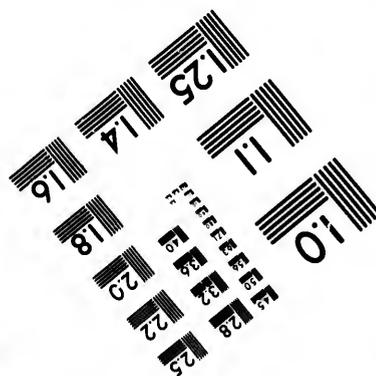
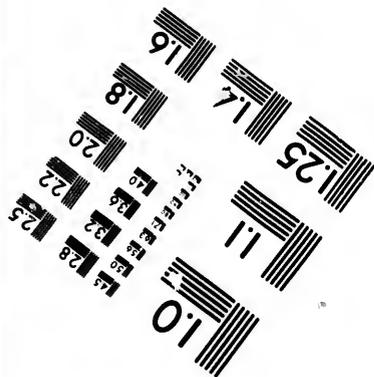
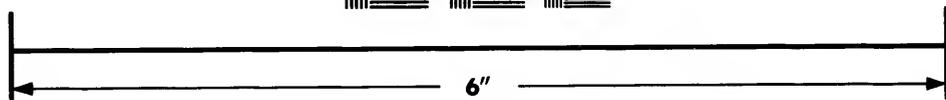
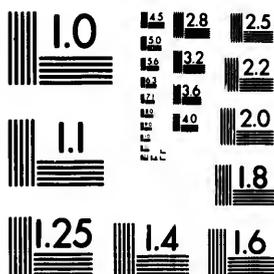


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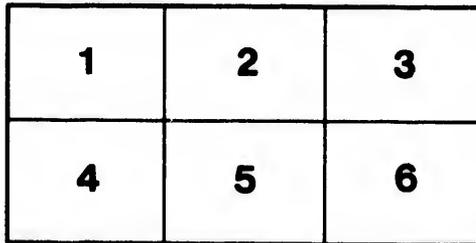
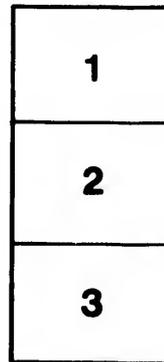
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window-blinds as were ever executed. The real business consisted in forging bills and cheques, coining, and counterfeiting bill and receipt stamps. One member of this association, a "discount agent," bill discounter, and "bill stealer," was said to live at the rate of 4,000*l.* a year. This gang, some eight or ten in number, carried on their frauds so skilfully that although the police suspected what was going on (some of the gang were old forgers), and watched the premises for more than a year, they were unable to find out who executed the forgeries, or to get sufficient evidence to justify the apprehension of the men; till at last the bearer of a forged cheque was secured, and the whole gang was captured.

As an additional precaution, "Bateman and Co.," when they had committed a successful forgery, used to change the notes for foreign money, which at another foreign banker's they would then change back again into English money. On one occasion a bullion dealer paid them by cheque, and this cheque was by them made the basis of further operations: the signature was carefully copied and laid by till a cheque on the required bank could be laid hold of. By some means or other a blank cheque came into their hands, and the signature was then used.

This gang, luckily for the bankers, did not have a long existence; it is that of which we said above that it was estimated to have defrauded the London banks to the extent of 10,000*l.*, or more. It came to grief in 1859, when Wagner and Bateman, the principals, were condemned to penal servitude for life, the "Co." escaping with ten and twenty years.

The effect produced by the breaking-up of these two gangs has been so great, that since that time bankers—who are always being victimised more or less—have not suffered from the frauds of any extensive association—an immunity all the more grateful as succeeding the heavy losses of previous years. The harvest, however, is large, and it may well be feared that the absence of reapers is only temporary.

ALFRED MARKS.

A CATTLE-DRIVE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

A SHORT time after I arrived in British Columbia I went to the "Dalles," having as company a Yankee whom C—— had known a little at Lytton, and, being a butcher, we gave him credit for knowing something about cattle driving; but, as it turned out, he was not more up in it than I was.

We were at the "Dalles" nearly three weeks looking out daily for cattle to suit us. It is a wonderful place. Every night the

steamer came in from Portland with some 200 or 300 miners, this being the route to most of the mines, and a bigger set of blackguards I never came across. At the hotel where I was, which is chiefly patronised by miners, there were some 200 daily. Once or twice, when a Californian steamer came in, I saw at least 500. We all went in to supper together, that is to say, as some finished others made a rush to fill their places; and certainly I never saw beef-steaks and mutton-chops disappear quicker. Some of them were splendid-looking men, with long beards and mustaches. They mostly dress the same, in coloured flannel shirts, coats and waistcoats being few and far between, and have a six-shooter and bowie-knife stuck in their belt, of which they make pretty good use. The "Dalles" itself is an assemblage of wooden houses erected close to the Columbia river, and the railroad cars, with enormous puffing engines, are continually running backwards and forwards through the main street.

