

# Capturing a Mastodon

(By Al. Smith.)

## PART II.

While a mastodon is a large, clumsy brute not probably intended by an all-wise nature to draw any great volume of smoke from a cinder path, or smash world's records for speed, it must be remembered that the one this story has to do with may be supposed to have been in a hurry, and not improbably frightened. He had just come out second best in an affair with the police cannon and was still smarting and bleeding from his wounds which would naturally lend speed to his great, clumsy bulk as he raced down the trail along Bonanza creek.

On the other hand the reporter was not in training and the unusual exercise of wheeling during the morning had imparted a tendency to his legs to draw up at each stride as if they didn't intend coming down again, and he galloped along after the fashion of a horse with stringhalt.

Occasionally he looked anxiously over his shoulder, and always the next hundred yards after one of these Lot-like glances, would be covered in faster time. That mountain of flesh, with its two enormous tusks sticking out in front like spits awaiting something; the snake like trunk, waving about the bettered and bleeding head, and the noise and clatter incidental, were not things calculated to induce one situated as the reporter was to rest by the wayside.

He might have turned aside from the trail in many places, but there were reasons which impelled him to keep on which he did well to consider. To begin with it occurred to him that while it was not at all likely that the mastodon had considered him, of sufficient importance to be chased towards Dawson in the first instance, it was quite possible that seeing him running ahead, he might by this time have set his heart upon stepping on him or spitting him on one of his ugly looking tusks, and if such were the intentions of the brute it would be folly to attempt turning off the trail because there was considerable depth of snow through which the pursuer, by reason of his great strength and length of stride, could make much better time than the pursued. There were many people along the way, some on the trail and many who looked out of cabins, but there were none who tarried to ask questions or talk politics. One look at the thing coming along the road was enough in every case to secure the right of way, the people giving it up gladly and without formality, betaking themselves to the friendly shelter of wood piles, dumps, and even diving head foremost into snow banks.

Coming around a bend in the road the reporter almost ran into the horses of one of the stage teams, coming from Dawson with a load of passengers. The horses shied at the sudden encounter, and the driver and passengers caught sight of the thing coming down the road at the same moment.

"Hully gee, what's that," yelled the driver, but he lost no time waiting for an explanation, and as the passengers seemed to think that they could wait till later for the details, there was a frantic breaking away from robes and blankets and driver and passengers decamped, leaving the ill-fated team to its cruel fate.

"It's tough on those horses," said the reporter to himself, as he took in the situation, "but the first law of nature is imperative in its demands. If he'll only devote enough time to that team, I think I may yet reach Dawson intact."

Then he ran a little way farther, looking anxiously from side to side, till he finally paused near where the road had been cut into the side of the hill, leaving a steep embankment on the left, up which he clambered without respect to his best trousers or the fact that the stones and gravel drew blood from his fingers. Upon the top of this bank, which was about twelve or fifteen feet in height, grew a small spruce tree, with tolerably thick foliage near the top, and this he climbed with arms and legs after the fashion of school boys, finally seating himself on a limb among the thickest of the small branches. Once there he looked anxiously up the road, where the sight that met his gaze filled him with pity and alarm.

The mastodon was bearing down upon

the frightened stage team, which was making the most frantic efforts to break from the heavy sleigh which had been overturned and lay across the road in such a manner as to hold them securely.

The huge brute had his head somewhat lowered, and the murderous gleam in his small eyes boded ill for aught that barred his path. The blood was still flowing from the great furrow cut in his head by the cannon shot, and his trunk was curled back between the enormous white tusks.

On he came, his fury, at finding a foe he could in some manner comprehend, seeming to increase with each thunderous stride, and the poor horses became, upon his near approach, too terrified to struggle for liberty and stood sweating and trembling with hanging heads and starting eyes.

One lunge forward and downward of the mighty head, and the reporter closed his eyes and grasped his sheltering tree the closer, half sickened at what he saw and what he instinctively felt must follow. Then there followed a wild, piercing scream, such as only a horse in deadly pain or furious anger can give vent to; there was a whipling, snapping noise as the harness gave way, accompanied by the scraping and crash of the sleigh as it was dragged out of the road and tossed to one side; and the reporter opened his eyes on one of the most horrible sights it had ever been his ill fortune to see.

The mastodon had, with one furious stroke, driven his enormous tusks completely through the cringing horses, spitting them one upon the other, shaking his head savagely, the blood from the dying horses, spurting in great crimson jets and splashes far and wide over the white surface of the snow.

The weight of the team, though it must have been in the neighborhood of a ton and a half, did not seem to trouble him in the least, as he shook them furiously for a few seconds as a terrier shakes a rat, emitting a peculiar sound the while, which was neither a scream nor a roar, but terrifying in the extreme, causing the reporter to dig his nails into the frozen bark of the tree till they broke and the blood came. Then, with a motion which might have indicated contempt, from a mastodon sense of things, he whirled the team aloft, throwing them high in the air, and far behind him, where they fell with a dead, sickening noise upon the frozen ground, and lay still.

