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WILD WEST



WEEKLY.

YOUNG WILD WEST OR ARIETTA CAPTURING A CHIEF AS A

CAVALRY SCOUT AND OTHER STORIES

By An Old Scout



Wild dodged the blow aimed at his head with the tomahawk, and leaped upon the chief, and, as quick as a flash, flung him to the ground. At that moment Arietta and the cavalymen rode up.

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NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 14, 1913.

Price 5 Cents.

YOUNG WILD WEST CAPTURING A CHIEF

OR,

ARIETTA AS A CAVALRY SCOUT

By AN OLD SCOUT

CHAPTER I.

YOUNG WILD WEST PROMISES TO CAPTURE A CHIEF.

A few years ago when Fort Defiance, situated in the northern part of Arizona, close to the line of New Mexico, was a fort, in the true sense of the word, an Indian of the Apache tribe, named Dog Foot, created quite a sensation, and incidentally became a "thorn in the side" of Colonel Beardsley, who was then in command at the fort. Dog Foot had never been credited as being a very bad redskin, though he had assisted Geronimo greatly in committing his depredations. It is Indian nature to be crafty, cunning and treacherous, and Dog Foot surely possessed these qualities.

But he had learned much more through his dealings with white men, and he had taken a notion to get rich.

For something like two months the mining camps, settlements and even the trading-post near the fort had been flooded with counterfeit money, and when several investigations had been made and enough information had been gathered to convince the colonel and others in his council that Dog Foot was the leader of a band of counterfeiters, it was a great surprise manifested.

Who had ever heard of a redskin being a counterfeiter? This was the question they asked each other.

And the evidence pointed that way, so the thing to do was to catch Dog Foot.

This, however, was easier to talk about than to accomplish, and though many times the wily chief had been allured and captured, he was still at large somewhere, while the unsuspecting ones kept being swindled by selling goods and making change for bad money.

The situation had warmed up to such an extent that a reward of a thousand dollars was offered by the United States Government for information that would lead to the capture and conviction of the counterfeiters.

Colonel Beardsley was much nettled at the repeated failure to gather in the miscreants.

Two or three times worthless Indians as well as white men who were suspicious characters had been arrested for having suspicious coins in their possession.

But each time no evidence could be found that they were guilty, so that the money was bad.

They had always managed to explain how they came by the money, so the trouble caused from this investigation amounted to nothing.

It was a very warm morning in the month of June that Colonel Beardsley was sitting on the porch of the frame house he had built in close to the heavy stockade that surrounded the old fort, meditating and wondering over the situation, for

he had just received a dispatch from one of the high army officials commanding him to capture the counterfeiters.

He was well satisfied that Dog Foot, the clever Apache chief, was at the head of the counterfeiters.

Putting this and that together from the information he had received from different sources made it all point that way.

If he could only capture the chief he felt sure that the rest would be easy.

With the dispatch in his hand he sat on the steps of the porch, when an orderly suddenly came up and saluted.

"What is it?" the colonel demanded, gruffly.

"Captain Jackson advised me to report to you that Young Wild West has just arrived," came the reply.

"What!"

The colonel leaped to his feet so suddenly that the orderly started back in amazement.

"That is what he said, colonel," he managed to retort.

"Have Young Wild West sent to me at once."

With the usual military salute the orderly promptly turned and hastened to make his report to Captain Jackson.

Meanwhile, a party of riders had just ridden up and had dismounted near the south entrance to the big stockade.

In their fancy hunting and riding costumes of buckskin and gay-colored silk and cloth, they certainly looked picturesque indeed.

But it is not necessary to give a full description of them, for these characters are so well known to the readers of fiction throughout the length and breadth of our great country that when we simply state that the party consisted of Young Wild West and the friends who traveled with him in search of excitement and adventure throughout the wildest parts of the region known as the Wild West, it will be sufficient.

Young Wild West, the boy who had made himself famous through his daring exploits and stout determination to do the right thing, no matter what the cost, and who held the title of Champion Deadshot of the West, stood near his sorrel stallion, Spitfire, talking with Captain Jackson of the Thirteenth Cavalry, when the orderly came back.

"Captain," the latter said, "the colonel wishes to see Young Wild West immediately."

"I told you so, captain," the young deadshot said, laughingly. "I have never met Colonel Beardsley, but I know he has heard of me. The document I just showed should convince you that I am pretty well known among the army folks. When I heard a little while ago that an Apache chief was worrying you all so much and that there was a reward of a thousand dollars offered for his capture, I made up my mind right away that we would find something to do here. The fact is, I am very glad we decided to ride up this way instead

of striking on through New Mexico. I'll go and see the colonel and have a little talk with him."

"Please do so, and while you are gone I'll try and arrange suitable accommodations for your friends."

"Don't bother yourself about that. We are all in the habit of pitching our camp anywhere we happen to stop. We always carry a pretty good outfit, and it is seldom, indeed, that we haven't a full supply of something to eat." Young Wild West retorted, and then he followed the orderly around the stockade and quickly saw Colonel Beardsley standing before his residence, apparently much agitated.

Our hero had been a great deal among the troopers stationed in various parts of the Wild West, and he had many times acted as a scout, always being successful in anything he undertook.

While he had been at Fort Defiance several times before, it happened that Colonel Beardsley was a new commandant there, and he had never had the pleasure of meeting him.

"How are you, colonel?" he called out, in the cool and easy way that had helped make him famous, at the same time giving the military salute. "Can I do anything for you?"

"You are Young Wild West, I believe?" came the reply, without an answer to the salute.

"Yes, sir, that is my name."

"You have some sort of connection with the regular army, have you not?"

"Nothing more than that I hold a paper which was given to me by the major-general two or three years ago. I suppose it makes me connected somewhat, since it gives me the privilege of passing through the lines anywhere, and also of offering advice to those in command."

"Yes, I know. I have heard something about that. You are just the one I want to see. But I am a little surprised to find that you are not a much older person. From the little I have heard of you it would seem that you should be older, for you have accomplished no end of things, and all to the good of the army and for your country."

"That is all right, colonel. I started in when I was quite a little kid, you know. I'll admit that I am nothing but a boy yet, but some day I'll be a man, and then perhaps it will be different."

"I rather think you're man enough now. But come into the house. I want to talk to you in private."

A wave of the hand dismissed the orderly, and Young Wild West, not the least bit timid about consulting with such a high officer as a colonel, walked coolly into the house and sat down without being invited to do so.

The colonel drew up a chair before him and, taking a seat, looked the boy squarely in the eyes.

"You have heard about the counterfeit money that's been floating about through these parts, I presume?" he began.

"Not until a few minutes ago."

"Is that so? You have not been long in this vicinity, then?"

"No, we came straight through from New Mexico, and we haven't stopped at a camp or town in three days."

"Oh, I understand, then. You didn't come across any one who wanted to buy or steal anything?"

"Not a soul in that time."

"Who told you about the counterfeit money?"

"Well, we met a cavalryman just as we had about reached here. He happened to know us, and, of course, he wanted to give us all the news he could, I suppose, so he told us about the counterfeiters. He said an Indian chief was supposed to be the fellow who was making the bad money. That sounds rather strange, colonel."

"Yes, it does sound strange, I'll admit. But I have reason to believe that such is the case. If it isn't the chief who is actually doing it he is the brains of the organization engaged in the work."

"And the chief is named Dog Foot?"

"Yes, that's correct."

"Can't say I ever heard of him."

"No, he has never been much known, though he has taken part in some of the raids Geronimo made. But he's a wily fellow, a veritable fox, you might say. He can wriggle out of any scrape he gets into. I am confident he is the man we should get in order to break up this counterfeiting business. Why, just think of it. It is estimated that as much as thirty thousand dollars in spurious coin has been disposed of inside a period of less than six months."

"Quite a lot of money to be flapping around, colonel," and the young deadshot shook his head.

"Yes, indeed. It is all made of lead, too, though there is

some other metal, or perhaps melted glass, in it that causes to shine and give a ring."

"Only silver is counterfeited, then, is that it?"

"Yes, only silver dollars, halves and quarters."

"If the redskin is responsible for all this he must be a pretty sharp one."

"He is responsible for it, I'm sure."

"Well, colonel," and the boy looked at him curiously, "suppose you want me to try and catch Dog Foot?"

"That is just what I do. If it continues on this way I fear that I'll be transferred to some other post, or perhaps relegated to a lower station."

"I shouldn't like to have anything like that happen to you, colonel Beardsley, for I have sized you up pretty well and seemed to me that you are a bright man and are holding a post that you are fully capable of. Since you have been able to capture the leader of the gang of counterfeiters, it should not be the cause of your humiliation in any way."

"But these higher up won't look at it in that way, Young Wild West," and the colonel shook his head sadly.

"I suppose not. All right, colonel. I promise you that I will do my level best to get the chief who you think is responsible for the counterfeit money. There is no need of making you for any information, for if you knew anything it would be the means of finding where he was he would be at large now."

"That is sound logic," and the colonel actually smiled.

"All right, then. I reckon I'll stay around the fort to-morrow morning. In that time I may pick up something worth while by talking to the cavalrymen and some of the settlers."

"A good idea, I think. But do you believe that you will be able to catch Dog Foot?"

"I certainly do believe it, colonel. The fact is, a boy grew very earnest, that I never undertook a thing in this line that I didn't accomplish. Don't think I am boasting when I talk this way, but it is a plain, unvarnished truth when I say it."

"I have heard enough of you to feel that you will be successful. However, there is a thousand dollars waiting for you if you succeed."

"Colonel Beardsley, I don't care anything about the thousand dollars that is offered for a reward. Probably you are not aware that I struck it rich when I was only sixteen years of age, and that since that time money has been rolling in from different sources. That is why I can enjoy myself by taking the horseback rides all over this part of the country so that I can always find something in the way of excitement, and at the same time do a little good now and then. My two partners, Cheyenne Charlie, who was a scout for a long time in the army, and Jim Dart, a boy born and bred in Wyoming, who is now my own age, are like me in respect. They are willing to go wherever I lead, and I have never yet found them lacking when the greatest of dangers threatened me."

"Your partners are with you, I suppose?" the colonel was now looking at the boy with undisguised admiration.

"Yes, and so are the girls."

"Girls, eh? You don't mean to say you have any help with you?"

"Oh, yes! Cheyenne Charlie got married two or three years ago, and his wife told him that if he insisted on going on the trips with me she would go along. She was permitted to do this, and at the same time the two girls who are my close companions also set out with us. They are Aris Murdock and Eloise Gardner. Probably you may have heard of them all."

"Yes, I have heard of them. So it worked all right when they travel with you still, is that it?"

"Yes, it seems that it agreed with them from the start, and even though they were in peril a big part of the time, they were not dismayed, and they have kept it up ever since."

"I suppose I might find accommodation for the ladies in your house," and the colonel looked around at the front of a rather small structure.

"Never mind that, colonel. They are used to camping, while I am hunting for the chief with my partners they will be all right in camp right here at the fort. But if we have to go quite a distance I think we will take them with us. Arietta is a girl not like the general run of them, and she often she has proved to be of the greatest assistance to me."

"You are a wonderful boy, Young Wild West," declared the colonel, "and it seems to me that your companions are just like you. But I wish you would report to me at the

ect this afternoon. Possibly I may have something in way of information that would assist you. I'll look over papers in the meantime."

"All right, colonel," and rising from his chair Young Wild saluted and went on out of the building.

He was soon back with his waiting friends, who had not made any arrangements for camping.

"Well, Wild, how did you make out?" Arietta Murdock, the young deadshot's golden-haired sweetheart, asked.

"All right, Et," was the reply. "I reckon we are going to have some lively work before we get away from this part of the country. What do you think of a redskin being a counterfeiter?"

"It doesn't seem possible, Wild."

"But it is true, I think. I have promised Colonel Beardsley to capture him, too. I reckon we'll come pretty close to doing it."

"Bet your life we will, Wild!" spoke up Cheyenne Charlie, the scout, who was always ready for anything the boy proposed.

CHAPTER II.

WILD GETS A LITTLE INFORMATION.

There was not a very large force of men stationed at the fort just then, but those who had the chance to do so were watching Young Wild West and his friends in a way that showed great interest.

Captain Jackson walked over to the group and again invited them to take up their quarters in one of the buildings during their stay there.

But the young deadshot shook his head and smiled.

"I reckon we'll pitch our camp over there by the brook," he said. "We'll be pretty close to a house, and I suppose occupying it won't object to us as being neighbors for a short time. I can't say just how long we'll stay here. It may be for a week, or only until to-morrow morning. It all depends upon the present location of the Indian chief who is wanted so badly."

"Do as you like, Young Wild West," the captain answered, smiling politely. "So you have made up your mind to try and capture the chief, then?"

"I certainly have, captain."

"Good! If you can't do it no one else can. But it will be a hard task, for all that."

"You think so, eh?"

"Yes, I do. While I honestly believe that the counterfeiters have a hiding-place somewhere within a few miles of here I have no idea of just where it is. The surrounding country is full of places that could be used to hide in, you know."

"That's right, captain. But it seems to me that there ought to be a way to get on the trail of Dog Foot."

"Probably he has ceased working the bad money now and is hanging close. I heard that some bad money was taken in at the store only last night."

"Is that so? I reckon I'll go over there and have a talk with the captain. Probably he has some of the money."

"Oh, yes! He has quite a few coins, I believe."

The captain was called away just then, and as soon as he had gone the young deadshot turned to the two Chinamen who were in charge of the pack-horses that carried the camping outfit and supplies for the party, and said:

"Now, then, you two heathens can fix up the camp. We'll be right over there by the brook. Come on."

Taking his sorrel stallion by the bridle, Young Wild West went the way to the place he had selected.

There was not much water in the brook, but there was grass and other vegetation growing close to it, and this would do to feed their horses.

However, they could buy what grain they wanted at the supply store, which was stationed not far from the stockade at the fort.

Once they were upon the spot, Hop Wah and Wing Wah, the Celestials, went right at work.

Wild and his partners saw to it that their own horses and those of the girls were tied where they could get the benefit of the grazing and drink from the brook whenever they felt so disposed.

When they had done this they assisted Hop and Wing to set up the two tents close to a steep bank.

It did not take long to do this job, for the Chinaman had a system, and so many times had they put up and taken down the tents that it was easy for them.

"Come, Et," our hero said, nodding to his sweetheart, "I reckon we'll take a walk around and talk to some of the people. I want to find out all I can about this counterfeiting business. It's a very interesting subject to me just now."

"I suppose it is, Wild," Arietta answered, laughingly. "Anything that has a touch of mystery about it or shows a possible chance for you to get into danger always interests you."

"Never mind about that. If I was born that way I can't help it."

The girl joined him, and the two walked leisurely toward the small collection of log houses and shanties that made up the village at the fort.

The store was about the largest building there, and was just like those to be found anywhere in that section of the country, for about all that was needed by the settlers could be bought there.

Trading was done, too.

Hunters and trappers came there with their pelts and got goods in exchange, and sometimes money.

Wild and Arietta did not meet any one on the way, and they entered the store to find no one there but the man who was evidently the proprietor.

"Are you the boss?" Wild asked, in his cool and easy way, as the man stepped behind the counter, ready to wait upon them.

"Yes, I'm Jed Thomas, an' I own this store."