The citizens are all either hotel, store, gambling-house, or barkeepers, and consequently, in their endeavours to secure the miner's patronage, are continually running foul of one another. I had not been here two days before I had a sample of how they settle matters here. I heard two shots, and running out of the hotel, found that a neighbour had disagreed with our landlord on account of his having nailed a board or two outside the hotel to improve the light, and seeing him and his wife in the first story window, thought the best way of remonstrating would be by letting off a brace of bullets at him and his better half. Fortunately for them, he was a bad shot. The next shot—he had another pistol—would probably have been more successful, but fortunately he was stopped. I afterwards heard that he had been summoned, but the affair was amicably settled before the case came on.

A day or two afterwards one of the waiters at this same hotel, who had quarrelled the night before with a friend of his, was sweeping in front of the hotel, when his friend came behind him and deliberately shot him in the shoulder. For this offence a short term in the Penitentiary was the punishment.

The following week, a man rather inebriated, was making a disturbance in the post-office, insisting there must be a letter for him, when the marshal of police walked in and requested him to walk out and be quiet; whereupon our friend pulled out his six-shooter, and telling the officer, with any amount of oaths, that he was not going to be talked to by any of his kind, coolly took a shot at him; but somebody behind knocked his arm up, and

the ball went through the ceiling. When he pulled his pistol out everybody "skedaddled" by the door as fast as their legs would carry them; for my part, I "made tracks" behind the counter. Well, I went to this man's trial the next morning, and they let him off with the absurd fine of twenty-five dollars (57.). The best thing of the sort I saw at the "Dalles" was, when I was talking to a French stable-keeper about a horse one day, a friend of his came in, and began harping on some old quarrel, and eventually drawing his shooter; but the Frenchman was too quick for him, and knocked him clean off his legs; and several other like cases happened during the short time I was there.

Great excitement was caused by the news of Lincoln's death; and one unfortunate rascal having been heard to say that he was glad to hear it, was immediately strung up. The people take the law entirely in their own hands about there, and form themselves into "Vigilance Committees," for the better observance of their laws. When I was there a gang of horse and cattle thieves was discovered—about eighty altogether; some of them turned out to be men who were looked upon in the neighbourhood as respectable farmers, but who, it now appeared, had been for some years past laying their hands on everybody's property but their own. A "Vigilance Committee" was formed, and the next day fourteen of the gang were hung, the others managing to get off.

I bought two horses at the "Dalles;" and about the third week in April W—— and I started off for Umatilla, a place 140 miles further up the Columbia. We were three days riding it, keeping the same horses, with our blankets, &c., packed upon them. It was by no means a pleasant ride, and W—— soon began to show what he was. I bought some cattle at Umatilla—about 250—and set to work, looking out for some horses; and, in about a week, I secured seven, making in all nine. The next thing, and the hardest of all, was to get men, and when you succeeded in doing so, you could not be by any means sure that they would not cut your throat on the road and appropriate the cattle. I got two Yankees (one a Missouri man, the other a Webfoot or Oregonian,) and a Spaniard; and I hope I may never have the company of such scoundrels on a like trip again.

W—— was drunk nearly every day while we were at Umatilla, and I would much sooner have been without him. Well, we got off at last, with everything fixed, 300 lbs. of flour, some bacon, salt, tea, soap, and a few other things, and on the 11th of May left Umatilla with a nice little trip before

us of close upon 650 miles. Camping out at first came pretty rough, but after two nights I got used to it. And all went right till we reached Walla-Walla river; but here, through W——'s folly, some three cows and twelve or fifteen calves were drowned. It was by the greatest luck in the world that we did not lose half the herd; as, rushing them all in suddenly, they got mired, and were consequently heaped up one on the top of the other. We of course immediately jumped off our horses, and set to work to do our best to get out those that were stuck. Jumping into the mud, we laid hold of the first part of the first animal we came to, one by a leg, another by the tail, and so on, and in about half an hour had them all out with the exception of nine or ten, which had been hopelessly trodden on by the others. For about two hours afterwards the bank of the river was covered with some forty animals, all more dead than alive, but eventually they all got to their legs except some five or six, which were either drowned or smothered. I never worked so hard in my life, and was literally covered from head to foot with black mud, and as I had unfortunately no other clothes, I had to get it off as I best could. The only thing that at all compensated for the ill-luck was a first rate beef-steak supper cut off one of the drowned animals, and I do not think I ever eat a better supper, as it had been nothing but beans and bacon morning and evening for some days.

