lower end and this could not be reached by Sanders because of the intervening bluff. The rustlers were driving the cattle toward the narrow t. Once there all would be The herd would be hastened on down through the plains to the Texas border where it would be impossible to apprehend the thieves. Full consciousness of the impending

seeming to realize the importance of speed, he galloped into a red, hurtling mass. The night wind sang shrilly in Jack's ears and sang shrilly in Jack's ears and brought tears to his eyes. Chaparral trees passed like small shadows fleeing backward. Over to the right he could see the cattle in the moonlight urged forward by the riders. Flashes of blinding light snapped out here and there. Corsnapped out here and there. Cordovan stumbled sending a shower of sand high. He recovered. The rope whipped against Jack's knee and beat back against the saddle. Not a half mile further lay the outand beat back against the saddle. Not a half mile further lay the outlet, Jack's goal, yet that of the rustlers. It seemed he was losing ground, that the great solid mass ground, that the great solid mass seems crushed against the rider and he fell from his horse. The urge to preserve life forced him to catch hold of a steer's neck but the beast hold of a steer's neck but the be Jack realized that if one steer passed the entire herd would break through like the ocean surging past a rocky inlet. Alarmed with the heart the beast brushed against others until he slipped down between the milling cattle, grasping at their sleek sides as he fell. thought and apprehending that all would be lost if he failed to gain would be lost if he failed to gain and the collection of the with a judicious sympathy, for he knew that Ned had the making of the scholar and the schola the pass he urged on Cordovan, who stretched lower under the command. A strange uncanny sensation took possession of Jack. It was as if the world was passing

the pass he urged on Cordovan, who stretched lower under the was as if the world was passing under Cordovan's clicking hoofs. The mesa out and beyond the pass lay quiet, inviting, as if in suspense and waiting for tragedy. Insects in sluggish dirge halted as Jack rade by someone at the mouth of the gulch and had fled toward the hills. Jack knew that Sanders and Buster were somewhere along the Northern edge of the valley. An occasional popping of a gun acquainted rode by and as the clip clops mellowed into space, again began to voice their intonations of the night. A million acres seemed to speed away with each bound. Then something rocked; Cordovan was reaching the irregular, broken ground near the cliff, a precipice down there safely he could circumvent the herd, reach the pass in time and block the Gulch. He felt that it was a losing race, it would be impossible to reach it if he were Then the peril of being shot by the rustlers would form a double hazard. He must turn to the left and go a longer way.

to the right and swerved from his bee-line path. A series of uneven ridges, a mound of sand, soft and powdery, shelves of rocks swept free of earth and they had come to the rim of the gorge. Suddenly the earth had ended. There was no more rock or land, only blackness and sky. Into this inky crater appeared no trail, nor path. Now on the more rock or land, only blackness and sky. Into this inky crater appeared no trail, nor path. Now on the summit of the universe with all the things of life and nature, in a moment they were to plunge into a sable strip of void. There was no turning back, they must dash on into the chasm of darkness as if the bottom had fallen from earth. It yawned in front of him like an illimitless pit, filled with shaking, the great mass of cattle were bawling hoarsely. To Jack they seemed to stand still for a moment to watch the outcome of this spirited struggle. Then Cordovan leaped—pitched his mighty body out into space. Jack held to the saddle horn; a strength of steel came into him average.

Cordovan limped a moment, then jogged. Fifty feet away lay the rocky mouth as if the hills had intentionally opened to let the eattle pass. Infuriated steers, swinging their heads toward Jack as they ran, watched the new foe. Jack bent low and spoke to Cordovan who, as if in response, gathered his strength and made one desperate lunge to the rocky gates. A big startled beast, pressed by those behind, lowered his head and struck blindly gangers in the Eastern sky told him he had missed his man. A moment later/the shadow bobbed into view higher up on the sloping shelf. Then it was gone. Jack muttered in his astonishment.

On the other side of the gulch stacatto detonations broke out upon the night air. High on the Western ridge Jack could see Sanders'

Cordovan limped a moment, then jogged. Fifty feet away lay the rocky mouth as if the hills had intentionally opened to let the eattle on the head intentionally opened to tet the cattle on the head to steer, swinging their heads toward Jack as they ran, watched the new foe. Jack bent low and spoke to Cordovan who, as if in response, gathered his strength and made one desperate lunge to the rocky gates. A big startled beast, pressed by those behind, lowered his head and atruck blindly called his name when she was bend-lowered his head and crumbled. The report of the gun and the belch of light checked the herd for an instant. One moment later a flash spat from the rear of the herd and another the report of the herd and another from the right. As the report reached his ears Jack felt Cordovan him. Then from somewhere he heard disturbance. The familiar tone brought joyful relaxation, sweet the new foe. Jack bent disturbance. The familiar tone brought joyful relaxation, sweet the new foe. Jack bent disturbance. The familiar tone of the new foe. Jack bent disturbance. The familiar tone of the head and and the procked the head on desperate lunge to his ears by some etherial disturbance. The familiar tone of the start head stoward law the rocky pass, yet she had hardly call On the other side of the gulch stacatto detonations broke out upon the night air. High on the Western ridge Jack could see Sanders' gun flashing while deep down in the valley bright streaks of light followed by whimpering reports told him the rustlers were taking pot shots back at the sheriff.