"Got any bad money on hand?"

"What do you want to know for?" and the storekeeper looked at the boy curiously.

"Oh, I don't know. I just had a talk with Colonel Beardsley about the bad money that's in circulation in these parts. I heard you had some of it."

"Yes, I got fooled two or three times by it. So you had a talk with the colonel, eh?"

"Yes, and I mean to help him catch the counterfeiters."

"Who are you, young feller?"

"Young Wild West is my name."

"Oh! Seems to me I've heard of you."

"Probably. You were not here the last time we were at the fort. There was another fellow keeping the store."

"Yes, I know that. I bought him out putty nigh a year ago. I've been here ever since, too, an' I can't say that I'm gittin' rich very fast."

Then he turned to a drawer behind him and took from it about a dozen coins.

Most of them were quarters, and as he let one of the latter fall upon the counter it gave out a ring that seemed to be nearly the real thing.

"Putty good counterfeit money," he declared.

"Yes, that's right," Wild answered, as he weighed one of the quarters in his hand. "But pretty light, though. I should think if any one was awake when one of these was given him he ought to tell the difference right away."

"But you ain't thinkin' about that, you know, especially when some of your regular customers pass the money on yer."

"Oh, some of this was passed by your regular customers, eh?"

"All of it. But they got hold of it 'cause it gits goin' around, I s'pose."

"Quite likely. Can you remember which of your customers has passed the most of this money to you?"

"Let me see," and the storekeeper thought for a moment. "Catamount Dick, the hunter, give me the most of it. Last night he was here, an' the boy I've got workin' for me took three dollars an' a half along with about a dollar an' a half good money. You see, Catamount Dick bought five dollars' worth of stuff here, an' he paid for it in silver. The boy didn't think, so I don't know as I oughter blame him too much. Catamount Dick will make good when he comes around ag'in, of course."

"He's an honest man, then?"

"I always found him to be."

"Where does Catamount Dick live?"

"He's got a log shanty out along the trail about three miles from here. It's right close to the pass that runs somethin' like half a mile between the cliffs. Maybe you come that way."

"No, we didn't come that way," and the boy shook his head. "Catamount Dick is a hunter, you say?"

"Yes, he's been livin' in these here parts for a number of years, so I've heard tell. He's always brought in more pelts than any other man in the business, until the past few months. He ain't been doin' much in that line in that time,

though now an' then he brings in half a dozen good skins, an' I either pay him cash for 'em or else let him have what he wants in trade."

"It's too bad you have been fooled by this worthless coin, boss. If I were you I would keep my eyes open every time any one attempts to pay you in silver."

"I'd have to have my eyes open all the time, then. There ain't nothin' much but silver around here, but, of course, once in a while a gold-piece shows up. But outside of the officers of the fort there ain't many as has any of it. A tradin' store don't take in a big pile of money, anyhow. I make most from shippin' the pelts I git from the hunters an' trappers."

Wild bought a couple of dollars' worth of coffee and sugar, for he knew the supply was getting somewhat low.

He gave the storekeeper a five-dollar gold-piece to make change for him, and saw to it that what he got in the way of change was good money.

As he turned to go out with Arietta it struck him that he had better buy one of the spurious coins from the man, so he nodded to him and said:

"I suppose you would give me one of those bad half-dollars for a good one, wouldn't you?"

"I sartinly would. I'll give 'em all to you if you want 'em."

"No, one is enough."

"All right, here you are," and the exchange was soon made.

"Well, Et," the young deadshot said, as they were walking from the store, "it seems to me that it hadn't ought to be very hard to find out something about this gang of counterfeiters. Did you listen to all that the man said in the store?"

"Yes, Wild, I took note of everything he said."

"Did you form any conclusion?"

"I surely did."

"Well, what is it?"

"I think the hunter who is called Catamount Dick should be looked after."

"Right you are, little girl. The storekeeper said Catamount Dick had not been doing much in the way of hunting for the past few months. Probably he has found an occupation that pays him a great deal better."

"That's just what I think, Wild."

"All right, then. I am going to find Catamount Dick this afternoon."

They went on around through the little village, only meeting two or three men and not bothering to talk much with them, and finally went back to the camp.

Wing Wah, the cook, had already kindled a fire and was making preparations for the noonday meal.

Hop Wah, his brother, was missing, and when Wild noticed this he looked at the scout and said:

"Where's Hop, Charlie?"

"The blamed heathen sneaked away when nobody was lookin'," was the reply. "He went right after you did. Goin' to see if he kin git hold of some whisky, I s'pose."

"Well, he's not apt to find any around here, that's certain. It's against the rules to have liquor for sale at the Government fort."

"It's ag'in the rules, all right, Wild, but it kin generally be had if you know where to git it."

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Hop will find it, too, if any one kin."

"Undoubtedly, Charlie, for Hop certainly is a clever Chinese."

When the boy said this he certainly spoke the truth, for Hop Wah was far above the average of his race in many ways.

He was a sleight-of-hand performer of no mean ability, and though he was steadfast and true in looking after the interests of his employers, he was bound to play a practical joke every time he got the chance.

He also had two failings.

One was that he was a little too fond of whisky, which he always called tanglefoot, and the other that he had a mania for gambling and could cheat even an expert card sharp without his knowing it.

It was easy to guess that he had either gone to try and find whisky, or get into a game of draw poker.

But Hop was lucky, and if he happened to get into trouble while thus engaged he was pretty sure to get out of it all right.

This our friends knew pretty well, so they did not worry about him in the least.

They sat down and talked while the cook went ahead with the dinner, and presently a couple of cavalrymen came strolling along.

Wild invited them to come over and sit down, and then began questioning them about the counterfeit money.

But it was little or nothing that he could get from them. Between the colonel and the captain about all that was known about the matter had been told to him.

However, he considered the information he had gathered at the store was worth far more than anything else he had heard so far.

"A rather lonesome place around here," he said to one of the men, as he shot a glance at the mean-looking shanty lying close to the stockade.

"Yes, it's mighty tiresome, that's a fact," the cavalryman answered, with a shrug of the shoulders. "But what a fellow do? We are in the service, and we've got to take a lonesome part with the lively part of it. Sometimes it's lively enough."

"It isn't much of a place for cowboys to ride in and hang out big time, though. There are no places where liquor is sold."

"That's right. We don't see cowboys very often. But sometimes there are as many as half a dozen hunters and trappers here. They come in with their pelts and get rid of 'em at the store, you know. They generally fetch along whisky with them, and some of the boys pay a good price to get some of it."

"Is that so? There's a hunter living somewhere about here who is called Catamount Dick, I believe?"

"Yes, I know him. He's a tall fellow with little black eyes. They say he's a deadshot, and that he always gets the game he shoots at."

"He lives close by, doesn't he?"

"Yes, he's got a shanty over that way, just as you go down the narrow path the trail goes through."

Wild looked in the direction the soldier pointed out, and could see the cliffs easily.

He kept on talking in an off-handed way, but had found out all he cared to.

Of course, he did not want to let the storekeeper know that he was at all interested in Catamount Dick.

It was the same with the cavalryman, for if either had been anxious to meet the man they might suspect in some way that he connected him with the counterfeiters.

The fact was, our hero had made up his mind to catch Catamount Dick without the assistance of any one but his companions.

Whether he would be able to do this or not remained to be seen.

As noon approached the cavalryman went away, and finally when twelve o'clock came and dinner was ready, Charlie again spoke of the missing Hop.

"We'll look him up after dinner, Charlie," Wild said, in a cool and easy way. "Come on, we may as well eat, now that everything is ready for us."

They took their time about it, and when they had finished the very good meal the Chinese cook had provided for them the young deadshot nodded to Charlie and Jim and said:

"Well, boys, we'll go and see if we can find Hop, and if we do I am going to take a ride over that way and hang around a little."

"I am going with you, Wild," Arietta spoke up.

"All right, little girl," was the reply. "You and I will take a ride out to the cliffs to have a look at the pass the trail runs through."

"I can go right away, then, Wild," the girl suggested. "Charlie and Jim will find Hop all right."

"Just as you say, Et. I reckon that would be a good idea. But maybe we had better give our dinner a chance to settle."

The girl laughed lightly at this, but went straight to where her horse was tied and was quickly at work putting on the saddle and bridle with her own hands.

This meant that she was ready to go, so her dashing young lover was not long in making his own horse ready.

Meanwhile, the scout and Jim Dart had gone away in search of the missing Chinaman.

A few minutes later Young Wild West and his sweetheart were riding briskly over the sandy trail in the direction of the cliffs that loomed up a couple of miles away.

CHAPTER III.

HOP VISITS THE BARRACKS.

It will be in order to find out what became of Hop Wah, Young Wild West's clever Chinese, as he was very often called by those who knew him best.

He had watched his chance to slip away immediately after Wild and Arietta started to take a walk through the little village.

Hop knew that the men in the employ of Uncle Sam as a rule had a fondness for gambling, and that they liked to drink occasionally.

He happened to be out of his supply of liquor, and he thought he needed some.

He also felt that he needed a little practice at card-playing to keep him in condition.

When he slipped away he kept along behind some rocks and soon reached the barracks inside the stockade, for he had little or no trouble in slipping through the wide-open gate while the sentinel's back was turned.

Behind the long, low structure that quartered the cavalrymen of the post the clever Chinese crept until he came to a spot where it was divided.

He stepped in under the roof and listened.

As if he had been led there through a scent, he heard the voices of men and the clinking of glasses.

"Lat velly stlange," the Chinaman mused, a grin showing upon his yellow face. "Allee samee gottee something to drink. Maybe um colonel no likee his if he knowee."

But Hop had no intention of telling the colonel about it, even should he discover that there was whisky in the barracks.

He looked around for a means of getting inside, and in order to do this he found that he must go into the open and face the old wooden fort.

But, nothing daunted, he walked on around, and finding a door within a few feet of him he stepped to it, tried it, and found it was not fastened.

Pushing it softly open, he stepped inside.

It was a small, square apartment he had entered, but there was a door leading from it to the right.

Hop placed his ear to this and then he could hear the voices very plainly.

Men inside were inside, and he judged right away that they were having a good time.

There was no crack wide enough for him to peer through the door, so he moved along to the partition adjoining it.

Then he found a small knot-hole, and applying his eye to this he took in the interior of the apartment.

It was a good-sized room, with a table in the center, and lighted by openings from the front and rear which might have been called windows, though there was nothing in the way of glass to them.

Seated at the table were three men in uniform, all of them wearing the stripes and other insignia of officers.

Hop recognized one of them as Captain Jackson, whom he had taken note of while he was talking to Young Wild West upon their arrival at the fort.

Again a smile illumined the face of the clever Chinese.

A bottle and three glasses were upon the table, and the officers, even though they were not in their quarters, seemed to be enjoying themselves immensely.

Knowing full well that they were violating the military rules, the Chinaman was not at all afraid to force himself upon them.

He quickly made up his mind what to do, and then stepping to the door, lifted the latch and pushed it open suddenly.

"Velly nicee day, so be," he said, blandly, as he nodded, bowing to the astonished men.

"What are you doing here?" demanded one of them sharply, as he leaped to his feet and placed a hand upon the sword which hung at his side.

"Me wantee lilllee drink of tanglefoot, so be. Me allee samee Young Wild West's clevee Chinese."

Captain Jackson hurriedly grabbed a bottle and hid it from sight behind a box that happened to be close at hand.

"See here, heathen," he said, rather sternly, at the same time motioning for the other officer to keep quiet, "you have made a mistake. We have nothing to drink here save water."

"Lat allee light, Mislser Captain," the clever Chinese remarked, coolly, as he stepped over and took a seat at the table. "Me watchee you through um knot-hole. Me see wellything. You givee me lilllee drink of tanglefoot. Me no allee somebody. Me velly goodee Chinese."

The captain remained silent for the space of a few seconds, and then he looked at his two companions, and, shaking his head, said:

"I guess there's no other way out of it, boys. This fellow has been watching us, and he knows we have whisky. We may as well give him a drink."

"Throw him out," suggested one of them, angrily.

"No, no. That wouldn't do. Didn't you hear him say that he was Young Wild West's Chinaman?"

"Young Wild West's clevee Chinese," Hop corrected. "Me namee Hop Wah; comee from China. Gottee velly smartee uncle in China, and me allee samee likee my uncle. Me showee you nicee lilllee tlick pletty soonee."

The other two men quickly gave in and smiled in spite of themselves.

Then the captain reached for the bottle, and placing it upon the table before the Chinaman, said:

"Help yourself, heathen. But I hope you won't say anything about this, not even to Young Wild West."

"Me no tellee somebody," declared Hop.

"Very well. I hope you don't, for it would make it bad for us if you do. We are violating the rules, as you know. But what is a man going to do? Here we are stationed here in idleness, and we have to have a little amusement."

"Lat light," Hop admitted, and then he took one of the glasses and poured some liquor in it, which he held up before he drank it, and said:

"Velly goodee luckee."

The three nodded, and he drained the glass, whereupon the captain took the bottle and again hid it from view.

"It's time for you to go now," one of the others said, motioning to the door.

"Lat allee light," Hop answered, with a shake of the head. "Me wantee showee you nicee lilllee tlick, so be. You gottee um packee cards?"

"No, we haven't," declared the captain, quickly. "You had better go now."

"Lat allee light. Me gottee cards, so be. Me velly smartee Chinese."

Then he was not long in laying a brand-new poker deck on the table.

"Shuffle um cards," he said, nodding to the captain.

"I suppose we may as well humor him, boys," the captain said, as he picked up the cards and proceeded to do as directed. "He won't stay very long."

When he had shuffled the pack thoroughly he put it on the table and looked questioningly at the heathen.

"Now, len," said Hop, touching the top card with his forefinger, "you takee um card from um pack. Me tellee you whattee um card is."

"That's an old trick, captain," one of the others spoke up, in disgust. "We don't want anything like that."

"We'll humor him," was the retort, so Captain Jackson drew a card from somewhere about the center of the pack and looked at it.

It was the nine of diamonds, and he showed it to his companions.

"I suppose you want me to put it back, don't you?" Jackson said, smiling at the Chinaman.

"No, you keepee," was the reply. "You wantee me tellee you whattee um card is?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"Me bettee you fivee dollee me tellee you."

"You might, if you look over the pack and find which one is missing."

"Me no touchee um packee."

"And you'll bet me five dollars you can tell me what this card is, eh?" and the captain held it up, back to the Chinaman.

"Lat light. Me velly smartee Chinese."

"Well, my heathen friend, I'll bet you five dollars that you can't. Put up your money, if you have got any to put up."

"Me gottee plenty money."

Hop soon showed them what he had.

He drew a big roll of bills from one pocket and a well-filled buckskin bag from another.

The latter contained gold and silver coins to probably the amount of three or four hundred dollars, while the roll must have contained somewhere in the neighborhood of a thousand dollars.

The three officers opened wide their eyes, for they had not expected a common Chinaman, such as Hop appeared to be, would possess such a big sum of money.

The heathen selected a five-dollar gold-piece from the buckskin bag and placed it on the table.

"I have made the wager, boys," the captain said, "so I'll stick to my word."

Then he counted out five dollars and placed it beside the gold-piece, all the while keeping the card concealed in his hand.