The next morning we got the cattle across at a different place, and made a big drive up to Snake river, about twenty miles. The Indians were crossing a band of cattle there, and so we had to wait a week, and a more unpleasant week I never spent. Some fifteen cows had lost their calves at the Walla-Walla river, and for about four days they did nothing but try to get back. So all day long they had to be watched, and at night we had to "carrall" them, by walking round them; otherwise, they would to a certainty have gone back, and as there were several men who knew of the loss of the calves, and were on the watch day and night expecting the cows to get back, it behoved us to be careful. I now found out that there was no rest for me by day or night, as the men were ready to take advantage of my back being turned to get off their horses and lie down and sleep, so I had to keep going round and round in bitterly cold nights, and with the wolves howling dismally all round. And if the cows had not forgotten their calves by the fifth day, and allowed us to get a sleep, I do not think I could have stood it any longer, and I never was so thankful for a night's rest in my life.

My next trouble was losing eight big head by poison, done, I am certain, by the Indians, who skinned the carcasses and jerked the meat for winter use. Crossing Snake river was a long job. We had to take lots of about twenty at a time and rush them into the river, where there were two or three canoes of Indians, who accompanied them across, trying to prevent their returning to the bank we started them from by pelting them with stones. This took a long time, as Snake river is half a mile wide, and we had to lasso the calves, then bind their legs, and send them across in the canoes twelve at a time, four in each canoe. It took the Indians about two hours and a half to go across and come back, the current being so strong, that it took them down a couple of miles before they could land on the other side, and when they did come back they all sat down and smoked for about an hour. We spent a fortnight in getting across, and then followed the Columbia for some fifty miles, until we came to the White Bluffs. One old cow died on the road, but what was far worse the cows were still calving, and as the calves would not travel for a week, I had to shoot them all, so that before we had got to the end of our trip, I had killed some forty, and the cows would always try to go back to where they last saw their calves. We used to lasso and stake out those that were not too wild, but those that were (and they were by far the largest number) we had to watch all night, and I had the pleasure of sitting up half the night, watching them on horseback, as it was dangerous to go among them on foot.

At the White Bluffs, fortunately and yet unfortunately, there was a store; that is to say, a log-hut, belonging to a man who kept such things as flour, sugar, beans, &c. I say fortunately, because we were nearly out of everything; and yet, unfortunately, because here my troubles with W—— really began, owing to his being able to buy some stuff they dignified by the name of whiskey, but which was almost pure alcohol.

Leaving the White Bluffs, we reached the plains, and had 140 miles to travel across them before we again struck the Columbia river. It was by no means pleasant travelling; nothing but sand, covered with scanty bunch grass and sage brush; it was, moreover, exceedingly hot, and the cattle kicked up the sand in clouds, going at the rate of a mile and a half to two miles an hour. There were streams or lakes at intervals of ten or fifteen miles, which we had to make for each day: as we had been informed of this at the White Bluffs, we had no difficulty, as we used to follow the trail until we came

to water. I think the farthest distance from water to water was about twenty miles, which was a long day's drive for the cattle. They could smell the water three or four miles off: the leading cows, who had no calves, used to start off, and the band was strung out for three or four miles with the calves behind.

The first evening after leaving the White Bluffs W—— was the worse for liquor. I had had a row with him in the afternoon about the way he was riding, and in the evening, after supper, he told me before the men that he had had enough of the trip, and was going to leave the next morning, taking one of my horses. He then asked me for some money, which I of course refused to give him, as he was breaking his part of the compact. Mine was, that he was to receive 500 dollars (100%), and all expenses paid; he had already had some 200 dollars. My refusal put him in a tremendous rage, and drawing his pistol, he swore that he would have every cent in my pocket; so I drew my pistol and told him he had better not try it. He went on blackguarding me in the most disgusting language, as a Yankee only knows how to do, and swore that I should fight him with six-shooters. This I politely declined. The other three men all this time were quietly looking on, Wilson telling them that I would never pay them, and that they had better follow his example, each take a horse and all start the next morning. Two of them came up to me and told me they wanted their wages, and would leave in the morning. They knew I had no money left, and when I told them so, they said they should each take a horse instead. W—— at last, after having put some flour and bacon together for the morning's start, went to bed, which I was not sorry for, and I soon followed his example, after having taken his whiskey-bottles and emptied them on the ground. The next morning, directly after breakfast, I told him he should keep his word and be off, and that he might take a horse, which I could get back easily enough on getting home. Then, drawing my pistol, I went up to the other two, and told them I would shoot the first of them who followed his example, and would not come and get the cattle together. I had quite made up my mind to do it, for I should have been in a nice fix if they had all gone off and left me with these 200 or 300 head of cattle, without the slightest chance of getting anybody else; and we were then in Idaho, a blackguard state, with the worst class of Indians, and not a soul between the White Bluffs (where there was one man) and the place where we again struck the Columbia, a distance of 140 miles. However, to make a long story short, W—— left and the others

stopped; W——, for a week afterwards used to camp with us, abusing me all the time. The truth was, there were some Indians about, and he was afraid to sleep out alone; but when we got within four days of the Columbia, he left us.