Jack, forgetting his pain, ran to Cordovan and leaped to the saddle in a bound. He knew that the only outlet to the gulch was down at the lower end and this could not be considered in a bound in the steer. The herd pushed from Cordovan as he fell and at the lower end and this could not be clear both bodies. Jack shot twice the saddle of the steer is from the rear of the herd and another from the right. As the report the rear of the herd and another from the right. As the report the rear of the herd and another from the right. As the report the swayed to the right and then fell down upon the carcass of the steer. The herd pushed down the gulch." She spoke in hurried gasps.

"Tulane gave the alarm. Said the herd was being rustled down the gulch." She spoke in hurried gasps.

"Tulane?" cried Jack, his mind awakening to a fresh sensation. "Where is he now?" the same time a savage steer started to clear both bodies. Jack shot twice

same time a savage steer started to clear both bodies. Jack shot twice into his face, the fire showing in the depths of his startled eyes.

The heavy bull twisted and tossed his head in pain and as a river of blood came down his nostrils settled lifeless with a groan, straddling the bodies beneath, the horse and the steer.

With the outlet effectively blocked Jack slipped behind the pass and voices beliowed above those of the steers. A dark figure riding a still

and as the clip clops melhim with the fact.

ground near the cliff, a precipice that dropped twenty feet to the valley slope below. If he could get down there safely he could get down the co his eyes only to reopen them when that the rustlers now had banded together. He could hear Christian's gun blurt out—unmistakably that was Christian's. Then the string of light became blurred in Jack's vision, seemed to recede as a steamer at night dropping back into the horizon. A tree-will ask in the world and air of the horizon. A tree-will ask in the light and air of the light and air of the light and air of the earth, and in the light and air of the light and a bit of experience in the legal profession. Pierre Olivaint was his name. A lady came to the door, showing all the externals of refinement in dress and adornment. Bro. Olivaint ushered her to the parlor and asked her business. Then sud Accordingly Jack pulled on the left rein. But Cordovan for the first time in Jack's experience refused to obey. He jerked defiantly against the pressure, veered sharply to the right and swerved from his

the outcome of this spirited struggle. Then Cordovan leaped—pitched his mighty body out into space. Jack held to the saddle horn; a strength of steel came into his arms and clinched his jaws while fitful cannonading boomed in his ears.

Jack set his body for the shock. The earth seemed to rock and turn, the dome full of stars rolled to one side, wheeled back and plunged over with him, down, down. A pain as a hot branding iron seared his shoulder, something tore in his back, his forehead struck the saddle horn, blinding him. The impact brought everything dead still. Cordovan fell to his knees, paused a moment after the heavy jolt and rose slowly. The cattle were bellowing in a parallel mass, maddened beasts in an arena.

One moment later a flash spat from the rear of the herd and another from the right. As the report reached his ears Jack felt Cordovan here?" His voice broke queerly,

"He and the boys are following the gang over toward Garrett's.

MATERIAL FOR A STORY

He was a lad of parts, Ned Thorndanger swept upon Jack like the light of a full moon bathing the plains. He swung the pony, drove his spurs deep and leaped forward as if catapulted.

Cordovan pitched for a moment unused to such handling. Then, accoming to realize the importance seeming to realize the importance accommand a view of the entire seeming to realize the importance accommand a view of the entire seeming to realize the importance accommand a view of the entire seemed to remain perennial, seemed t valley. With satisfaction he observed that the herd was beginning to spread backward. Loud, uncouth ing brass. The Dean of Santa Cruz combined all varieties, when Ned's recorded the result the man returned the fire from his hip, the bullet striking a rock on the buttress Students became accustomed to the

verbum.

"He does the chromatic scales very easily," Ned remarked with a pleasant smile one evening to his roommate, MacDonough Ward.

"Well, quit your dreamin' and you'll hear less of him," Mac rethe courtier, the scholar and the soldier in him. Mac had seen the Prep. School report which Ned had brought with him to Santa Cruz. It brought with him to Santa Gruz. It contained, besides the numerical statements about Ned's achieve-ments in class, the following note by the Head Master: "Edward, though dilatory and speculative, is capable of practical performances; occasions at school witnessed the excellence of his talents, when his hands and will responded to the vigor of his mind."
Yet the teachers at Santa Cruz,

understanding kindliness. They had to note the limited amount of had a bit of experience in the legal sparrows. Larks go up higher, see more of the earth, and in the light and air of heaven they give a service that is a delight to the world."