"There you are," he said, looking sharply at Hop. "Now, then, tell me what the card is I am holding in my hand."

"Um nine of diamonds."

The captain's face fell.

He shrugged his shoulders and looked at his two companions in mute surprise.

"He wins, captain," one of them said, after a pause.

"Yes, he certainly does," and throwing the card upon the table in disgust, Jackson folded his arms and looked the Chinaman over from head to foot.

"You said you were a clever Chinese," he added. "Well, I am inclined to think that you told the truth. You also remarked that you were going to show us a nice little trick. You certainly have done so."

"Me velly smartee Chineee," Hop declared, as he raked in the money.

Then he picked up the card and placed it back in the pack.

There was nothing that was at all simple about the trick, the three men thought, though at first they had expected it was.

The cards had been shuffled by the captain himself, and then without even touching his fingers to them the Chinaman had told him to draw one of the cards.

He had done so and looked at it, and had been told that the card would be named.

This, too, was done, and he had lost five dollars by it.

"Me likee havee another lillee drink, so be," Hop said, smiling complacently, as he settled back in his chair and held the pack of cards in his hands. "Me no tellee somebody. Me say lat before, and me never tellee lie. Me allee samee George Washee."

The three officers smiled at this.

It was quite evident that the cleverness and wit shown by the Chinaman was winning them over.

"Boys," the captain said, nodding to the others, "this fellow is no common heathen, that's sure. Why, he just did something that is so puzzling to me that I can't think of how he could possibly have done it. Think of it! I took the card from the pack myself, and he never once had his hands upon it. He wagered that he could tell what the card was, and he won. Neither of you ever saw anything like that done before, I'm sure."

"I never did," one of them answered, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Neither did I," the other declared. "But maybe it was only luck, captain."

"Perhaps so," and Jackson's face brightened up at once.

He went and got the bottle, however, and not only gave Hop another drink, but took one himself and permitted the others to do the same.

"Let me have the cards," he said, as he sat down opposite the Chinaman.

Instead of complying with the request, Hop began shuffling the pack.

Then he suddenly laid it upon the table and, looking at the captain, nodded his head and said:

"Maybe you thlinkee me havee velly muchee luckee, so be, when me tellee you whatee um card was."

"It looks that way," was the retort.

"Allee light. You shuffle um cards and len me bettee you five dollee me takee um same card flom um pack."

"You will, eh? We'll see about that. Are you sure it's there?"

"Yes, me velly muchee sure. Me showee you."

Then Hop quickly drew a card from near the center of the pack and turned it over.

"Lat um card," he said, and, sure enough, it was.

"It's the nine of diamonds, all right, captain," one of the officers said. "I think he knows exactly where the card is. It must be a marked card."

"If it's marked it must be somewhere on the edge, then," the other observed.

"That couldn't be. We'll see about it. I'll take the bet, anyhow."

Then the captain slipped the card back into the pack and gave it a good shuffle.

Having done this he laid the cards back upon the table, and nodded for the Chinaman to pick the card.

"Understand," he said, "if you fail to pick out the nine of diamonds the first time you try you lose."

"Lat light. We bettee puttee uppee um money."

"Yes, if you like. I suppose that will be the better way."

"Allee light," and Hop deposited five dollars upon the table.

When it had been covered by the captain he reached over and picked the top card.

Before turning it over he turned to the other two men and said:

"Now, len, whatee you bettee his card no nine of diamonds?"

"I won't bet," one of them said.

"I will," the other exclaimed. "I'll go five dollars on 'Allee light,' and Hop calmly produced another five dollars.

When it had been matched by the officer he turned the card over and then, without looking at it, pulled in the money and lay upon the table.

But the card was the nine of diamonds, just the same. "Very clever!" exclaimed Captain Jackson, with a nod of the head.

"Me showee you some more lillee trick, so be," Hop served, blandly, and picking up the cards he quietly slipped them under his blouse.

But, as if he had just thought of it, he reached back with his hand and brought out what seemed to be the same pack of cards.

But it was not.

What he had now in his hand was a regular pack of cards. The other was not.

It was a pack that Hop had made up himself, and the card in it was a nine of diamonds.

This was an old trick of his, however, so any further explanation would be unnecessary to the reader.

"Maybe you wantee play diaw pokee?" the clever Chinaman suggested, as he smiled at the three men.

"Not with you," Captain Jackson exclaimed, quickly.

"Whatee mattee?" and Hop looked at him in an angry sort of way.

"Why, any one who can pick out or cause to be picked any card he wants to would be a dangerous man to play with, I should think."

"Lat allee light. Me no cheatee."

"I wouldn't trust you, heathen. I admire Young Wild West and I have the greatest respect for any one belonging to his party. You say you are his clever Chinese. But that I say that I am going to play draw poker with you. You've taken ten dollars from me, and you are perfectly welcome to it. But you won't get another cent. I'll tell you what I am going to do, heathen. I'll let you have one more card from this bottle and then I want you to get out of here."

"Allee light," Hop said, as though he was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement, and putting the pack of cards in his pocket he arose from the table and waited.

The bottle and a glass was passed to him, and, taking a drink, he bade the three men good-morning and went out of the barracks.

No doubt he left them in a somewhat uneasy state, but certainly Hop had no intention of letting any one know what had happened.

He was not done with the barracks yet, however, for he knew quite well that there were quite a few cavalrymen around somewhere who had nothing to do but to lie around and take things easy.

He moved along a few feet and then, hearing voices, came to a stop and listened.

He knew right away that something was going on inside though the voices were somewhat subdued and appeared to be excited somewhat.

Looking sharply along the boards, he found a crack that was large enough for him to peer through, and his eyes were promptly glued to it.

What he saw was very pleasing to him.

Four privates were sitting on the ground inside the barracks playing cards upon a blanket which lay between them.

Hop looked around for a way to get to them.

He soon found it, and pulling a board aside, he slipped through and gave the gamblers a surprise.

They all leaped to their feet and one of them threw a blanket over the cards to hide the money that was lying there.

"No be afraid, gentlemen," the Chinaman said, calmly. "Allee samee Young Wild West's clevee Chineee. Me no tellee anybody. Me wantee play diaw pokee. Me gottee plenty money."

He showed a handful of coins and a few bills and instantly the four cavalrymen became a little more at their ease.

It happened that one of them had seen our friends before and he had heard quite a little of them, including the clever Chinese.

"Say, Hop," he said, for he knew the Chinaman's name, too, "you don't want to say anything about this. While we have got a right to gamble if we want to, it wouldn't do

tain Jackson heard anything about it. He's opposed to you know."

"Me knowee lat," was the smiling retort. "But you no be wild. Me no tellee. Me wante play dlaw poken."

"He's all right, boys," the cavalryman said to the others. "He's got a little money there, so we might as well play with him."

After some little talk the others agreed, so the blanket was spread out again and they all sat down.

It happened that the men at the fort had been paid off the day before, so they all had nearly the amount they had received.

They played for small stakes, but that did not prevent the shaman from winning every dollar they had, while from one of them he won his uniform.

It took some little time to do this, however, and it was nearly an hour past noon when the game broke up and the shaman was escorted out of the barracks by his victims. While they all felt sore, none of them dared to stir up a row, and Hop went back to the camp, smiling complacently.

CHAPTER IV.

WILD AND ARIETTA ARE IN GREAT LUCK.

Young Wild West and Arietta rode along at a smart clip, rapidly covering the distance between the fort and the cliffs they were heading for.

They reached the pass that was so close to the fort in a short time, and then bringing their horses to a slower pace they kept on, all the while looking for the log shanty that was occupied by Catamount Dick, the hunter.

Just about three miles from their starting point they came in sight of it.

It was built on the side of a steep slope, and was surrounded by rocks, while a couple of trees that looked as though they had a hard time to draw sufficient nourishment from the soil to keep them alive stood at one side.

The moment they came in sight of it Wild brought his horse to a halt.

Arietta followed his example quickly and then both dismounted.

"Now then, little girl," the young deadshot said, "I reckon I will be just as well if we go ahead on foot and not make any noise. By the looks of things no one is in the shanty, but you can never tell by appearances. One thing about it, we didn't come close enough to be heard if there is any one there. That means that we ought to be able to get up there without it being known. We'll leave the horses here and go around a little to the left on a tour of inspection."

"All right, Wild," the girl answered. "You know what to do better than I do."

"That's right, Et. But probably you would do the same thing if you were alone and wanted to find out if there was any one in that shanty or not."

"I think I would, Wild."

"Well, then, I am not the only one who knows what to do."

To prevent them from straying they tied the horses, after first taking them into a rather wide niche to the left.

Then the two started around, keeping the rocks between them and the shanty, and in this way they finally got to the high ground above it.

Arietta did not need to be told to step softly.

She had been too long with Young Wild West and his partners for that.

When within fifty feet of the shanty, the top of which barely showed above the rocky hill upon which they had made their way, Wild dropped upon his hands and knees.

The girl followed his example instantly, and in this fashion they crept up until they were right at the edge of the shanty.

The roof was of boards, which had split from exposure to the sun, and when they heard the sounds of low voices within the two at once looked for a place to peer through.

There were so many of them that they had a choice in the matter.

But, anyhow, it was not more than a few seconds before they were looking down into the shanty.

Sitting upon a three-legged stool was a white man attired in the fashion of a hunter, while standing near the door apparently ready to leave was a dirty-looking redskin.

But the redskin was not a chief.

He was simply one of the good-for-nothing sort that were

to be found hanging about the mining camps and settlements at the time of which we write.

"You're afraid to do it, eh?" the white man was saying.

The Indian shrugged his shoulders, and, after a pause, retorted:

"Palefaces at the fort ketch me once. Me tell heap much lie and they let me go. If they ketch me again maybe they no let me go."

"Can't yer lie ag'in? You know we've got piles of the stuff on hand, an' we've got to get rid of it."

"Dog Foot say to go some other place. Dog Foot heap much wise."

"Never mind about Dog Foot. He thinks he's wise, that's all. I've helped him out in this thing, an' I reckon I've got somethin' to say about it."

It is needless to say that Young Wild West and his sweetheart were not only surprised but much pleased at what they heard.

They had made an important discovery; in fact, they had learned what the whole force at the fort had failed to get an inkling of in months.

They had caught at least two of the gang belonging to the counterfeiters, and had them dead to rights.

But it was not our hero's intention to make a capture just then.

The Indian chief was the man wanted the most, and in order to find him the two rascals in the shanty must be permitted to remain free.

"See here, redskin," said the hunter, for it was no doubt Catamount Dick who was speaking, "you take fifty dollars' worth of this stuff an' go down to the settlement. You don't have to spend your money at the store. It was pay-day yisterday at the fort, an' the soldiers will be wantin' fire-water. You kin git five dollars a pint for it. Jest you go an' git your nag an' take down about fifty pints. Some of 'em will have big money, an' you kin use this stuff to make change. They won't think of it bein' counterfeit, especially when they're buyin' whisky. If they do find out it is after you have gone they won't dare to say anything about it. Now, do as I say."

"All right, Dick," the Indian answered, slowly. "Maybe Dog Foot tell you it is all right."

"He didn't tell me what to do, but he would say it was all right. You go ahead an' fix it so you git there about dark to-night. That's a good time. They'll be lookin' for some one to come around with whisky, anyhow. I s'pose they was on the watch last night."

The Indian seemed to be satisfied that it was all right, so he went on out of the shanty.

When he had gone Wild arose to his feet and, nodding to his sweetheart, said in a low tone of voice:

"Well, Et, I reckon we may as well go on back to our horses. We'll get them and then ride on up and make out we have struck the shanty accidentally. I'd like to have a talk with Catamount Dick. I'm sure he is the fellow inside."

"He certainly must be, Wild. The redskin called him Dick," was the reply.

"Yes, but I would be satisfied of it if I had not heard him called Dick."

"So would I."

They went on carefully in the direction they had taken, and when they were about half-way to the spot where they had left the horses they came very near coming in contact with the Indian, who was ascending a path on foot.

But luckily for them they managed to keep out of his sight, and after waiting a reasonable length of time they proceeded on down to the mouth of the narrow pass.

Finding their horses, they mounted, and then rode leisurely to the rocky ascent, passing within a few yards of the front of the shanty.

The hunter came out almost immediately, and after looking at them in a curious sort of way, called out:

"Hello, strangers! Which way are you headin'?"

"How far is the fort from here?" Wild asked, as he rode up a little closer, followed by his sweetheart.

"Jest about three miles, I reckon. All you have got to do is to keep right on the trail that way," and he pointed out the right direction.

"Oh, thank you! Do you live here?"

"Yes, here is my home. I've been livin' here for a mighty long time now."

"A rather out-of-the-way place, I should think," spoke up Arietta, as she viewed the lonesome surroundings.

"Oh, it's good enough for me, miss. I'm a hunter, you know. I make my livin' by shootin' an' trappin'. I man-

aged to git quite a few skins in a year's time, an' that's about the only way I've got of makin' a livin'."

"Where do you take the skins to scil them?" our hero asked.

"Over to the fort an' sometimes to a place about fifty miles below here. I ain't been doin' much business at the fort lately, 'cause the storckeeper over there don't pay the price. Another thing, he wants to trade out too much of it. I don't want any more grub than I kin eat. It's cash money I want, 'cause I'm gittin' a little old now, an' the time will come when I won't be able to hunt an' trap any more. Then I want to have a little to help me out in my old age."

Beyond the fact that the man had a very shifty pair of eyes, and that they were small and deep-set, there was nothing about him that would indicate that he was anything more than crafty and grasping.

However, the keen perception of Young Wild West satisfied the boy that he was talking to a very clever fellow, and that he would surely be a dangerous customer if put to the test.

However, he was not inclined to put him to the test just then.

He had simply wanted to talk with him and have a close look at him.

That had been accomplished, so he was ready to go.

"Well," he said, turning to his sweetheart, "suppose we go on. Quite likely the rest have got there before this. We tarried a little too long, I think, and that is why they went on and left us. Probably they thought we went on ahead, though."

"I am sure they did," Arietta answered.

"There was others with yer, eh?" the hunter asked, looking at the two sharply.

"Yes, a couple of fellows and two ladies."

"You ain't goin' to stop around the fort, are you?"

"Not very long, I hope. It isn't much of a place, is it?"

"Nothin' much, I should say," and the hunter shrugged his shoulders. "But what are you doin' around here, anyhow?" and he suddenly became very curious by his manner.

"Nothing in particular. Just riding around looking up excitement and adventure, that's all."

"Excitement and adventure, eh? What did you expect to find in that way around the fort?"

"Oh, we don't know. We simply found that we were pretty close to it and we decided to stop there until to-morrow."

"Well, you won't find much excitement around there."

"Then we won't stay there very long."

"That's a fine horse you have got, young feller," and the man looked at the sorrel stallion admiringly.

"Yes, he certainly is."

"An' it's a putty fine one the gal's got, too. Don't s'pose you would like to sell either one of 'em, would yer?"

"No, they are not for sale."

"Seems to me I've heard somethin' about a young feller what rides a sorrel like that one is," the hunter said, suddenly, and then he cast a searching look at the boy.

"Perhaps you have heard of a girl who rides a horse like this one," Wild answered, as he reached over and touched Arietta's horse on the mane.