The mastodon turned the sleigh over once more as if suspicious that it harbored some living thing, but left it immediately, starting once more down the road towards town. The reporter drew himself closer to the body of the tree, realizing that should his presence be suspected, one sweep aloft of that huge trunk would be sufficient to render all his past troubles of little moment.

"Now, if he sees me," thought the reporter in the tree top, as the mastodon drew near, "I'm done for and some one else will have to write this story." Could he have foreseen what was to follow so soon when he climbed that tree he would have much preferred trying to outrun the mastodon all the way to town to climbing that tree.

Merciful is the veil which Providence wisely hangs between mortals and the future.

When the mastodon reached a point in the road just opposite where the reporter sat holding his breath and drawn into as small a space as his avoirdupois would admit of, there came a sudden quivering of the tree, then a quick sliding motion of the earth, and the ground and tree seemed to dart forward together.

The back of the mastodon was only a few feet lower than the perch of the reporter, and, before he had time to realize the full extent of what had happened, he was plumped fairly upon the middle of that broad back, and found himself devoting all his attention to remaining there.

As soon as he found that he was in no immediate danger of falling from his unsought riding place, it occurred to him that each breath would probably be his last, as he expected the mastodon to remove him with his trunk after which he did not care to contemplate what was likely to occur.

(To be Continued.)

**More of the Brownings.**  
In a cozy corner in a parlor at the Hotel Imperial yesterday sat the Brown-

ing sisters, Gracie and Dottie, with their lap filled with gold nuggets, small bottles of gold dust of various degrees of fineness and big bunches of United States bonds and greenbacks of large denomination. With these mute witnesses to their veracity, the girls told a surprisingly interesting story of their life and success in the Klondike.

Three years ago the girls, who are singers, became discouraged because of their ill success with several vaudeville managers, and went home to San Francisco.

The rush to the Klondike was then at its height, and the girls, frail of frame, but full of pluck, joined the procession. At Dawson City, their reputation as vaudeville actresses had preceded them.

"We had had hardly set foot in Dawson," said Gracie, the taller and prettiest, "than the managers of the different theaters fairly jumped for us. They seized our bags and wraps, each trying to outbid the other for our services. Frank Simons, of the Opera house, settled the controversy by promising to accede to our own terms."

"After we had been singing five months a wealthy miner gave us a chance to invest our savings in part of a claim, 15 miles from Dawson. It paid from the start. Then we quit singing, except while we were digging gold. We did not stand idly by and look at others work. We got short skirts of heavy stuff, heavy brogans that fitted our feet, and pitched right in."

Their hands show evidences of hard work. "I'll never forget my first pan of pay-dirt. Its result is in this bottle." Here she proudly exhibited a small homeopathic pellet vial, a quarter full of sparkling sand.

"We now have five claims. How did we stand the climate? Well, it was hard on us sometime, but we each weigh from 10 to 15 pounds more than when we first went out. In the summer, out at the mines, the mosquitoes were so persistent that they actually got through two pairs of ribbed stockings. In the cold weather we were abundantly provided with warm clothing. Besides our regular mining clothes, our whole body, head and all, was enveloped in a parkie, or coat and trousers, of heavy, long-haired fur, the hood covering the entire face, so that while we could see and breathe, our eyes or nose were under covers. On our feet we wore muckluks—a kind of fur and leather shoe."

"We intend to remain here just long enough to complete our wardrobes. I guess we shall spend about \$50,000 on clothes, but they'll be new styles, and Dawson women will go wild with envy."

Since the sisters have been here they have been besieged day and night by impetuous actors and actresses, but not one has been turned away disappointed. Last Friday they received drafts for \$250,000 through their bankers in Seattle, nearly all of which they proposed to invest in bonds.—New York Journal.

### Charged With Bigamy.

New York, Jan. 2.—George Howard, a consulting engineer of Boston who came to this city about a year ago as the representative of the Whitney-Elkins-Widger syndicate and who has made his home in this city since that time, was arrested at the New Amsterdam hotel in this city tonight on a warrant charging him with bigamy.

Howard had offices in this city and has been a prominent figure in the social circles of Brooklyn. Last September he married Helen Hawkes, a daughter of Deputy Commissioner of Highways Hawkes, of Brooklyn. After the ceremony the bride was presented with a handsome residence by her father, and after the wedding tour the couple returned to their new home.

Howard, however, for alleged business reasons, brought his wife to this city and they put up at the New Amsterdam hotel. It is said he frequently pleaded press of business, went to Boston and remained away Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The young wife's parents became suspicious and employed a detective to shadow their son-in-law. The detective says he secured the evidence on which today's warrant was issued.