This part of the trip was not only disagreeable but worrying, and often I got so disgusted that I hardly knew what to do. Thanks to W——'s advice I had brought no tent, and two or three times we came in for forty-eight hours of most severe rain; a pleasant thing driving all day in a soaking rain, and when we did come into camp, unable to get up a fire to warm ourselves by, as there was nothing but sage brush and no trees. The only thing we could cook there was beans, which we boiled and then eat with raw bacon; bread we could not bake, as it was far too wet.

To make matters pleasanter the Missouri man and the Webfoot were continually fighting; and one day when the latter knocked the former down, the Missouri man would certainly have shot him if I had not held his arm down. He and the Spaniard had a row after that, as we were driving one day. The Spaniard drew his knife, and the other his pistol; however, I managed to pacify him after a bit; but the Missouri man took his oath to me afterwards that he would have shot the Spaniard, only he had but one barrel loaded and dared not risk. There were some Indians following us here, I think, as one day when I went back after a cow, I came upon ten awfully ugly brutes, all covered with paint; and they always mean mischief when they are without their squaws. When it was getting dark, the dog, which belonged to one of the men, was always growling, and so I used to sleep with the horses, which were turned loose after their work. This was not very comfortable, as they used to wander about all night, and sometimes were three or four miles from camp in the morning. I had to take a blanket and throw it over my shoulders and doze on my knees, following the horses about till it was daylight. We were always up at the first appearance of daylight, had generally done breakfast by three, and then started off driving, which lasted till about eight or nine, when the day's work was sometimes done, but I generally drove again from three in the afternoon until six.

After about a fortnight of this work we got to the Columbia river, where W—— was waiting to settle with me, as he said. Here, however, he saw what a fool he had been, and we settled that he should come back to me again, an agreement I was almost obliged to come to, as I had to leave the cattle and go on to the "Line," where a Mr. B—— lived, a

British Columbia magistrate, who I knew would let me have some money, which I wanted to cross the cattle and get more provisions with. We lost the horses here for two days, but found them on the third, when I started, leaving W—— to cross the cattle in my absence. It was eighty-five miles to the "Line," and after swimming the Columbia, which is half a mile wide there, and very rapid (I was in a canoe, and the horse swam), I left about seven, and after a tremendous long ride of seventy-five miles I reached a lake, which I had to swim. After ten miles farther in a pelting hail-storm, I did the eighty-five miles in thirteen hours, which was pretty good for the mare, as she had had nothing but grass and lots of hard work. I was very tired, hungry, and wet, but after some hot brandy and water, was all right.

Never was I so glad to see a gentleman again; and as there were two other men there, one of whom was a young Irishman, who came out with me, we had a most jolly evening. I had been so utterly miserable in the company of my blackguard drovers, that I was perfectly happy and able to appreciate all their little kindnesses in lending me blankets and things to make me comfortable. After two days I left them, with 200 dollars I had borrowed and a fresh horse I had bought, as mine was about played out. I left in the afternoon, and rode twenty-five miles in soaking rain; then staked my horse out, and made my bed (which was one small saddle blanket) close to her. B—— had told me to look out for the Indians, as they were a bad lot all along the river, which was my road. However, I got on all right, and started before three the next morning, eating my bread and cold bacon going along. I afterwards heard that upon the same night two men prospecting for gold ten miles from where I was, at a place called Rock Creek, were attacked by the Indians, and one of them was murdered.

When I got back to the Columbia river, I was delighted to find all the cattle crossed over, and I had nothing to do but to pay the Indians who had helped with their canoes, and then we started off for the "Line" again, which we reached after about a week's drive. Our next drive was to the head of the Okanagon Lake (90 miles). The scenery was beautiful, but the trail very bad, and the cattle began to get foot-sore, so we gave them a week's rest. After starting them off again, I soon left them to come up here first. I took three days to do the 110 miles, the road lying along the Thompson river; stopping at the grand prairie the second night, and at Kamloops the third, and never was I so glad to strike a place I could call home. K.

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