"Maybe I have. I'll bet I know who you are. Thunder! it's a wonder I didn't think of it afore."

"Well, who am I?" and the young deadshot looked at him smilingly.

"Ain't you Young Wild West?"

"You have guessed it right, stranger. Who are you?"

"My name is Catamount Dick; leastwise, that's the name I go by. So you have jest come around here lookin' up excitement an' adventure, Young Wild West?"

"You have got that exactly right, Catamount Dick."

"Well, I don't think you'll find it, so you may as well go right on to some other parts."

"I certainly will if something doesn't turn up between now and to-morrow morning. We can't afford to remain idle, you know. It's altogether too tiresome."

"I don't know what could possibly turn up between now an' to-morrow mornin'," and Catamount Dick shook his head as though he was trying to think of something that might.

"You can't never tell," Wild declared, as he turned his horse to ride down the hill. "There may be a very lively time between now and to-morrow morning. There must certainly be bad redskins hanging around here, and they very often make trouble, so the soldiers at the fort are kept busy for a while."

"There ain't nothin' like that around here, Young Wild

West. Old Fort Defiance is simply rottin' away by & grees. Injuns aint what they used to be, an' the soldiers over there ain't got ncthin' to do but to lay around an' drink an' sleep."

"It certainly is no place for us, then," and so saying the young deadshot rode on down the hill, followed by his sweet heart.

He waved his hand to the hunter, who answered it in a very friendly way, and then, without looking behind them again, Wild and Arietta rode on until the cabin was out of sight.

But they had succeeded beyond their expectations, and jubilant over the fact, they hastened to get back to the camp to report to Charlie, Jim and the girls.

"Little girl," our hero said, as they were nearing the camp at the fort, "I reckon that by to-morrow this time I'll have that chief the reward is offered for. I am pretty certain from the conversation we heard in the shanty that he can't be very far away."

"I feel sure that he isn't, Wild. Oh, yes, you'll catch him, all right. But it seems impossible almost that there can be such a thing as a gang of counterfeiters located in this wild part of the country."

"We know that such is the case, however."

"Yes, we know it all right. Still it don't seem reasonable."

"But it is, little girl, so there's no use in talking that way. I have a counterfeit half-dollar in my pocket now, and we saw more of it while looking through the cracks in the roof of that shanty. The redskin has a quantity of it, and when he comes around to-night I mean to get hold of a few of the coins."

"Do you mean to catch him and hold him a prisoner, Wild?"

"Certainly not. That would be spoiling it. We want to find out where Dog Foot and his gang are located. Then we'll get the whole bunch of them."

As they rode back to the camp, Captain Jackson stood waiting to greet them.

"Took a ride, eh?" he said, after he had saluted in military fashion.

"Yes, we thought we would take a ride around and see how the country looked."

"You didn't like it very much, I suppose?"

"No, not a great deal. But you can't expect much in this section of the country."

"When are you going to look for Dog Foot?"

"I think we'll get him about to-morrow some time."

"Is that so?" and the captain looked at him in surprise.

"I am confident of it," Wild declared. "I can't understand why you people have been unable to locate the gang of counterfeiters. Why, it seems to me that they ought to be cleaned out in a hurry."

"You talk as though you have discovered something."

"Do I? Well, I don't know. How could I discover anything in the short time that we have been here?"

"That's so. But why is it that you seem so confident?"

"Because it looks easy to me."

"Maybe certain things are easier to you than any one else, Young Wild West."

"If they are they shouldn't be. I understand that men both white and red have been arrested for passing spurious money. It would seem to me that something in the way of information could be gained by such a proceeding."

"But there hasn't been, though. The colonel has always run things, and I think if there is anything to be learned he would be the one to find it out. He's a pretty sharp sort of man, you know."

"I know he is. At least I think he is. But never mind, captain. I hope to capture Dog Foot before sunset to-morrow night. We'll see how near I come to doing it."

CHAPTER V.

THE DEN OF COUNTERFEITERS.

Catamount Dick watched Young Wild West and Arietta until they had disappeared from his view behind some rocks.

Then his eyes flashed and he gave a nod, muttered as he did so:

"Well, I reckon somethin' has got to be done. You can't fool me, Young Wild West. I've heard enough about yer to know that you're here for no good to me an' some others. The best thing to do is to git after you afore you git after

"I'm mighty sorry I sent that Injun away now. He'll git jest as sure as anything. It's too bad, but I reckon we kin find a way to fix things."

Into the log shanty he went, and after filling a whisky-bask from a demijohn he had standing in a corner, he picked up his rifle and went outside.

He closed the door, but made no attempt to fasten it. Around to the rear he made his way, and was soon climbing up the steep hill behind the shanty.

Once at the top he paused and looked toward the fort. He could see the boy and girl who had been talking to him a short time before riding on, and again the ugly gleam shone in his eyes.

"Spyin', that's what you're doin', Young Wild West. I know it jest as much as if I had been told all about it. All right. Wait till I see Dog Foot. I reckon he kin git enough Injuns together to fix you up all right. We'll wait an' see." Then he went out and soon struck a path which wound its way in zigzag fashion along the side of the mountain.

The old hunter walked rapidly, and it did not take him long to cover the distance of a mile.

When that was done he found himself going down hill again toward a deep ravine, through which a stream of water flowed.

Showing that he knew the way very well, he hardly stopped for a moment, but kept on down the rocky path until he reached the bottom of the descent.

There was not much in the way of vegetation growing at the sides of the ravine, but at the bottom where the ground was moist there was plenty of it.

Catamount Dick avoided this as much as possible, and when there was no other way of passing without disturbing the scrub and grass he stepped into the brook and went along until he found a good opening.

He must have proceeded in this way for a distance of nearly a quarter of a mile.

Then he went across the brook and was soon standing upon a large slab of rock that extended straight to the face of the rocky cliff.

He paused long enough to look up and down the ravine, and then after glancing upward, he gave a satisfied shake of the head and stepped into the niche.

It appeared to be a niche, we might say, but was really the entrance to a passage that ran underground.

The hunter turned sharply to the left, and then quickly found himself in darkness.

But he knew just what to do, and feeling along upon a rocky shelf that was at his left he found a lantern, which he was not long in lighting.

Then, as coolly as if he was simply going on a common errand, he went on through the passage and soon came to a series of rocky chambers that seemed to fill the space under the rocky cliffs for a great distance.

But it was not far the man proceeded now before he came to a chamber that was well lighted by a wide opening high above in the natural roof of rock.

There was no one there, but this did not seem to bother him in the least.

He extinguished the lantern, and placing it on the ground went on through an opening and then sounds came to his ears that were evidently familiar.

Pounding was going on, and occasionally a voice could be heard.

Catamount Dick gave a nod of approval, and passed on through the second chamber, only to enter one that was fitted up as a sort of workshop.

There was a long wooden bench running across one end of the chamber, which was nearly square, and upon this several pieces of machinery made of iron and steel could be seen.

Two men, their sleeves rolled above the elbows, were working at the bench, while sitting lazily upon a chair watching them was a full-blooded Indian, a long-stemmed pipe in his mouth.

Catamount Dick walked so softly that none of them saw him until he attempted to cross the level floor of rock.

The Indian was the first to hear him, and he turned with a start.

"Ugh!" he exclaimed. "Catamount Dick walks very easy. What the matter, Dick?"

"I reckon there's somethin' the matter, chief," was the reply, and the look on the man's face showed the redskin how well he meant it.

The two men at the bench ceased their work, and after nodding to the newcomer, waited to hear what he might say.

"Dog Foot," called Catamount Dick, as he proceeded to fill

his pipe, "you have heard tell of Young Wild West, haven't yer?"

"Ugh! Young Wild West paleface boy who shoots heap much straight."

"Yes, that's the one I mean. He's after us, Dog Foot. I reckon some Government man has got him to come here to run us down."

The chief looked at him in silence, his face never once changing its expression for fully half a minute.

Then he shrugged his shoulders and, rising to his feet, said:

"The paleface boy want the thousand dollars. He try to find Dog Foot."

"You kin bet your life that you're right in sayin' that, chief. I jest seen Young Wild West a little while ago. He come along by my shanty, an' he had a gal with him. A mighty good-lookin' gal, too."

"The paleface squaw who can shoot very straight, too," nodded Dog Foot. "She make fine squaw for me."

"She would make a fine squaw for any one, as far as that goes," declared the hunter. "But I don't know as any of us is lookin' for squaws jest now. We're hurryin' up to git all the stuff worked up we've got here so we kin git it away to some place where we kin git rid of it. If it wasn't that you're so confounded savin', I wouldn't have sent that redskin you call Slow Heel over to the fort to git rid of some bad money."

"You send Slow Heel to the fort?" asked the chief, looking keenly at the white man.

"Yes. You have been so mean in dividin' up the good money we've been takin' in that I reckoned I needed a little cash, so I sent him out to git some."

"You send Slow Heel to the fort. Then Young Wild West come."

"That's it, chief."

"If Young Wild West come to look for the bad money-makers he will ketch Slow Heel."

"That's jest as sure as anything."

"But Slow Heel no tell where he get the money," declared the chief, as though he was positive of it.

"You can't tell nothin' about that. He's been caught once afore, an' he managed to lie out of it. But this time he's got different ones to deal with. Young Wild West is here with his partners an' that gal what I seen with him. I've heard so much about 'em all that I'm inclined to think that we're goin' to have a lively time of it for a while. If we don't git Young Wild West he'll mighty sure git us. What you have got to do, Dog Foot, is to git a gang of redskins together an' wait for him when he comes sneakin' around this way. He's got to be put out of the way, an' that's all there is to it. They're a lot of lunkheads over at the fort, from the colonel down, an' we kin stay here till we git all our stuff worked up, an' maybe git rid of a lot more afore we strike out for some other place. But jest let Young Wild West have his way about it an' you'll see how soon we're all nabbed. I did think that runnin' a counterfeitin' game in this wild an' lonesome spot was all right, an' that nobody would ever ketch us. But all things come to an end, so I've heard say, an' I s'pose this ain't goin' to be nothin' different from other things."

"Me fix Young Wild West," declared the old chief, his dark eyes flashing murderously.

"Well, you want to git right at it, then. You know where you kin find as many as twenty Apaches who will stick to you an' do jest as you say."

"You think Young Wild West will come to-day?"

"I don't know. He may come to-day, or he may wait until to-night. Then, ag'in, he may wait until to-morrow. But he'll come, an' that's sartin'."

"But he no find."

"Don't you believe anything like that. He's only a kid, but he's been follerin' trails ever since he's been big enough to know the difference between the print of a moccasin an' a miner's boot. Young Wild West can't be fooled, chief."

"Ugh! If the palefaces ketch Dog Foot they will hang him. Dog Foot and his braves must kill the palefaces when they try to ketch him."

That was about all Catamount Dick wanted to hear, so he turned his attention to the two men on the bench and began questioning them as to the length of time it would require to finish up melting the stock of metal they had on hand.

One of them was not long in estimating that it would require at least thirty days, and that at the expiration of that time they would have something like a hundred thousand dollars worth of spurious coins to be disposed of.

"That will be a lot of stuff to git away," Dick said, with a shrug of the shoulders. "But we kin git plenty of horses, so when we make up our minds to move on down to the south we'll go all right. My idea is to go right over into Mexico. We kin fool the greasers with the money a whole lot easier than we kin the whites."

"Fool plenty of palefaces," spoke up the chief, a grin showing on his ugly countenance.

"Yes, I knew we have. I've done considerable of it myself, an' that's how I know. Jed Thomas, the storekeeper, is easy to fool, for one."

The two men returned to their work at the bench, and Catamount Dick sat down and puffed at his pipe placidly.

He looked about the rocky apartment, and after a rather lengthy silence, nodded to the chief and said:

"When you come to think of it, it's a great thing that we've done."

"Me do it all," declared the chief, proudly. "He," pointing to one of the men at work, "tell me how he make bad money. Dog Foot save his life, and Joe Divver thank him heap much. Then he tell how he make bad money and have to come many miles so he no be sent to prison."

"Yes, I know that part of it. You was shrewd enough to figure out how you could start a counterfeitin' place here an' make heaps of money. You done well, too, chief, an' there ain't no mistakin' it. You knowed where this big cavern was, an' it was you what caused it to be fitted up in proper shape. It's a mighty good hidin' place, an' since we've been in this business heaps of dollars, half-dollars an' quarters have been turned out. You're the brains of the whole shootin'-match, of course, but Joe Divver is responsible for the work."

"I was responsible for havin' the dies to make the coins with, anyhow," the man spoken of retorted, as he grinned at the hunter. "With them almost anybody could turn out money that looked like the real thing. All they have to do is to find some kind of metal that could be melted easy an' would harden up half decent. The chief figured that part of it out. Lead an' zinc an' a little ground glass all melted together an' strained, an' then run into the moulds, does the trick."

"Yes, I know, Joe. We ain't had much trouble in gittin' the metals we wanted, an' up till about a month ago we didn't have trouble in gittin' rid of about all the money we could turn out. But it's different now. They're on the watch all over this part of the country, an' a reward has been offered for the chief."

"A thousand dollars," Dog Foot observed, with a chuckle. "They no ketch me. When me go to the south me have my hair cut and wear clothes like the palefaces."

"Yes, that will be all right. But it will sorter spoil your locks, Dog Foot. When you have got your feathers an' paint on you sartainly are about the best-lookin' Injun I've ever seen. You kin knock spots out of Geronimo, or any of the rest of 'em, when it comes to looks."

This was pleasing to the redskin, for he arose from his chair and, drawing himself up to his full height, threw out his chest and pounded it with his fists.

This was his way of boasting about his physique, and looks, too, probably.

"Most likely you'll feel like puttin' on some of your war-paint, chief," went on Catamount Dick, looking rather serious. "Everything is quiet among the redskins in these here parts jest now, an' if you should happen to git about twenty bad ones together an' clean out Young Wild West an' his pard, things would be started up in a hurry. Cavalrymen would be swarmin' as thick as bees, an' there wouldn't be a day pass when there wouldn't be bullets hummin' through the air an' flattenin' against the rocks an' sich like."

"Dog Foot no want to make war on the palefaces. He want to make money and get rich. But if the palefaces come to ketch Dog Foot he will fight."

"I know that. But as I said a little while ago, you had better git ready for business right away. There ain't no tellin' how soon Young Wild West will be sneakin' around here. If any one is able to find this here place he kin do it. Mind you now, he didn't say that he had come here to hunt down the counterfeiters, but I know that's what he's here for. I ain't no fool, either, an' I kin read a man putty well when I see him. I kin read a boy, too, an' that's what I done to-day when Young Wild West stopped in front of my shanty with the yaller-haired gal."

"The yellow-haired maiden maybe will be Dog Foot's squaw."

"There you go ag'in. Thinkin' about gittin' married when you must have as many as half a dozen squaws livin' now."

"Dog Foot no got paleface squaw."

"An' you don't want any, either, in my opinion."

The Apache made no reply to this, but it was evident that he cared little or nothing for the hunter's opinion.

He smoked away until his pipe was empty, and then putting the stem from the bowl and dumping the ashes, he put it aside and showed that he was going to leave the cave.

