not of

the kind that warrants the official

interchange of ribbons and medals.

Berlin, Aug. 11.—The semi-annual report of the German Genossenschaft Bank emphasizes the existing industrial depression. The report shows that the bank lost \$867,500 in industrial enterprises.

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