MC2289

POOR DOCUMENT

Blazed Trail Stories

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Stories of the Wild Life

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE.

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THE RACE.

(Continued.)

"Dean you done do dat!" he said, with indignation.

He looked upon the turkey-like Jose for a heavy moment, and then turned back to the cooking. In rescuing an unstable coffee-pot a moment later he accidentally jostled against Jose's leg. Jose promptly and fiercely kicked the whole outfit into space. The frying-pan crowned a sage-brush; the coffee rolled into a hollow, where it spouted coffee grounds and water in a diminishing stream; the kettle rolled gently on its side; flap-jacks distributed themselves impartially and miserably; and, worst of all, the fire was drowned out altogether.

Black Sam began stifly to arise. The next instant he sank back with a gurgle in his throat and a knife thrust in his side.

The murderer stood looking down at his victim. The other Mexicans stared. The cowboy jumped up from the tongue of the wagon, drew his weapon from the holster at his side, took deliberate aim and fired twice. Then he turned and began to run toward Alfred on the hill.

A cowboy cannot run so very rapidly. He carries such a quantity of dunnage below in the shape of high boots, spurs, chaps, and cartridge-belts that his gait is a waddling single-foot. Still, Tom managed to get across the little stony ravine before the Mexicans recovered from their surprise and became disentangled from their ponchos. Then he glanced over his shoulder. He saw that some of the vaqueros were running toward the arroya, that some were busily unhoobling the mules, and that one or two had kneeled and were preparing to shoot. At the sight of these last, he began to jump from side to side as he ran. This decreased his speed. Half-way up the hill he was met by Alfred on his way to get in the game, whatever it might prove to be. The little man reached over and grasped Tom's hand. Tom braced his foot against the stirrup, and in an instant was astride behind the saddle. Alfred turned up the hill again, and without a word began applying his quirt vigorously to the wiry shoulders of his horse. At the top of the hill, as they passed the grazing ponies, Tom turned and emptied the remaining four chambers of his revolver at the herd. Two ponies fell kicking; the rest scattered in every direction. Alfred grunted approvingly, for this made pursuit more difficult, and so gained them a little more time.

Now both Alfred and Tom knew well enough that a horse carrying two men cannot run away from a horse carrying one man, but they also knew the country, and this knowledge taught them that if they could reach the narrow passage through the old clay bluff, they might be able to escape to Peterson's, which was situated a number of miles beyond. This would be possible, because men climb faster when danger is behind them than when it is in front. Besides, a brisk defence could render even an angry Mexican a little doubtful as to just when he should begin to climb. Accordingly, Alfred urged the pony across the flat plain of the ancient river-bed toward the nearest and only break in the cliff. Fifteen miles below was the regular passage. Otherwise the upper mesa was as impregnable as an ancient fortress. The Mexicans had by this time succeeded in roping some of the scattered animals, and were streaming over the brow of the hill, shouting wildly. Alfred looked back and grinned. Tom waved his wide sombrero mockingly.

When they approached the ravine, they found the sides almost perpendicular and nearly bare. Its bed was V-shaped, and so cut up with miniature gullies, fantastic turrets and spires, and so undermined by former rains as to be almost impassable. It sloped gently at first, but afterward more rapidly, and near the top was straight up and down for two feet or more. As the men reached it, they threw themselves from the horse and commenced to scramble up, leading the animal by the bridle-rein. From riding against the sunset their eyes were dazzled, so this was not easy. The horse followed gingerly, his nose to the ground.

It is well known that quick, short rains followed by a burning sun tend to undermine the clay surface of the ground and to leave it with a hard upper shell, beneath which are cavities of various depths. Alfred and Tom, as experienced men, should have bofer thamt ram but not. Soon after entering the ravine the horse broke through into one of the underground cavities and fell heavily on his side. When he had scrambled somehow to his feet, he stood feebly panting, his nostrils expanded.

"How is it, Tom?" called Alfred, who was ahead.

"Shoulder out," said Tom, briefly.

Alfred turned back without another word, and putting the muzzle of his pistol against the pony's forehead just above the line of the eyes he pulled the trigger. With the body the two men improvised a breastwork across a little hummock. Just as they dropped behind it the Mexicans clattered up, riding bareback. Tom coolly reloaded his pistol.

The Mexicans, too, were dazzled from riding against the glow in the west, and halted a moment in a confused mass at the mouth of the ravine. The two cowboys within rose and shot rapidly. Three Mexicans and two ponies fell. The rest in wild confusion slipped rapidly to the right and left beyond the American's line of sight. Three armed with Winchesters made a long detour and dropped quietly into the sage brush just beyond accurate pistol-range. There they lay concealed, watching. Then utter silence fell.