Catamount Dick said nothing, but he knew pretty well that the chief was going to send word to the braves he was able to gather together at short notice, and that he would make preparations to catch Young Wild West and his partners if they came prowling around the place.

"I'm goin' back now, chief," Dick said, as he arose and picked up his rifle. "I've got a few traps to look after on the way. If I hear of anything I'll let yer know."

Dog Foot nodded, and then went on out of the chamber a way different from that which Catamount Dick had entered.

But the latter knew quite well that a number of horse boys belonging to the chief were stationed in an adjoining cave and that there was a wide opening from this into a hollow from which it would be easy to reach the trail after it had the pass a mile distant.

Close to this was a small village of Apaches, where the squaws and some of the older children made fancy articles to sell to the palefaces whenever they got the chance.

The bucks and braves did nothing but a little hunting, and were at the service of Dog Foot at any time he wanted them.

Well satisfied that everything would be all right to give Young Wild West a warm reception, Catamount Dick went on out by the way he had entered and was soon on the way back to his shanty.

CHAPTER VI.

HOP'S FIVE-DOLLAR JOKE.

"Well, boys," Young Wild West said, as he nodded to Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart after returning to the camp with Arietta, "I reckon we have got a little job on hand to-night. I think we can do more after dark than we could by day. We started out now. We found two who are connected with the gang of counterfeiters."

"What!" Cheyenne Charlie exclaimed, his eyes opening wide. "You found two of 'em, eh? You done it mighty quick, too, didn't you?"

"Well, I suppose there was a whole lot of luck in it, although a little information I got from the storekeeper was responsible for it. The hunter he spoke of is one of them, and the other is a dirty-looking redskin, whom no one would think capable of being in league with such a gang. He will be here to-night to sell whisky to the soldiers, and he will be well provided with bad money to give them change."

"We'll catch him easy, then," Jim Dart spoke up, with a smile.

"Yes, if we want to, Jim," the young deadshot answered quickly. "But I reckon we are not going to try to catch him. What I want to do is to go to the hunter's shanty after dark to-night and keep a watch on him. It will be somewhat strange if he doesn't leave it and go to the place where the bad money is being manufactured, or that some one from the place will come to him. If neither happens we won't make much headway. We have got to take the chance."

Knowing that there was no one there who could possibly be listening, Wild and Arietta related their experience to Charlie, Jim and the girls.

All were greatly interested, and they could not help congratulating the two upon the big start they had made toward the rounding up of the counterfeiters.

Hop Wah was now at the camp.

As usual he listened to everything that was said, but none of them tried to keep it from him, for they knew quite well that Hop could always be depended upon.

"Me likee go helpee ketchee un counterfeiters, Malar Wild," he said, when the young deadshot had finished talking upon the subject and was about to go and look to see how the horses were getting on. "Maybe me helpee you velly muchee."

"That's all right, Hop. I hardly think we will take you with us to-night. I am going to take Charlie and Jim with me. Perhaps we won't do a whole lot to-night, anyhow. You know as well as I do that the thing for us to do will be to find where the gang is located. That once done, the rest will be easy enough, and we can take our time about doing it."

"Me undelstandee, Misler Wild. But me likee go and see."

Wild knew very well that Hop was capable of proceeding with the utmost caution, for he had been with the party long enough to learn much in the way of woodcraft and was about as clever and stealthy as an old-time scout.

"If I make up my mind to let you go, Hop," the young deadshot said, after a pause, "you must understand perfectly well there is going to be no chance for you to have any fun. We are always looking for an opportunity to surprise a bunch of rascals whether they are whites or reds, by setting off your big crackers and other fireworks. But no such thing is that must happen to-night. We are simply going on a scouting expedition, as you might call it."

"Maybe me helpee you, Misler Wild."

"Perhaps, if we get into a bad fix. But we don't intend to do that to-night, Hop."

"You no knowee, Misler Wild. Maybe um counterfeeters vely muchee smartee."

"I haven't the least doubt but that there are one or two very smart ones among them. A redskin chief is at the head of the gang, so it is said, and I heard enough this afternoon to satisfy myself that this is the case. But there are redskins who are quite as clever as any one else, so there really is nothing so strange about it, after all. I'll think it over, and when we get ready to start I'll let you know whether you can go or not."

"Allee light, Misler Wild. Me be allee leddy. Me vely smartee Chinee. Helpee you vely muchee. Ketchee um counterfeeters and gittee um thousand dollee reward."

The Chinaman spoke as if he was well satisfied that he would be one of the party.

He proceeded to rattle off some more of his lingo, but Wild cut him short, and then, with a bland smile, the Chinaman went back to the camp.

"What have you been talkin' to Wild about?" the scout demanded, looking at him sharply. "Want to go with us to-night, I suppose?"

"Lat light, Misler Charlie. Me go, too, so be. Me helpee ketchee um counterfeeters."

"You won't go if I've got anything to say about it."

"Lat allee light. You no gottee something to say 'boutee. Misler Wild fixee lat."

The scout knew this was the truth, so he changed the subject.

"Where was you at dinner-time?" he asked.

"Me havee vely goodee timee. Play claw pokee; win plenty money, so be."

"Oh, I thought so. Who was you playin' with?"

"Me no tellee, Misler Charlie. Me plomise lat. Me havee plenty tanglefoot, too."

"Where did you git the tanglefoot?"

The Chinaman shook his head and grinned.

"If me tellee you lat maybe you tellee um colonel or Captain Jackson. Len somebody gittee in trouble."

"There is no use questioning him, Charlie," Jim observed, with a laugh. "If he has been gambling and has obtained whisky from some of the cavalymen, no doubt he has pronounced not to give them away. You can't blame him for it."

"Yes, I kin blame him, too. He ain't got no right to go around gittin' whisky when there ain't s'posed to be none of the fort."

"You talk as though you would like to have a little yourself, Charlie," Anna spoke up, looking at him rather sharply.

"Oh, I don't know, gal. I ain't in the habit of drinkin' very much, am I?"

"No, and it's a very good thing that you are not."

"I used to drink enough, though, afore we got married, didn't I?"

"So I have heard. But I am happy to say that you didn't keep it up."

"Well, gal," and the scout's face softened, "I told yer the way we got hitched up that I wasn't never goin' to git drunk again. I never have, an' I'm glad I'm able to say it. The time was when I didn't think no more of gittin' full of tanglefoot an' shootin' up a camp than I did of takin' my breakfast. But I s'pose I ain't to be blamed so much for it. I was brought up that way. I was born in old Cheyenne in the time when there was more tents than there was shanties here. It was a case of every one for himself, an' whisky an' gamblin' was the only things to be found in the way of amusement. But I've learned a whole lot since that, gal, an' when you say that I give up goin' on sprees an' raisin' questions you tell the truth. But you know, too, that once in

a while I feel as though I need a little drop of liquor, an' I take it. But I know how to handle it, gal."

"Maybe it would be better yet if you didn't touch it at all. There are Wild and Jim. They never have tasted liquor in their lives. I've heard them say so many times."

"They're tellin' the truth about that, too, I reckon. But that makes it mighty easy for 'em not to want to taste any of it. It's the taste what does the business, gal," and the scout chuckled as though he thought he had scored a great point.

"Misler Charlie likee tanglefoot allee light," Hop observed, keeping a watch upon the scout so he would not be able to seize him if he took the notion.

"If I liked it half as much as you do I'd be b'illin' drunk all the time, heathen," was the retort.

"Me no gittee dlunk. Misler Charlie. Me dlunk plenty, but no gittee dlunk. Me vely smartee Chinee. When me gittee velly diy and no gottee tanglefoot me makee some. Maybe you like havee lillee bit now. You gittee um bottle of water and me makee um water turn to tanglefoot."

"I'll bet you a dollar you can't do it."

As the scout said this he gave a sly wink at Jim and the girls.

Wild came along just then and he smiled when he saw that something in the way of a controversy was going on.

"What's the trouble now, Charlie?" he asked.

"Oh, we have just been talkin' about drinkin', Wild. I was remarkin' that I never got drunk since I've been married. I promised Anna I wouldn't, an' I've kept my word. Then Hop he puts in his jaw, an' now we've got a bet on. He's goin' to do a magic trick which is as old as the hills as far as we're concerned. I'm bettin' him a dollar he can't make a bottle of water turn into a bottle of whisky. I do feel as though I'd like to have a drink, an' I s'pose maybe it's worth a dollar to git it."

He winked again, Hop failing to catch him at it.

"Hop," said Wild, looking at the clever Chinese with a smile, "you know very well that we understand perfectly how you turn water into whisky. What is the use of trying it now?"

"Misler Charlie bettee me um dollee me no do it, Misler Wild," was the reply.

"And you want to win the dollar, is that it?"

"Lat light, Misler Wild."

"He's been winnin' a whole lot of dollars from some of the soldiers by playin' poker, Wild," the scout spoke up, as he happened to remember what Hop had been talking about previously.

"Is that so?"

"Yes, but he won't tell who they was. He says he promised 'em not to tell."

"Well, it's hardly likely that he won a great deal, for I have never seen many privates who had a great deal of money to lose. But I'll investigate about it and if I find out who the losers were I'll see to it that he returns the money to them. I'll ask Captain Jackson pretty soon."

"Lat light, Misler Wild. You askee Captain Jackson. He tellee you allee 'boutee, so be," the Chinaman said, a twinkle in his almond-shaped eyes.

The young deadshot caught on instantly.

"I reckon I'll speak to him about it, Hop," he said, looking keenly at him.

The Chinaman shrugged his shoulders and turned away, evidently not caring to say any more about it.

Later in the afternoon Wild met the officer.

"Captain," he said, as though he had just thought of something, "we have a Chinaman who is always getting mixed up in some sort of an affair. I have reason to believe that he has been gambling with some of the men connected with the fort. I also am pretty certain that he got whisky from some source. Have you any idea about this?"

Jackson's face turned red.

"Why, no, I haven't, Young Wild West," he answered, after hesitating a moment. "Have you questioned him about it?"

"Yes. He admits that he won some money playing draw poker, and also that he got whisky somewhere. But he will not tell who the parties were he obtained it from."

"Oh! Pretty cute Chinaman, that."

"Very much so, Captain Jackson. I suppose you play poker now and then?"

"Not with a Chinaman," and the captain forced a laugh.

"I suppose there is nothing to prevent the men from gambling, anyway."

"No, of course not. If they feel disposed to risk their money and lose it, so long as they don't do it openly, it's all

right, I presume. But say, Young Wild West, what do you intend to do about the counterfeiters?"

"I haven't anything further to say other than what I have already told you. I may do a little scouting to-night."

"You still feel that you are going to capture the chief before to-morrow night, I suppose?"

"I certainly do, captain."

"I wish you luck. If you succeed you will have done something that no one around here has been able to accomplish. I'll admit that I have my doubts about it."

"I don't blame you for that," and the young deadshot laughingly walked away.

Along toward the close of the afternoon some of the cavalrymen went out upon an open stretch and began to do some athletic stunts.

Quite a few of them were experts, and our friends enjoyed it not a little.

One young fellow was quite a jumper.

He declared that he could jump over any team of horses there was to be found, with a running start of fifty feet.

But this was no great feat, after all, though there was not another man connected with the fort who could do it.

Some of the men seemed to think that Wild ought to show what he could do in athletics.

But the boy declined, saying:

"While I may be pretty good at that sort of thing, I don't practice enough to be an expert. I do keep my hand in at shooting, however, and I always do my best to remain cool, no matter what happens. I am succeeding pretty well in both, and I mean to continue persevering."

This did not satisfy one of the cavalrymen, who was second in the contest of jumping.

"You don't think you could jump over the team of horses, then?" he said, after a short silence.

"Oh, yes, I do, but I'm not going to try it just now. The fact is I am not in that sort of humor."

"Maybe the other fellow would like to try," and the cavalryman nodded at Jim Dart.

"No," Jim answered, quickly.

At this juncture Hop, who was listening as usual, stepped up and, with a bland smile, bowed to the fellow and said:

"Me bettee you fivee dollee you no jumpee ten feet, so be."

"What's that, heathen?" the cavalryman spoke up, in a sneering way. "You'll bet I can't jump ten feet?"

"Lat light. You wantee bet?"

"Yes, I'll bet you, if you have got five dollars to put up."

"Me gottee plenty money. Me makee lillee money to-day when me play dlaw poken, so be."

It happened that two of the Chinaman's victims were present, and they both turned red.

But the cavalryman wanted to win the five dollars.

However, before he put it up he had it understood that he was to have a run to give him a good start when the jump was made.

Hop was quite willing to this, more than willing, it seemed. Cheyenne Charlie offered to hold the stakes, and the cavalryman proceeded to mark off a line to jump from.

But Hop stepped up and stopped him.

"Me no say where you jumpee," he protested. "Me fixee lat."

"Well, any place will suit me. I'll show you if I can't jump ten feet with a running start. Why, I can go fifteen without half trying."

"Allee light. Me bettee you no jumpee ten feet, so be. You comee with me."

The cavalryman evinced a certain degree of uneasiness, but followed Hop to the edge of the brook.

The Chinaman, always on the alert to play a practical joke and cause others to laugh while he enjoyed it himself at the same time, had thought quickly, and he was going to make the cavalryman leap into the brook in order to win the five dollars.

He selected a spot where the water was at least waist-deep, a good-sized pool being there.

With his heel he drew a line within a foot of the edge of the water, and then, turning to the man, said:

"You jump ffrom here."

A laugh went up from all hands, for every one but the cavalryman took it as a good joke.

He got very angry.

"See here," he said, "you're tryin' to make a fool of me, heathen."

"Lat allee light. You jumpee ten feet or me win um fivee dollee."

"You do, eh?" and turning to the scout he demanded money he had put up.

"Not much," Charlie said, coolly. "A bet is a bet. I have either got to jump ten feet or you lose the money. The wasn't nothin' said about where you was to jump from, ahead now. Be a man or a monkey."

The fact was, Charlie did not have much of an opinion of the fellow, anyway, for he had listened to his boastful of talking until he had tired of it.

"Trying to skin me out of my money, I guess. It seems though you put up a job on purpose to do it."

"Don't you say that I'm tryin' to skin yer, or I'll wipe the ground with yer, even if you are wearin' the uniform of a soldier," the scout retorted, losing his head right at the start, as he usually did.

"Easy, Charlie," cautioned Young Wild West. "We don't want to have any trouble here. This fellow is a little bit headed, that's all. I reckon he'll make the jump rather than lose the five dollars."

"Go on and jump," one of the cavalrymen called out, jeeringly. "You ain't afraid of a little water, are you?"

"I'm not afraid of anything," was the hot retort, while the eyes of the man flashed.

"Jump, then," spoke up Wild. "What are you waiting for?"

"You don't think I'm afraid to jump in the water, do you, Young Wild West?"

"No, I don't. But I think you'll be a fool if you do."

"What you think is one thing, and what I think is another. I haven't as much money as you have. That five dollars is as good to me as it is to the Chinaman. I'll jump, anyhow."

A derisive laugh sounded, and the cavalryman was ready to fight any one just then.

But it seemed that no one was willing to accommodate him, even though there were perhaps several there who could easily have given him more than he wanted.

He talked away angrily for about five minutes, and then stripping off his coat he declared that he was going to make the jump.