But the Dean preferred the spar-rows; he looked for steady little facts and figures that could be counted up arithmetically; his eyes did not gaze at rainoows or follow bubbles of prophecy. Such was the Dean, Father Melling. He had Ned Thornton's measure, all in figures, like a tailor's chart for a suit of elethes.

before the boy knocked; and then looking up at his visitor, he added, "The late Edward Thornton wants permission to stay up tonight, I

'I must present a story in class

"I must present a story in class tomorrow morning," Ned began meekly. "I can work better when things are quiet, Mr. Graham."
"But do you work better when you've had less sleep?" asked Mr. Graham pointedly. "However; take an extra hour. But be in time for chapel." Mr. Graham then took up his pen as if to indicate that the interview was over, but he had a discontinuous comments." terview was over, but he had a dis-cerning eye and saw that Ned had something more to say, so his "good-night" was more friendly than per-

emptory.

"Good-night, sir," said Ned, and, as he turned to go, added, "I wonder if you could, or rather if you would, give me a suggestion; I want material for my story."

"What!" ejaculated the teacher.

"You, Ned Thornton, who have lived in New York and Washington, you may have traveled up and down

who have traveled up and down Europe, you asking for material for a short story, for a mere class exercise

'Oh, I can arrange the landscape and backgrounds," the boy replied; "that'll be easy enough. But I want something for a foreground, some figure, some incident."

Any incident, any commonplace incident, must suffice for you now."
Mr. Graham again glanced towards the clock. "Set your little event in some foreign place, up among the Alps, for you have been there, or discuss complete the some foreign grant will fit among the same something that will fit among the same same thing that will fit among the same than dig up something that will fit among the ruins in the Roman Forum, for you have been there, or take a theme from a ballad out of Ireland, for you have been there. And now —." The teacher was laughing, even as he took Ned by the arm to accompany him to the door.
"Oh, please, Mr. Graham," Ned
protested, "Time's short and my
mind's a blank. A suggestion to set

me going. Please."
"You've been in Paris, too;" Mr. Graham was yielding.
"Yes, sir," said Ned, tempting
him further; "and I went down to Angers where you once studied, and I saw the old Roman ruins you

spoke about, and the huge wind-mills beckoning on into Brittany, and the great bridge across the Loire. You have told us that the foundations of the bridge were made by Julius Cæsar. But Mr. Graham, did anything happen to you there, or in Paris?"

"Sit down, Ned," was the reply. "You said you were once at our Vaugirard college." It was plain that the teacher was beating out a nathway to an incident. "And you pathway to an incident. "And you and your mother stopped to see our former house, in the 'Rue de Sevres.

Ned knew his aim was accomplished, and kept a discrete silence.
"Well, now that I mention the 'Rue de Sevres,'" Mr. Graham went on, "in the very parlor, the reception room which your mother and you visited, a little incident occurred some years ago, and you may make something out of it, since you can lead up to it with your traveler's notes, and come away from it by a gateway of re-

"Yes, yes, sir," Ned sat forward anxiously. "Was it long ago?" "Seventy years ago. That's it; make it definite and real, say seventy-four years ago. A young Jesuit and asked her business. Then, suddenly, in a shrill tone, and with words of bitter reproach, she assailed him, cursed the habit he wore, and included in her maledictions the whole sacerdotal body. tions the whole sacerdotal body. "They have stolen my daughter away from me," she cried, one of your priests here has bewitched my daughter away from her happy home." Brother Olivaint tried to quiet the clamor of the visitor, saying that he would go to fetch one of the Fathers. 'No,' she shrieked, 'no I do not want to see any other of your black stuff. You are all of the same piece. You all inveigled my daughter, my sweet You are all of the same piece. You all inveigled my daughter, my sweet little child, away into a cold and heartless convent.' Now, then, Ned Thornton, go ahead and make an ending for that. How would you arrange a satisfactory exit?'' Mr. Graham pretended that he had finished his contribution to the belated exercise.

exercise, "How should I end that scene?" asked Ned. "I should call for Father Melling." The boy was smiling with becoming propriety. Everybody at Santa Cruz was allowed to spice the santa Cruz was allowed to enjoy a reference to the Dean's vigorous voice. "I should arrange for somebody like the Dean to come in and give her tit for tat, and shout her out of the house. Still, Brother Olivaint couldn't do that six goveld he? De tell me that sir, could he? Do tell me what he actually did."

"Well, Brother Olivaint kept his peace; he allowed the poor distracted grief of the mother to abate a bit, and then he advanced a word of consolation, saying that the little daughter must surely have obtained her mother's generous consent to go to the convent, and that the good God would reward the sacrifice of the mother and child." Mr. Graham would like to have delayed over the incident, but he eyed the clock again, and made a show of speed. "Well, the mother seemed to find in College Days Ahead

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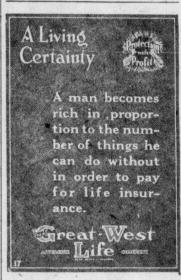
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