Page 92



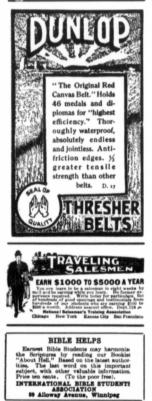
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want to satisfy yourself further that he wasn't here. I'll let you have the lantern. Only, remember, now! No more shooting at the wrong man!" The half-breed made no reply.

"And you, Sedgwick. Here's the destroyer. Do you still want to kill him?"

"I suppose not," replied the artist lifelessly.

"Since his design was only against your life and not against your picture," commented Kent with a smile. "Well, our night's work is done." Lifting the lantern, he held it in the face of the half-breed. "Jim!" "Huh?"

"When you really want to know who made those footprints, come and tell me who the body in Annalaka burying-ground is. A trade for a trade. You understand?"

The eyes stared, immovable. The chin did not quiver. Reaching for the lantern, Gansett Jim, now nine of Indian to one of negro, turned away from them to the pathway. "No," he said stolidly.

As the flicker of radiance danced and disappeared in the forest Sedgwick spoke. "Well, do you consider that we've made a friend?"

"No," answered Chester Kent; "but we've done what's as good. We've quashed an enmity."

CHAPTER XI

Hedgerow House

Answers to the telegrams Chester Kent had despatched arrived in the form of night letters, bringing information regarding the Blairs of Hedgerow House: not sufficient information to satisfy the seeker, however. Therefore, having digested their contents at breakfast, the scientist cast about him to supply the deficiency. The feet of hope led him to the shop of Elder Ira Dennett.

Besides being an able plumber and tinker, Elder Dennett performed, by vocation, the pleasurable duties of unprinted journalism. That is to say, he was the semiofficial town gossip. As Professor Kent was a conspicuous figure in the choicest titbit the Elder had acquired in stock for many years, and as the Elder had been unable to come to speech with him since the inquest (Kent had achieved some skilful dodging), there was joy in the plumber-tinker's heart over the visit. Unhappily, it appeared that Kent was there strictly on business. He did not wish to talk of the mystery of Lonesome Cove. He wished his acetylene lamp fixed. At once, if Elder Dennett pleased. Glum was the face of the Elder as he examined the lamp, which



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