No one objected to this, so, taking a short run, he made the leap, landing easily ten feet from the bank into the water.

There was a loud splash and he was wet to the skin, and then there was more laughing, of course.

Hop's victim came out of the water, and when Charlie handed him the stake money he picked up his coat and made a bee-line for the barracks.

"Lat too bad," said Hop, shaking his head, sadly. "Me allee samee losee um fivee dollee."

"But I reckon you won more than that from some of the rest of 'em?" Cheyenne Charlie answered, with a grin.

"Lat light, Misler Charlie. Me velly muchee satisfy, so be."

CHAPTER VII.

WILD AND HIS PARTNERS FAIL TO RETURN.

Supper-time came around, and after the meal had been finished the sun went down and darkness, which comes quickly in that part of the country, began to gather.

"Now then, boys," Young Wild West said, nodding to the two partners, "I reckon we'll get ready to take a ride to the hunter's log shanty."

"Me go, too, Misler Wild," the ever-ready Chinaman spoke up, for he was standing within a few feet of them, no doubt waiting for the young deadshot to set out.

"All right," was the reply. "But we'll wait until it gets good and dark."

Hop was delighted, and he snapped his fingers at the scout, whom he knew was opposed to his going, laughing at the same time.

"Et," the young deadshot said, turning to his sweetheart. "I reckon we'll leave it to you to do a little watching to-night. If that redskin comes around here, keep an eye on him. But don't let on that you know that he's one of the gang of counterfeiters."

"I know just what to do, Wild. You can depend on it that I'll not say a word," the girl replied.

A few minutes later Wild and his partners were ready to leave.

They had hardly mounted their horses when Hop was in the saddle, too, and then turning off to the right, so they would not let any one know where they were heading for, they soon disappeared from view.

Arietta was proud of the fact that she had something to

"Now, then," she said, smiling at Anna and Eloise, "I am going to be a spy with a will. I think I'll start out right now and try and locate the Indian who intends to sell the whisky here to-night."

Neither Anna nor Eloise would have cared to do a thing like that, but they knew pretty well the ways of Young Wild West's sweetheart, and they merely nodded to show that they thought it was all right for her to go ahead.

The girl knew the direction the Indian would come from, and a few minutes later she stole away in the darkness and made her way around to the trail, and finding a convenient place to hide herself from any one who might come along, she lay down upon a rock to wait.

It seemed that she had not got there a minute too soon, for she had barely got herself in a comfortable position when she heard the sounds made by an approaching horse.

Peering from behind a rock she soon was able to discern the outlines of a horse and rider.

The horse was at a walk.

But it did not take her long to recognize the rider as an Indian.

He carried quite a burden with him, and it happened that he stopped within a dozen feet of her.

She saw him tie the horse to a tree, and then proceed to take something from its back.

The girl was not long in making out that what he had brought with him were stone jugs.

Where he got the whisky from neither she nor any of our hands had any idea.

But they did not care.

They knew that the mission of the redskin was to sell the whisky to the cavalymen and work off as much as possible of the spurious money he had with him.

"It's too bad Hop went with them," the girl thought, as a smile flitted over her face. "If he were here now I'm sure I would think of a way to play a joke on the Indian."

She was right in thinking this way, for when he had unloaded the whisky he had brought to the fort the Indian set the jugs on the ground and then started on foot toward the stockade.

The girl decided to wait there, for there was really no need of following him, since he was bound to come back as soon as he found a customer.

After a wait of perhaps ten minutes she heard footsteps, and then saw the Indian returning with four men whom she easily made out to be cavalymen.

Reaching the spot where the horse and jugs were, the rascally redskin at once started to do business.

The jugs held about two quarts apiece, and he demanded six dollars per jug.

The first man to buy gave him a ten-dollar gold-piece and received what he thought to be silver in exchange.

The next man had the right amount, so the Indian did not make anything extra by him.

But the other two received change, for they did not have the right amount.

With the whisky they had purchased the four stole away, no doubt to reach the barracks and hide what they did not want to drink immediately.

The redskin sat down and lighted a pipe, smoking away in perfect content, while the girl, a short distance away, watched him.

She had heard enough of the conversation to feel sure that there would be more of the cavalymen to come and purchase the whisky.

This proved to be the case, for in less than fifteen minutes a uniformed man appeared.

The redskin had but eight jugs left, and the cavalryman, who must have been acting for some of the rest, bargained with him to purchase the whole lot.

"I'll give you four dollars a jug. That makes thirty-two dollars," he said.

"No," retorted the redskin. "You give five dollars and me all."

Then there was quite a little wrangling, and Arietta could not help smiling at the craftiness displayed by the redskin. Finally he gave in, however, and the deal was made.

"You'll get your money as soon as the stuff is delivered," the cavalryman said. "There's a man waiting there with it. We have got to help me carry it."

The redskin agreed to this, and, dividing the jugs between them, they promptly set out through the darkness.

They had just about time to reach the stockade when con-

fused voices rang out and Arietta knew that something had gone wrong.

She quickly left her place of concealment and ran through the dark in the direction of the stockade.

As she neared the spot she saw as many as a score of men moving about as though excited over something.

Getting a little closer she realized right away what had taken place.

The redskin had been caught.

"I wonder what Wild will say to this?" the girl thought, shaking her head. "This may spoil his plans somewhat. But it can't be helped. I think the man who came last was sent purposely by some one who had an inkling that the Indian was here. I'll get a little closer and try and find out what they are talking about."

This she did, and from what she could pick up of the conversation of the few who remained while the redskin was being led away she could understand that a scheme had been laid to catch the rascally fellow.

She heard one man say that so much dealing in whisky had been going on that the colonel had appointed certain ones to be continually on the watch.

Two men went back and soon came in with the Indian's horse, which was promptly corralled.

Then Arietta made her way back to the camp and told Anna and Eloise what had happened.

She had just about finished telling the story when the colonel's orderly appeared.

"Colonel Beardsley would like to see Young Wild West," he said.

"Wild isn't here now," Arietta answered, quickly.

"Do you know where he is?"

"That I cannot say. But I think he has gone out to try and find out something about the gang of counterfeiters."

"That is what the colonel wishes to see him about, I am quite certain."

"Suppose I go with you to the colonel?"

"I would have to first find out if he wishes to receive you."

"Please do so, then."

The orderly saluted, and quickly retired.

In a few minutes he came back, followed by the colonel himself, who very graciously doffed his hat, not forgetting the military salute at the same time.

"Young Wild West isn't here, I see," the colonel said, as the orderly promptly retired.

"No, sir. He has gone out in search of the counterfeiters."

"Ah! We have captured one of them, I believe."

"Yes, I know," and Arietta nodded and smiled.

"You know! How is that?"

"Before he left the camp Wild told me to be on the watch for a redskin who was coming here to-night to dispose of whisky to those of the men at the fort wishing to purchase it. This Indian was to have counterfeit money with him, which he intended to give out as change in case he had to make it."

"Great Scott!" Colonel Beardsley exclaimed, looking in surprise at the girl.

Since the redskin had been caught, Arietta had quickly decided to let the colonel know more than he could otherwise have learned.

"So Young Wild West knew the redskin was coming here to-night, eh? How did he find that out?"

"That is something I am not at liberty to tell you, colonel. Perhaps he will tell you all about it when he gets back."

"Yes, of course. Excuse me for asking the question. This is what I call wonderful. So Young Wild West made the discovery that the redskin was to appear and that he was to have counterfeit money with him? Well, that makes it certain that we haven't made a mistake this time. The same rascal was arrested once before for passing bad money here at the settlement. He squirmed out of it by pleading his ignorance. But this time he'll stay in the guard-house until the whole matter is settled."

Then he talked on, doing his best to learn from Arietta how the discovery was made.

But she evaded all the hints and questions, and finally the colonel left the camp and went back to consult with the officers under him.

"Girls," Arietta said, laughing, "I think I have offset him somewhat. I am glad of it. Perhaps I shouldn't have told him that we knew the redskin was coming. But I couldn't help it. I just wanted to see how surprised he would be."

"Probably he now thinks that he is not quite as clever as he believed himself to be, even though he no doubt laid the plans to catch the wily redskin," Anna observed. "Certainly

he didn't know for sure that he was coming, but when you told him that Wild knew he was coming and that you were appointed to watch him he did not know what to say."

There was nothing for them to do but to remain in the camp, so Arietta settled down, satisfied to do so.

Something like an hour later the orderly appeared again to learn whether or not the young deadshot and his partners had returned.

"The colonel seems to be anxious," he said, as though he was admitting something he should not. "He wants to see Young Wild West badly."

"He will have to wait until he returns, that's all I can say," Arietta retorted.

Again the orderly went away.

From that time on the minutes dragged slowly, and at length another hour had passed.

The girls were beginning to think it about time Wild and his partners should return.

But they were not at all worried about it, for it might be that they were compelled to wait in order to carry out their plans.

But when still another hour had elapsed and there were no signs of them, they began to grow uneasy.

Finally it went along until midnight, and then, really alarmed at their protracted absence, Arietta declared that a search should be made for them.

But Anna and Eloise managed to persuade her to give up such an idea, and in case they did not return by morning, then the search should be made.

They retired along about two o'clock, but it was little sleep that any of them got.

At daylight they were all up and stirring, and when the sun showed itself above the jagged mountain line to the east, Arietta declared that she was going to have an audience with the colonel right away.

"There's one thing certain, girls," she declared, shaking her head slowly. "They have run into danger, and perhaps they may have been killed, for all we know. They have a desperate lot to deal with, I'm sure. I must find them."

"It seems strange that all four of them should be caught by the villains," Anna answered, as if she doubted the possibility of such a thing. "But you had better see the colonel and have a detachment go out in search of them."

"I'll do so at once," the girl retorted, and after she had visited the brook and treated her face and hair in the usual fashion she did every morning, she left Wing, the cook, preparing the breakfast and hurried straight for the colonel's quarters.

She knocked loudly upon the door, and after some little time it was opened by an orderly.

"I wish to see Colonel Beardsley at once," Arietta said, in a very business-like way.

"It's too early, miss," was the reply.

"No, it isn't. I must see him."

"Well, I—er—don't know," stammered the man.

"Who is it?" a voice called out from an adjoining room.

"The young lady you were talking with at Young Wild West's camp last night, colonel," was the quick reply, while the face of the orderly lighted up as if by magic.

"Very well. Tell her to have the kindness to wait. I'll be out as soon as possible."

It was not a very long wait before the colonel appeared. "Haven't returned yet!" he exclaimed, when she told him how Wild and his two partners had failed to come back to the camp. "Why, something must be done right away. Perhaps they have met the counterfeiters and have got into trouble."

"That's what I think, colonel," the girl answered, coolly. "What I would like to have you do is to send a detachment of cavalry right away. I'll go with them and act as a scout."

"You!" and the colonel looked at her in amazement.

"Yes, colonel. It will not be the first time I have acted in that capacity. I'll find Wild and his partners, and the Chinaman, too. We must not forget him, you know, for he is human, like the rest of us."

"Oh, one of the Chinamen went with him, eh? I suppose Young Wild West knows his own business, though," he added, with a shake of the head. "But I really hope that nothing has happened."

"So do I, colonel. But we can't tell what may have happened. How soon must I be ready?"

"In five minutes, miss. But have you had your breakfast?"

"No."

"Get it, then. A few minutes more will certainly make no difference."

The girl thought this to be good advice, so she declared that she would be ready in half an hour, and he promised to have a detachment of twenty men ready to accompany her in search of Young Wild West.

CHAPTER VIII.

WILD IS TRAPPED.

Young Wild West did not strike the trail leading to the shanty that was occupied by Catamount Dick until a distance of a mile and a half had been covered.

If he had struck it a little sooner he would surely have met the redskin with his jugs of whisky.

But the young deadshot wanted to avoid such a meeting anyhow, and he kept a watch as he rode along with his partners and the Chinaman not far behind, so he might have time to prevent such a meeting, if the Indian happened to come along.

The four rode on, and it was not very long before they saw the glimmer of a light on the side of the hill close to the mouth of the pass.

Wild knew it must surely come from the shanty, for he had located the place well in his mind before leaving it with his sweetheart that afternoon.

"There it is, boys," he said, as he brought the sorrel steed to a halt and pointed to the right. "I reckon Catamount Dick must be at home."

"That's where the shanty is, eh?" Jim asked, as he took a look.

"Yes, there's no mistake about it. That light comes from Catamount Dick's shanty."

"Maybe the redskin ain't started for the fort yet, Wild," Cheyenne Charlie suggested. "He might be in the shanty."

"That is probable," was the reply. "But I have an idea that he went some time ago, and is now doing business with the soldiers at the fort. But never mind. We are all right now, anyhow. We'll find a place a little closer to leave the horses, and then we'll see who is inside the shanty."

They let the horses go on until they were within a couple of hundred feet of the log structure on the side of the hill.

They could see the light better now, for at first it had been obscured from their view by the branches of a tree that grew close to it.

It was not a very bright light, to be sure, but was about the same as might be expected to be found in such a place.

Probably it came from a lantern or a smoky oil lamp.

Anyhow, it lighted the way for our hero and his companions, serving as a sort of beacon, so to speak.

Feeling sure of finding more about the counterfeiters and possibly locating their den, the young deadshot started cautiously up the hill after the horses had been left where there was no chance of them being seen should any one pass up or down the trail.

Charlie came next, and he was followed by Jim and Hen, the latter a little in the rear.

Delighted at the prospect of playing a part in the adventure that he was certain was sure to come, the clever Chinaman marched along, treading as carefully as did those who preceded him.

Cautiously they all made their way upward, and in a very short time they paused within a few feet of the shanty.

They all listened, but could not hear a sound.

"Stay right here, boys, and lie low," our hero whispered. "I'm going to have a peep inside."

They all nodded, but Wild did not see them, for he started as soon as he spoke, and carefully made his way until he reached the window through which the light shone.

The lower part was about on a line with his shoulders, so he could easily look in by standing upright.

But before doing this he placed his ear close to the end of the building and listened.

Presently he heard some one moving about.

Then he took the risk of peeping through the opening, which contained no sash, but was partly covered by a piece of blanket in lieu of a curtain.

The young deadshot got a good view of Catamount Dick, who was just putting on his hat as though he was going out.

"Ah!" thought the boy, "I reckon we didn't get here any too soon. Now all we have got to do is to follow the sneaking coyote and see where he goes. It may be that he will get his horse and ride on toward the fort to meet the redskin when he returns. But there's a chance of his going to the

quarters of the gang. That's what I want to see him for the quicker this business is disposed of the better I like it."

The villainous hunter picked up a couple of bear-traps, and taking his rifle went to the door and opened it.

Having done this, he turned back and extinguished the light which came from a lantern.

"Going to set traps, is he?" the watching boy muttered. "Well, I suppose he has got to put up a bluff in that way, anyhow. He is supposed to earn his living by hunting and trapping, and he must do a little of it to keep away from suspicion. All right, Catamount Dick. You go ahead. We'll see you."

Then came the man, closing the door after him.

Wild knew his partners and the Chinaman would surely surmount his form, for there was enough light from the lantern to enable them to do that.

He waited at the end of the shanty until he heard him talking away, and then he stole noiselessly around and joined the others in waiting.