The rising moon shone full and square into the ravine, illuminating every inch of the ascent. A very poor shot could hardly miss in such a light and with such a background. The two cowmen realized this and settled down more comfortably behind their breastwork. Tom cautiously raised the pony's head with a little chunk of rock, thus making loop-holes through which to keep tabs on the enemy, after which he rolled on his belly and began whittling in the hard clay, for Tom had the carving habit—like many a younger boy. Alfred carefully extracted a short pipe from beneath his chaparejos, pushed down with his blunt forefinger the charge with which it was already loaded and struck a match. He poised this for a moment above the bowl of the pipe.

"What's the row anyway?" he inquired with pardonable curiosity.

"Now, it's jest fifteen mile to th' cut," said Tom, disregarding Alfred's question entirely, "an' of co'se they's goin' to send a posse down thar on th' keen jump. That'll take clost onto three hours in this light. Then they'll jest pot us a lot from on top."

Alfred puffed three times toward the moonlight, and looked as though the thing were sufficiently obvious without wasting so much breath over it.

"We've jest got to git out!" concluded Tom, earnestly.

Alfred grunted.

"An' how are we goin' to do it?"

Alfred paused in the act of blowing a cloud.

"Because, if we makes a break, these Greasers jest nat'rally plugs us from behind th' moment we begins to climb."

Alfred condescended to nod. Tom suspended his whittling for a reply.

"Well," said Alfred, taking his pipe from his mouth—Tom contentedly took up whittling again—"there's only one way to do it, and that's to keep them so damn busy in front that they can't plug us."

Tom looked perplexed.

"We just got to take our chances on the climbing. Of course, there's bound to be th' risk of accident. But when I give th' word, you mosey, and if one of them pots you, it'll be because my six-shooter's empty."

"But you can't expec' t' shoot an' climb!" objected Tom.

"Course not," replied Alfred, calmly. "Division of labor; you climb; I shoot."

A light dawned in Tom's eyes, and he shut his jaws with a snap.

"I guess not!" said he, quietly.

"Yo' laigs is longer," Alfred urged, in his gentle voice, "and yo'll get to Peterson's quicker;" and then he looked in Tom's eyes and changed his tone. "All right!" he said, in a business-like manner. "I'll toss you for it."

For reply. Tom fished out an old pack of cards.

"I tell you," he proposed, triumphantly, "I'll turn you fer it. First man that gits a jack in th' hand-out stays."

He began to manipulate the cards, lying cramped on his side, and in doing so dropped two or three. Alfred turned to pick them up. Tom deftly slipped the jack of diamonds to the bottom of the pack. He inserted in the centre those Alfred handed him, and began at once to deal.

"Thar's yore's," he said, laying out the four of clubs, "an' yere's mine," he concluded, producing the jack of diamonds. "Luck's ag'in me early in th' game," was his cheerful comment.

For a minute Alfred was silent, and a decided objection appeared in his eyes. Then his instinct of fair play in the game took the ascendant. He kicked off his chaps in the most business-like manner, unbuckled his six-shooter and gave it to Tom, and perched his hat on the end of his quirt, which he then raised slowly above the pony's side for the purpose of drawing the enemy's fire. He did these things quickly and without heroics, because he was a plainsman. Hardly had the bullets from three Winchesters spatted against the clay before he was up and climbing for dear life.

The Mexicans rushed to the opening from either side fully expecting to be able either to take wing-shots at close range, or to climb so fast as to close in before the cowboys would have time to make a stand at the top. In this they shut off their most effective fire—that of the three men with the Winchesters—and, instead of getting wing-shots themselves, they received an enthusiastic battering from Tom at the range of six yards. Even a tenderfoot cannot over-shoot at six yards. What was left of the Mexicans disappeared quicker than they had come, and the three of the Winchesters scuttled back to cover like a spent covey of quail.

Tom then lit Alfred's pipe, and continued his excellent sculpture in the bed of hard clay. He knew nothing more would happen until the posse came. The game had passed out of his hands. It had become a race between a short-legged man on foot and a band of hard riders on the backs of very good horses. Viewing the matter dispassionately, Tom would not have cared to bet on the chances.

As has been stated, Alfred was a small man and his legs were short—and not only short, but unused to exertion of any kind, for Alfred's daylight hours were spent on a horse. At the end of said legs were tight boots with high French heels, which most Easterners would have considered a silly affectation, but which all Westerners knew to be purposeful in the extreme—they kept his feet from slipping forward through his wide stirrups. In other respects, too, Alfred was handicapped. His shoulders were narrow and sloping and his chest was flat. Indoors and back East he would probably have been a consumptive; out here, he was merely short-winded.

So it happened that Alfred lost the race.