I will now offer our fresh vegetables kept all winter without artificial heat. Our potatoes are in particularly fine condition, solid, unswelled and as sound as the day they were harvested. Such are the most healthful food. A full line of family groceries by retail; likewise a full stock of food products for man or beast by the case, sack, bale or ton, at competing prices with the "big companies." E. MEERER, Log Cabin Grocery, Third Ave., near Postoffice.

Steel marten traps, just in—0, 1 and 1 1/2. Shindler's. Shoff, the Dawson Dog Doctor, Pioneer Drug Store.

Eastern oysters at the Postoffice market.

## CHINESE EMPRESS OBJECTS

### To a Return to Peking, to Which She Prefers Death.

### Murder Stalks Redhanded Through the Flowery Kingdom—Americans Escape by a Daring Move.

Oriental advices dealing with the Chinese imperial court show that there is a decided conflict of opinion between the empress dowager and the young emperor, who has recently commenced to assert his rights. The Su Poa says that the emperor is determined to return to Peking, but that the empress dowager is just as fixed in her determination not to do so, and she declares that she will depart from this scene of earthly activities rather than again cross the borders of Tungkwai.

"Affairs at court," says the Gazette, "are in a decidedly mixed condition. Ostensibly Wang Wenshao and Lu Chuankun are at the head of the affairs of the grand council, but in reality all rewards and punishments, promotions and degradations are meted out by Li Lienyin, the empress' favorite eunuch, whom everyone has long believed dead."

The Gazette says further that it has reliable information to the effect that the emperor has taken definite issue with the empress and her party.

Of late the empress has not been in a pleasant frame of mind, according to the Su Poa. When the news of the treaty made by the viceroys of the south and east with the foreign authorities first reached the empress she flew into a rage, and was about to decree the dismissal of Viceroy Liu and Chang, but was held in check by Prince Ching.

The court is evidently weary of Si-anfu, and in connection with the rupture between the emperor and the dowager it is reported that the empress intends to make her future home at Wuchang, while the emperor will return to Peking and try to make a settlement with the people of the west.

Many of the ministers in attendance on the court now advocate a removal to Nanking.

A letter from Tientsin to the Su Poa in part as follows:

"A conclusion of peace is believed to be impossible. Li Hung Chang has notified the members of the Chinese Benevolent Society in the North to finish their work and take themselves out of the way as soon as possible, before something occurs."

Nothing is said in a direct way as to what this something about to occur is, but the presumption is that with the court at war with itself and the foreign relations of the country strained, trouble of a serious nature may occur at any time.

Eight prisoners, who were being brought to the United States on the transport Grant made a daring escape, while the steamer was in the harbor at Victoria, Hongkong. Handcuffed they managed to crawl through the ventilator leading to their place of confinement. Then they broke their chains, secured life preservers, and by crawling down the anchor chains got into the water. Strange to say, the men were not noticed by the sentries, if there were any on duty.

The convicts were picked up by the Chinese commissary launch Jubilee and landed at a pier. Before anything could be done by those in the boat the prisoners made a wild run for liberty. According to later reports some of them were captured, and it seemed probable

more of them would be found. Some of the men were under sentence for ten years.

A correspondent of the Shanghai Mercury writes from Newchang that the province is in the hands of robber bands. On the railway line near Shimintun a Russian patrol of 20 men was attacked and only two escaped with their lives.

The Russians seem to be utterly incapable of dealing with the robbers, who elude every effort made to capture them; in some instances pitched battles have occurred, in which the robbers have won. Even in the Russian settlement robbers have made their appearance and night shots are frequently heard.

A military corps consisting of Chinese has been formed by the Russians with the object of dealing with the robbers. A robber chief and his followers have been exhibited, reducing the case down to the proposition of setting a thief to catch a thief.

At Heungshan two thieves went into the house of Lao Spangsam, during his absence and murdered eight persons, as follows: His wife, three sons, the oldest of whom was six years; two daughters and two servant girls.

The next morning, neighbors observing that there were no signs of life about the place, instituted an investigation. They found all of the bodies on the floor in a big pool of blood.

One of the servants was still alive, and from her the story of the tragedy was learned. She said that a man came to the house, ostensibly to see the master, and while he was being entertained by the mistress another man in a long coat arrived. These two men then proceeded to exterminate the entire family. The servant girl died the day following. It is said that the murder was a case of revenge.

Robber bands are terrorizing Canton, inside and outside the city. On one occasion they made a daring attempt to rob a shop. Meeting with resistance, they killed two shopmen. At a village outside the city the robbers killed one man, wounded two badly and set fire to a house.

Word has been received at Canton from Yingtah, on the North river, that a member of the Wesleyan mission has been beaten to death while resisting brigands.

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