"You saw which way he went, boys, didn't you?" Wild said, in a whisper.

"I reckon we did," the scout retorted, quickly. "He headed right up the hill back of the shanty."

"Come on, then. We must follow him. Hop, you be very careful, and don't make the least sound."

"Allee light, Misler Wild," was the reply. "Me be velly careful, so be. Me velly smartee Chinees."

"Never mind how smart yer are," whispered the scout. "Just keep that to yourself. This ain't no time to be talkin' back, anyhow."

"Allee light, Misler Charlie. You no talker, len."

The scout might have made another retort, but Wild checked him by touching him upon the shoulder.

Then the young deadshot led the way past the shanty to the hill behind it.

Dark as it was he had no difficulty in finding a way to the top.

As he reached the top he heard footsteps a short distance ahead.

They were receding, too, as he well knew.

Well satisfied that there would be no danger of the hunter catching them, he went on ahead, treading without a sound.

Catamount Dick was certainly not taking any precautions to avoid being heard, for he went right along, now and then kicking a stone and sending it rolling over the rocky ground. Across a level stretch he made his way, and those following could see him quite distinctly.

Presently he turned to the right and went down into a hollow, where there was quite some vegetation, since a stream of water flowed through it.

Once he disappeared from view the four ahead all came to halt at the edge of the hollow.

They could hear Catamount Dick moving about below, and they took it for granted that he must be setting a trap.

This was undoubtedly the case, for in a very few minutes he came back and our friends barely had time to conceal themselves behind some adjacent rocks.

He still had one of the traps, so this meant that he would go to another place at least.

Where he might go after that could only be conjectured. Catamount Dick strode on, humming snatches of some tune he had learned in days long gone by, and this satisfied the young deadshot that he had no thought of being followed.

But that was where Young Wild West made a mistake, as he will be learned later on.

The hunter continued on for about a quarter of a mile, and when he set the other trap, those following him waiting until he had done so.

Then Catamount Dick set out straight for the headquarters of the counterfeiters.

He walked rapidly now, and the distance not being great, he soon was at the mouth of the passage leading into the bowels of caves.

But instead of going in by the narrow entrance, he turned a little to the left and climbed the rocky cliff.

Having reached the top, he moved quickly to a narrow crevice, and then, picking up a stone, permitted it to drop downward.

When he heard the thud as the stone struck the ground somewhere quite a distance below him, he gave a nod of satisfaction, and then boldly started back the way he had come. This move was entirely unexpected by Young Wild West and his companions, and when they saw him coming back they were just starting to ascend the cliff.

But they quickly hid themselves from view, and Catamount Dick came on down, passing within a very few feet of them.

He went in close to the rocky wall then and strode along as if he was in a hurry, until he came to the mouth of the passage.

The next instant he disappeared from view.

Wild and his partners were watching with the eyes of a cat just then.

They all knew that he either had gone into some sort of opening, or else had turned an angle in the cliff.

The thing to do was to find out which of the two it was.

Motioning those with him to remain where they were, Wild crept back to the right, behind some rocks, and then was not long in moving around until he was exactly in front of the place where the man had last been seen.

There was a slight angle there, but as the cliff ran along almost evenly for over a hundred feet beyond that point, and nothing could be seen of the hunter, he knew he must have entered a cave or passage.

Without letting his partners know what he intended to do, the young deadshot crept softly through the darkness, and the next minute he found the black opening.

"Ah!" he muttered, under his breath. "I'm pretty close to the finish now. A cave, eh? Quite a snug place for a gang of counterfeiters to pursue their work, I reckon. But they won't be at it much longer, I'm certain. I reckon I'll venture inside and look for a light."

He listened for a few seconds and, hearing nothing, stepped boldly into the dark passage.

Then it was that something happened that he had not bargained for.

Two pairs of hands suddenly seized him, gripping him vice-like, and before he could even utter a cry of warning to those outside, another hand was pressed hard over his mouth, while still another gripped him by the throat, almost choking him.

It was but natural that he should struggle to free himself, but he soon found that he had three strong men to deal with, and when he found himself being borne away through the darkness he gave it up, realizing that he had been caught napping, and that he had better preserve his strength until a more opportune moment arrived.

His captors chuckled and laughed as they hurried on.

Suddenly one of them gave a low whistle, and then they stopped, holding their prisoner tightly.

Wild heard the sounds of approaching footsteps, and then a light suddenly appeared.

"We've got one of them," the fellow who was gripping Wild by the right arm said, in a low tone of voice. "The rest is outside waitin' for their turn."

It was Catamount Dick who said this.

Wild recognized his voice instantly.

The grip on his throat had been relaxed somewhat, so he was able to breathe.

But the hand was still pressed over his mouth.

"Good!" came the reply from the fellow who had appeared with the light. "Which one is it?"

"Young Wild West," one of the others retorted, taking care to speak in a voice that was very low.

"Better yet. Fetch him on back to the chief. He's anxious to see the inside of the counterfeiters' den, I s'pose."

Wild had never heard the voice of the man who spoke, so he had no idea who it could be.

But that made little or no difference.

Through into the rocky apartment in which the big bench was located Young Wild West was carried in a helpless condition.

There was a bright light there, for the counterfeiters needed it to play their villainous trade.

"Bind and gag him, boys," said Catamount Dick. "I reckon Dog Foot will be mighty glad to see him when he gets back. We'll keep him until he comes, for it wouldn't do to put an end to him afore that time."

This was pleasing to the ears of the boy prisoner, for he knew there would be a good chance of his making an escape if he was given sufficient time.

One of the men did the tying and gagging, and when he declared that it was all right the young deadshot was pushed into a chair.

"Well, Young Wild West," Catamount Dick said, a gleam of triumph in his eyes, "you thought you was mighty smart, didn't you? I figured it that you would come sneakin' around to-night, an' I laid a trap for yer. I was layin' low, watchin' for yer to come, an' when you rode up an' left your horses I waited until I was sure it was you. Then I sneaked back to

my shanty in a hurry. I had a way of gittin' in by crawlin' under, so I didn't have to open the door, you see. I reckon you'll admit that I'm putty clever, won't yer?"

Wild could not answer, and so made no effort to do so."

"Your two pardns an' the Chinees will be fetched in putty soon, or else they'll git killed, 'cause Dog Foot an' eight or ten bad redskins is hidin' close by. One of the redskins was here, an' I climbed to the top of the cliff an' dropped a stone through a hole. That was the signal for him to go out an' tell the chief that you was around, while at the same time it let them what was waitin' here know that I wanted 'em to meet me at the entrance right away. It worked fine, Young Wild West, an' I'm proud to tell yer about it, 'cause I figured it all out myself."

Then the villain laughed, showing his delight at the success of his scheme, while the young deadshot could do nothing but sit there in silence.

CHAPTER IX.

CATAMOUNT DICK'S SCHEME AMOUNTS TO NAUGHT.

Cheyenne Charlie, Jim Dart and Hop Wah waited for fully five minutes without saying anything or hearing from Young Wild West.

Then they began to wonder where he was.

All three knew his purpose when he crept along among the rocks, and they had even seen him as he stepped up to the opening.

But they did not know the opening was there, of course, and when Wild disappeared they were not sure that he had gone into such a place.

But when he failed to show up they began to grow anxious, and finally the scout gave Dart a nudge and whispered:

"I reckon Wild must have found some sort of hidin'-place, Jim."

"It looks that way," was the reply. "He's gone on in it if he has."

"I reckon so."

"Well, why don't he come an' let us know about it, then?"

"Wait a while, Charlie. You're too anxious."

"Yes, I know I am. I want to get at the sneakin' coyotes. That galoot we was watchin' disappeared right where we seen Wild go, an' we ain't seen any of 'em since. That means that Wild is sartainly followin' him somewhere, an' that it's through a passage or in a cave or somethin' of the kind."

Dart made no reply to this, but kept watch.

Hop crouched upon the ground, not opening his mouth.

There was nothing he could think of to suggest, so that was undoubtedly the reason.

Another five minutes slipped by, and then just as Charlie, who could no longer remain inactive, was about to get upon his feet to go and investigate, the sounds caused by a stone rolling down among the rocks close at hand came to the ears of the watching trio.

Instantly they were on the alert, their eyes turned in the direction the sound came from.

Shadowy forms suddenly appeared from behind the rocks, and there were so many of them that Charlie and Jim realized instantly that there was real trouble before them now.

Neither of them had brought their rifles with them, not thinking it worth while to do so in the darkness.

But they were armed well enough, for each had a brace of revolvers.

Hop had his big, old-fashioned pistol, too, and no doubt might succeed in putting up quite a scare, even though he did no damage with the weapon.

With something else to hold their attention, neither of them looked the other way now, but waited to see what would happen next.

Nearer came the shadowy forms, and in the starlight they quickly made them out to be Indians, almost nude and apparently ready to fight.

One of the figures wore the fancy head-dress of a chief, too, and it struck Charlie and Jim right away that he might be Dog Foot, for whom the reward of a thousand dollars was offered.

But why was it that such a party should be there at that time?

This was somewhat puzzling to them.

It seemed as though the newcomers were aware of the

presence of the three, and that they were prepared to upon them and treat them to a surprise.

When Jim Dart fairly understood this it occurred to him right away that the hunter had led them into a trap.

But he never once thought that Wild was at that moment a captive in an adjacent cave.

"Charlie," he whispered, "those fellows have been up to us. I think I understand it now. When that rascal a hunter went to the top of the cliff he must have sign in some way to the redskins. Then he came down and into a cave. But Wild will fool them yet, for he has fooled him, you can be sure."

"Right yer are, Jim, an' we'll fool them redskins direct see if we don't."

Then the Indians who were advancing so cautiously, suddenly disappeared from view behind a pile of rocks, and was less than a hundred feet from them.

But it was but a few seconds before they appeared again and they were now upon all fours and creeping along in treacherous fashion common to their race.

Hop Wah had drawn his pistol without being advised to do so, and he stood ready to send a shower of colored upon the advancing rascals.

If this did nothing else it would light up the scene, and would be sure to momentarily terrorize the redskins.

He knew that as well as anything.

Charlie and Jim saw him ready to shoot, and both hid their heads approvingly.

The fact was, as might as well be stated right now, Catamount Dick had told the truth when he said a trap had been prepared for Young Wild West and his partners.

Not satisfied with what he said to the chief, the villain had gone back to the secret rendezvous of the counterparty again shortly before night.

He found Dog Foot there, attired in the finery his partner called for and with his war-paint on.

Assuring the chief that undoubtedly Young Wild West would try to spy upon them that night, he got him interested enough to guarantee to have a few redskins who were willing to do his bidding on hand after darkness set in.

Then it was quite easy to arrange to lead our hero to the spot, for Catamount Dick was rather clever at fixing up schemes.

The chief listened to him and gave in to everything he said, and the result was that Catamount Dick had gone to his cabin to watch for the approach of any one who might come from the direction of the fort, and then lead them to the trap.

It appeared his plan had succeeded admirably.

Young Wild West had already been lured into the trap and was a captive, awaiting the return of the chief to the death sentence.

The redskin who had been inside with the three men, and with Catamount Dick, constituted the membership of the band, easily found the chief and his braves, and they had once made their way around to the foot of the cliff, for the purpose of pursuing the intruders and making them prisoners.

It was not their attention to shoot them down, for the savage instinct that controlled Dog Foot to a great extent had come upon him with full force, and he wanted to keep the palefaces alive and punish them by death in some way consistent with the old-time beliefs of his race.

Thinking that they had a sure thing of it, the Indians were not long in creeping toward the spot where Cheyenne Charlie, Jim Dart and Hop Wah were in waiting.

The fact that Young Wild West had been captured enraged Dog Foot not a little, so he did not hesitate to lead the way himself.

Nearer and nearer they got to the rocks behind which the three were crouching.

When they got quite close, Cheyenne Charlie could bear no longer, for he could see the glint of tomahawks and other weapons in the starlight.

He gave Jim a nudge, and then throwing up his revolver called out:

"Halt! Down yer go, redskins."

His revolver spoke three times in quick succession, and Jim Dart promptly joined in the firing.

Bang! bang!

Hop Wah's big pistol belched forth a streak of fire and four of the redskins were seen to turn and run for their lives.

Two alone remained there, so confused that they failed

away, and apparently did not seem to know which way to go.

But two more shots brought them to the ground, and then Charlie bounded forward, yelling himself hoarse.

"Hip hi!" shouted Hop Wah, and then instead of following the scout, he turned and ran to the spot where he had seen Wild disappear from view.

At that very moment a man came rushing out. He was followed by another, and, seeing them, Hop did not hesitate to fire a shot almost directly in their faces.

The bright flash that came from the revolver lit up the scene for the fraction of a second, and not only permitted the Chinaman to see that they were strangers, but also terrified them so that they promptly dropped to the ground, shouting in fear.

"This way, Charlie," Jim Dart called out, for he, too, had seen the two men as they fell to the ground. "Let the redskins go. We have got something else on hand just now." The scout heard him and followed him quickly to the spot.

"Take care of them two galoots, Jim," the scout said, and without the least hesitation, he plunged into the dark opening and began feeling his way through the passage.

He heard excited voices close to him, but, nothing daunted, he kept on, walking without making the least sound.

"What in thunderation kin be the matter outside?" he heard a voice say.

"Sounds as if the Injuns has got the worst of it."

"I reckon they have," muttered the scout, under his breath. "You'll git the worst of it, too, inside of two minutes." A little further on and he saw a light ahead.

Guided by it, he stepped along noiselessly and was soon passing the first of the series of caves.

It was in the adjoining one that the light came from.

It was shining brightly now, and once he reached the other side he peered in and saw two men standing there, revolvers in hand.

Charlie paused and looked behind him.

He saw that some one was following him, and he wanted to make sure if it was a friend before he did anything further. It was a friend, for it was no less a personage than Hop Wah.

That was enough, so without any hesitation the scout stepped quickly ahead, and with a revolver in either hand suddenly came upon the astonished pair.

"Up with your hands, you sneakin' coyotes!" he called out, a voice that echoed through the cavernous place. "I've got you dead to rights. Where's Young Wild West?"

"Hip hi, hoolay!" shouted Hop Wah, as he ran forward. "Everythin' allee light. We ketchee um counterfeeters velly quickee."

One of the men turned to flee the other way, no doubt hoping to escape by the other outlet.

But Cheyenne Charlie, whose blood was up by this time, pulled the trigger of the revolver he held in his right hand and the man went down in a heap.

"Now, then, you try it and you'll go the same way," he said, threateningly, as he stepped up to the other.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" came the pleading cry. "I'll give in."

"Ha!" exclaimed the scout, as he recognized the voice. "It's Catamount Dick, eh? Well, I'm mighty glad to meet yer here. Now hold your hands up over your head, or you'll die afore you kin count two."

Up went the hunter's hands and in the light that came from the lantern which was resting upon the ground near him his face shone pale and ghastly.

"Yer sorter got us in a trap, didn't yer?" the scout said, significantly. "But I reckon it didn't work, after all. Now, then, you tell me where Young Wild West is inside of ten seconds, or I'll take the top of your head off."

"He's back there, an' he ain't hurt a bit," came the quick reply, as the villain threw his head back, indicating the cave behind him.

"Go an' see if he's lyin', Hop," the scout said, without looking at the Chinaman.