The wonder was not that he lost, but that he succeeded in finishing at Peterson's at all. He did it somehow, and even made a good effort to ride back with the rescuing party, but fell like a log when he tried to pick up his hat. So someone took off his boots, also, and put him to bed.

As to the rescuing party, it disbanded less than an hour later. Immediately afterward it reorganized into a hunting party—and its game was men. The hunt was a long one, and the game was bagged even unto the last, but that is neither here nor there.

Poor Tom was found stripped to the hide, and hacked to pieces. Mexicans are impulsive, especially after a few of them have been killed. His equipment had been stolen. The naked horse and the naked man, bathed in the light of a gray dawn, that was all—except that here and there fluttered bits of paper that had once been a pack of cards. The clay slab was carved deeply—a man can do much of that sort of thing with two hours to waste. Most of the decorative effects were arrows, or hearts, or brands, but in one corner were the words, "passing the love of woman," which was a little impressive after all, even though Tom had not meant them, being, as I said, only an ordinary battered Arizona cow-puncher incapable of the higher feelings.

How do I know he played the jack of diamonds on purpose? Why, I knew Tom, and that's enough.

THE END.

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C. J. MILLIGAN IS REGISTRAR

He Was Appointed Registrar of Probates by the Provincial Government Last Evening.

C. J. Milligan was appointed registrar of probates at the meeting of the local government held last evening, additional justices of the peace were appointed, and letters patent ordered issued to several provincial companies. The meeting will be resumed today.

The position of registrar of probates has remained vacant since the death of the late John McMillan. It was formerly combined with the registrar of deeds, the last holder of the two registrarships being the late David McLellan. The salary is $1,500 a year and the appointment is a permanent one.

The announcement created some little surprise as it was generally thought Geo. Robertson, M. P. P., would have accepted the position. It is well known that Mr. Robertson would have been appointed had he so desired and the situation is taken to indicate that the dry dock scheme has entered upon a more hopeful stage and that Mr. Robertson will represent St. John at the next session of the local legislature.

At the meeting last night an application was received from the attorney general of P. E. Island for the admission of an islander into the reformatory. There is no reformatory on the island and it was not thought advisable to send the man to jail. The government felt unable to grant the request as there was no legal provision for such a contingency.

A number of justices of the peace were recommended for appointment and their names will be forwarded to the lieutenant governor for approval.

Letters patent were ordered issued to the following companies: The Gleaner (Fredericton), the Eureka Manufacturing Company (Sussex), the Thomas W. Flett Manufacturing Company.

All the members of the local government were present last evening. The session will be resumed today, and on conclusion of the government business the commissioners of the Provincial Hospital will hold their usual meeting.

A meeting of the South African Veteran's Association will be held this evening in their rooms in the Sutherland building, Union street. The business will be the formation of a company to become part of the 19th field battery now being organized. It is expected that Col. George West Jones and other officers will be present. Members of the association and all who served in South Africa are requested to attend. A smoking concert is being arranged to follow.

WESTMORLAND CONSERVATIVES

Strong Resolution Opposing Increased Indemnites Passed at a Meeting Yesterday.

Moncton, N. B., Nov. 14—(Special)—The executive of the Westmorland County Conservative Association met here this afternoon and elected the following officers: P. G., Mahoney, Melrose, president; G. B. Willett, Moncton, vice-president; C. L. Hanington, Dorchester, secretary-treasurer and organizer; A. N. Charters, Memramcook, assistant. A number of amendments to the constitution were made and the following resolution adopted:

"That this meeting of Liberal-Conservatives view with strong disfavor the action of the senate and Parliament of Canada in increasing the indemnity of senators and commoners, believing the same to be without warrant or justification.

"That we emphatically protest against the life pension granted to ministers who have served as such five years, believing the same to be an absolute and unwarranted misappropriation of public funds, whereby men who have done little or nothing for the welfare of the country are to be kept in affluence for their lifetime out of the hard-won earnings of the Canadian taxpayers.

"We further protest against a salary being granted to the leader of the opposition as being opposed to British and Canadian parliamentary principles, as hampering the free movements of the leader himself and reducing the position of honorable and untrammeled freedom to one of monetary gain.

"We maintain that this matter should have been submitted to the electorate for their approval, and that the members of parliament in the action they have taken have violated the trust placed in them by their constituents and now occupy their position without the confidence of the people."

The resolution was moved by F. B. Black, Sackville, and seconded by E. C. Cole, of Moncton.

OBITUARY

John M. Freeze

Penobsquis, Nov. 14.—John M. Freeze, who suffered from an attack of paralysis a week ago, died last night. His demise causes great regret throughout the parish of Cardwell where he was well known and highly esteemed. He leaves a widow and three young children to whom the sympathy of the community goes out in the hour of their bereavement. The late Mr. Freeze, who was fifty-three years old, was a son of the late Elias Freeze, formerly a general merchant here, and a man of prominence in the parish. John and Silas, who were in business with their father, continued to conduct the store and other enterprises after his death. John M. Freeze, although he had been far from well for the last two years, had attended to business daily in his store until his last illness. Two brothers and a sister survive him, M'Lidge in St. John, and Silas M. and Mrs. S. B. Weldon of Penobsquis. The funeral will be held tomorrow when Rev. Wellington Camp will conduct services at the house.

CANCER OF THE FACE

Stott & Jury, Bowmanville, Ont., will gladly send you the names of Canadians who have tried their painless home treatment for cancer in all parts of the body. Some of the cures are simply marvellous.

A FAKE CORRESPONDENT

Oakland, Cal., Nov. 14—For some time past newspapers located in various parts of the United States have been receiving queries asking whether they wanted special despatches from Oakland. In every case the items were accounts of crime alleged to have been committed here against some resident of the city, to which the "special" was sent, and on investigation all were shown to be entirely without foundation in fact.

Chief of Police Pearson has discovered that the author of these queries is Victor Meepon, an eighteen-year-old high school student. He carries cards, on which he styles himself "Press Correspondent, and Pacific Representative of a Press Syndicate."

About forty of Miss Muriel Austin's young friends assembled at her home, Lansdowne House, last evening to help her celebrate the tenth anniversary of her birthday. The event was a very happy and successful one.

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A single dose of Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup will convince you that it will stop the cough, sooth the throat, and start you on the road to recovery.

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is rich in the lung-healing virtues of the Norway pine tree, skilfully combined with Wild Cherry Bark and the soothing and expectorant properties of other pectoral herbs and barks. It is a pleasant, safe and effectual medicine for Coughs and Colds, Hoarseness, Sore Throat, Pain in the Chest, Asthma, Bronchitis, Croup, Whooping Cough, Quinsy and all troubles of the Throat and Lungs.

Be sure and do not accept a substitute for Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. The genuine is put up in a yellow wrapper, three pine trees the trade mark, and the price 25 cts.

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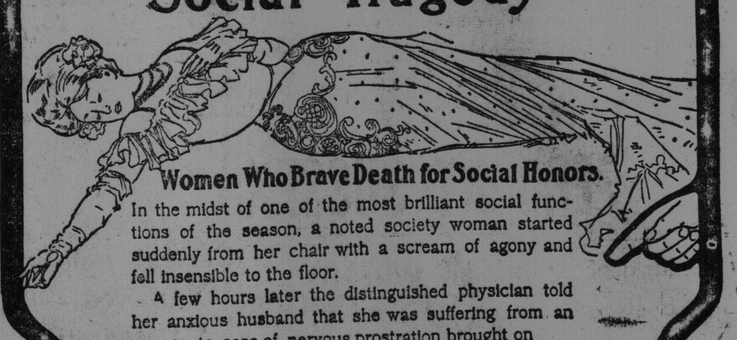

Women Who Brave Death for Social Honors.

In the midst of one of the most brilliant social functions of the season, a noted society woman started suddenly from her chair with a scream of agony and fell insensible to the floor.

A few hours later the distinguished physician told her anxious husband that she was suffering from an acute case of nervous prostration brought on by female trouble, and hinted at an operation. Fortunately a friend advised her to try

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

The result was that she escaped the surgeon's knife and to-day is a well woman.

The derangement of the delicate female organism sets every nerve in the body quivering with pain. Headaches, backaches, torturing bearing down pains and dragging sensations make women nervous and hysterical.

Mrs. T. E. Gillis, of Windsor, N. S., writes:

DEAR MRS PINKHAM:—When I commenced to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound I was suffering with weakness and womb trouble, headaches, backaches, and that worn-out, tired feeling. I have only taken the Vegetable Compound a few short weeks, and it has made me well, strong and robust. I believe that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is without equal for female troubles.

Mrs. Laura Emmons, President Loyal Home Workers, Walkerville, Ont., writes:

DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I am enjoying such good health that I feel it a duty to write and thank you for what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me. I suffered for more than five years with ovarian troubles, causing an unpleasant discharge and weakness which no amount of medicine, diet or exercise seemed to correct. Your Vegetable Compound however, reached the root of my trouble, cured me and made me strong, healthy and well. I want to say to every suffering woman, don't dally with medicines you know nothing about, but take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

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You can have this great remedy, and get it at most any drug store by sending for the great free prescription. Sent free in plain envelope to any man who writes for it—no cost of any kind—no bills, no receipts, no papers to sign—free—absolutely—to any and every sufferer.

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