"Allee light, Misier Charlie," came the cheerful reply, and Hop ran swiftly in the direction indicated.

He found that there was a light coming from some other part of the underground place, and in less than a minute he stood before the helpless young deadshot, who was still sitting in the chair he had been forced into by the villains but a few minutes before.

Wild had, of course, heard the shooting outside, and he knew right away that his partners had got into trouble.

But he was also convinced that they were doing the shoot-

ing, and when he heard the scout and Hop yelling he was sure of the fact.

It was but the work of a few seconds for Hop to tear the gag from the young deadshot's mouth and sever his bonds.

Wild no sooner got upon his feet than he looked for the weapons that had been taken from him.

They lay close at hand, and securing them he pushed the delighted Chinaman aside and bounded into the chamber where Charlie stood covering Catamount Dick.

"Where is Jim?" the young deadshot asked, as coolly as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened.

"He's outside, Wild. You had better go out an' see how he's makin' out. I left him with two of the rascals, who was so scared that they dropped to the ground when Hop banged away at 'em."

Wild waited to hear no more, but hurriedly made his way through the passage.

Dark as it was he did not hesitate to keep right on, and soon he saw the faint light from the stars.

"Jim!" he called out, softly.

"Hello, Wild!" came the reassuring response. "Are you all right?"

"I reckon I am."

"Well, I've got two of the scoundrels here. Three or four redskins got away, but more than that went down."

"That's cheering news, though I am sorry any blood had to be shed."

Out stepped the boy, almost stumbling over the prostrate forms on the ground, for neither of them had dared to rise, since Jim had given them to understand that if they attempted to do so they would be shot.

Wild promptly took charge of them.

He relieved them of their weapons in a jiffy, and then ordered them to rise to their feet, which they promptly did.

Our friends always carried some stout cord with them, and quickly producing what he wanted of this, the young deadshot was not long in binding the two men so they would have no further use of their hands.

"Well, Jim," he said, when he had done this, as he nodded to his boy partner, "I reckon I got caught napping. But everything worked all right, even if I did. So you didn't let them surprise you, eh?"

"Not much, Wild," was the retort. "We happened to see them sneaking toward us. I suppose if they had not made a noise and called our attention that way, they might have got a little closer before we saw them. But they never could have surprised us. We were ready and waiting for something to happen, and I'm sure we would have been able to take care of ourselves."

"Good! Catamount Dick showed he had more brains than I thought he had. It was a put-up job of his. He was watching for us when we rode up near his shanty and dismounted, and he got into the shanty without going through the door, and then made it appear that he was going out to set his traps, so we would follow him. Quite a scheme, I must say."

Having told Jim enough for the present, Wild went to the entrance and called out for Charlie and Hop to fetch out their prisoners.

The other man was quite dead, for the scout had made no mistake when he fired at him.

"Now then, boys," the young deadshot said, "we must get hot on the trail of the redskins who escaped. One of them is the chief we want, and I reckon we have got to get him."

CHAPTER X.

THE CAPTURE OF THE CHIEF.

The tables had been turned completely upon the villains, with the exception that the chief who was wanted so badly had got away.

Young Wild West thought quickly, and he was not long in settling upon a plan of action.

"Hop," he said, turning to the clever Chinese, "you go and get the horses. Charlie, you stay here until he comes with them, and keep guard upon the three prisoners. I am going to try and find Dog Foot. But before I go," he added, as he turned and looked sharply at the three men who were standing there helpless, "I reckon I had better find out about where to look for them. Catamount Dick, you can probably tell me that."

"I don't know nothin' about it," the hunter answered, shaking his head.

"Yes, you do. Now you tell me where you think he might be right away. If you don't I may take a notion to put a bullet through you, even if you have got your hands tied behind you. Such a villain as you should have no mercy shown him, anyhow. Now, then, speak out and be quick about it."

The boy showed his revolver and took a step toward the man he addressed.

"Most likely he's gone to the Injun village," was the reply. "Don't shoot. I ain't got no need of lyin' to yer. It's all up with me, an' I know enough for that. What I want is to have a little mercy shown me. I ain't done nothin' so very wrong, anyhow. I didn't make none of the bad money."

"We won't talk about that just now. I want to find Dog Foot. He is the chief the reward is offered for, and he is the man I want to take alive. Now, then, where is the village you refer to?"

"Right over that way," and the villain turned his head to indicate the direction.

"Is it very far?"

"You kin git there in about fifteen minutes if you trot along, I reckon."

"All right. Thank you. I think you are telling me the truth. If I find that you have lied to me it will be all the worse for you, that's all."

"I ain't lied, have I, boys?" and the hunter turned to his two companions in distress.

"Not a bit," one of them answered. "Ketch old Dog Foot an' hang him. He's responsible for the whole business. He led me into this game, an' I'm mighty sorry I took his advice now."

"Any one is apt to git sorry after he finds out he ain't got no chance," the scout observed, with a sarcastic laugh.

"Come on, Jim," Wild said, though he had not spoken of Dart going with him before. "I reckon we'll go ahead on foot."

"All right, Wild," was the reply, and then Jim Dart followed the young deadshot away through the darkness.

He knew the direction the Indians had come from, so he led the way until they got to some high ground about a hundred yards from the entrance to the cave.

Then Wild took the lead, and proceeded on in the direction Catamount Dick had told them the redskin village lay.

They found that it was quite a long way off, and fully fifteen minutes was spent in getting over the level ground before they sighted a camp-fire.

Then they became very cautious, and crept up until they were right at the edge of the village of tepees.

There were not many of the latter, which told that the population could not exceed more than fifty.

The two took a good look, and soon became satisfied that if the chief was really there the Indians were pretty good actors.

Finally Wild decided to go straight into the village and ask about him, for he had heard that there were no hostile redskins in the vicinity.

Anyhow, it was too close to the fort to find such a state in existence.

He walked boldly among the tepees, and the inhabitants of the village looked in surprise when they saw the young palefaces approaching.

But, of course, Dog Foot had not been living there for some time, or he would have been discovered by the colonel's men.

However, Wild picked out a couple of them and began asking questions.

They declared their ignorance of the whereabouts of Dog Foot, and said they had not seen him in months.

Others were called up and questioned, but with the same result.

"I reckon Catamount Dick gave us wrong instructions, Jim," the young deadshot said. "We will have to go back and get our horses. Then we'll try it again."

One of the Indians wanted to know what the trouble was, but Wild declined to give any information.

They made their way back and were just in time to find Hop returning with the horses.

"Well, Hop," the young deadshot said, "you were very anxious to come with us to-night, so you can have a job to attend to. I am going to leave you here with these three men, and I want you to guard them until we return."

"Allee light, Misler Wild," was the cheerful reply. "Me do lat velly gooddee."

Mounting their horses, the young deadshot and his partners started away on what might be called a blind trail.

It was a blind trail, sure enough, and an all-night search revealed nothing as to the whereabouts of the missing chief. It was not until the sun had been up nearly an hour that they came upon a fresh trail.

Spots of blood showed here and there, and then they knew pretty well that they were on the track of the Indians who had made their escape.

They followed the trail for nearly half an hour, and when they found it turned and went back in the direction of the fort they knew they were pretty sure of catching Dog Foot.

At length, as they were ascending a rise, they came upon the body of a redskin.

An examination showed that he had evidently met his death from a wound he had received.

While they were looking at him the clatter of hoofs sounded, and Cheyenne Charlie looked up and caught sight of the horsemen riding furiously away.

"There they go," he shouted, and up went his revolver. Crack! crack!

One shot sent an Indian rider to the ground, while the other dropped the horse that was being ridden by Dog Foot.

"After them, boys! I'll take care of the chief," Young Wild West shouted, bounding forward on foot.

The scout and Jim hurriedly mounted and gave chase to the others, while Young Wild West bounded forward as quick as a flash.

Having no chance to ride away, the chief raised the tomahawk threateningly and dashed to meet the young deadshot.

At that very moment the sound of a bugle was heard to come from behind some rocks close at hand.

Young Wild West heard it and knew what it meant, but he did not check him from his intention.

He ran on, intending to take the chief alive.

Up went the tomahawk, and Dog Foot was ready to strike. He did strike the next instant, too, but missed.

Wild dodged the blow aimed at his head with the tomahawk, and then he leaped upon the chief, and, as quick as a flash, flung him to the ground.

At that very moment Arietta and the cavalymen rode up. The assistance the cavalymen were able to give just then was hardly needed, for Wild had Dog Foot at his mercy.

However, one of the men dismounted and ran to the spot, and the villain was quickly disarmed.

"What are you doing here, little girl?" the young deadshot asked, in his cool and easy way, as he turned to the girl who was as she dismounted.

"Well, I insisted on the colonel ordering a detachment to come in search of you," was the reply. "It was only luck that we came upon you, too, for we knew nothing of your whereabouts until we heard the shots that were fired just now. I did the scouting for them, Wild, for I was right ahead at the time. I suppose if they had not done so they would have found you in another direction. You have got the chief, Wild, and I am glad."

"So am I, Et," and he embraced the girl right before the spectators present.

Explanations were soon made, and then the start was made and just then Charlie and Jim rode in with the other cavalymen, whom they had captured without delay, after chasing them into a blind ravine.

Then a short-cut was taken to the spot where Hop had been left with the other prisoners, and reaching there they found everything all right and the return was made to the fort in due time.

There is not much more to add to this story.

Suffice it to say that Young Wild West received the reward for the capture of the chief, and that Arietta was lauded for the skies for her ability as a scout for the cavalry.

Through her advice the detachment had found not only Young Wild West and his partners, but Dog Foot as well.

Later on our friends heard that the rest of the counterfeiter-felers were tried and convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment.

Of course, the outfit of the counterfeiter-felers was destroyed, and the rest of the stuff taken proper care of by the Government officials.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE LONE CABIN; OR, THE RAIDERS OF THE GORGE."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE

CURRENT NEWS

Prince Albert, son of King George, stood sixty-fourth in a list of merit in a list of sixty-five persons who underwent examination for naval cadets last month. The newspapers comment on the standing of the prince as evidence of the complete impartiality of the examiners.

All communication with the interior of Mexico was cut January 15. Rebels severed the railway and commercial telegraph wires below Gallego, 140 miles south on the Mexican Central Railway. Destruction along the Mexico Northwestern Railway has been more extensive than at any time during the two years of revolution. One hundred and twelve wooden trestles over 150 miles of road have been burned by rebels on the English-Canadian line, which runs into the Casas Grandes district southwest of Juarez.

A distinct triumph for the liquor forces was the passage of the Post-office bill in the House January 14 without prohibition of the carrying of liquor by the parcel post or of the transmission of advertisements of intoxicants through the mails. Murdock, of Kansas, wanted to prohibit the sale of matter advertising intoxicants in prohibition states, but his amendment also was ruled out of order. Postmaster-General Hitchcock in establishing the parcels regulation made a regulation that no intoxicants could be shipped by mail. This was held to be an unauthorized exercise of executive power.

Rules to insure proper deportment of the midshipmen of the United States Naval Academy dances have just been promulgated, and the naval lads feel that, in some particulars, the enjoyment of their hops has been curtailed. Midshipmen have been notified that if dances of recent origin are to be attempted, left arms are to be held straight at all times, and partners are to be kept at a distance of at least three inches at all times. Supplementary to these rules is one which points out that in no case should midshipmen use the arms of their companions when escorting them to and from the dances or on other occasions.

Importers of European wood pulp and paper urged the Customs Court to authorize the admission of those products free of duty to the United States from all countries having "favored nation" treaties with America. Albert H. Washburn, counsel for importers of wood pulp and papers from Norway, Sweden, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Germany, Belgium and Great Britain, occupied practically the whole day in an effort to convince the Court that these commodities should be free. Free wood pulp and paper is granted to Canada on all unrestricted exportations by the only operative clause of the Canadian reciprocity treaty and Washburn maintained that the United States Government was bound by its treaties to extend the privilege to Europe. He said America had granted Canada a gratuitous concession which could be claimed by other nations under favored nation treatment. Assistant Attorney-General Wemple will argue the Governor's side.

Five square feet of skin from dogs is being grafted by Dr. S. A. Van Hoefen, Jr., on Ralph Keris, seven-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Keris, of 409 Blase avenue, Baden. The lad was burned playing Indian five weeks ago, and one-fourth of the grafting has been completed. At least twelve dogs will be sacrificed in an effort to save the life of the child, Dr. Van Hoefen says. Two weeks after the lad was burned twenty-five pieces of skin from the under hide of a young beagle hound were successfully grafted. Using a dog at each operation, Dr. Van Hoefen grafted sixty-one pieces at an interval of three days. The last time, about a week ago, seventy-five pieces of skin taken from two pups were grafted to the boy's limb. The supply of pups in Baden having been exhausted, Dr. Van Hoefen has employed men to obtain additional ones.

While on the outskirts of East Canaan, Conn., January 14, on his way to his home in Salisbury, George Ball, nineteen years old, saw the form of a man with upraised arms, he says, approaching him. Believing that he was to be held up, Ball leveled a double-barreled shotgun at the supposed highwayman and discharged one barrel. When Charles Adotte, in front of whose home the shooting took place, and other villagers who had heard the report of the gun reached the scene Ball was standing over the body of John J. Whalen, of Norfolk, a friend of Ball. The young slayer went to the home of George Beebe, where he remained until the arrival of Deputy Sheriff Rhoades, who locked him up in Canaan. Coroner Herman, of Winsted, after an inquest, asserted that no evidence had been adduced showing a motive for murder, but he ordered the prisoner committed to jail pending decision.

The first State Ranger School in the United States has been established by the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University. Sixteen young men entered at the beginning of the term and are now studying practical forestry in the Adirondacks. The College of Forestry, established by legislative act in 1911, carries on a professional course at Syracuse University, in addition to its ranger school, and also a general educational work among the people throughout the State. A letter has been sent to the principals of all high and preparatory schools of the State, offering to give illustrated lectures and demonstrations before the schools upon the subjects of forest care and tree planting. Arbor Day, which has been so long an institution in our public schools, is simply playing at a great problem on one day of the year. In New York State over one-third of the area is non-agricultural, better suited to the growing of forest trees than anything else. The planting of a piece of such waste land by school children, who could watch the growth and development of the trees, would be one of the best ways to inculcate among the rising generation a respect for forests which would tend to secure their protection from fire and careless wastefulness.

DICK DONNELLY'S FORTUNE

—OR—

THE BOY RANCHMAN OF TEXAS

By DICK ELLISON

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER I. (Continued)

But Dick was the hero of the hour that day. His companions, the "swell set," gathered about him, and he had to recount his encounter with Tom Mikel again and again, and yet once more for their edification.

Tom Mikel had not come to school that morning. After the fight he went home, not that he was badly hurt, but because he did not care to meet the jeers and sneers with which the boys usually greet the vanquished. There were but two or three slight scratches on his face, and one eye was slightly discolored, but hardly enough to be noticeable.

Dick Donnelly's act in defending the weak was a manly one. Even boys love gallantry and bravery among their playmates, though they may detest quarrelsome lads.

Dick was truly a noble, brave lad, for had he not been, he would never have dared attack such a bully as Tom Mikel.

The bell rang and the boys hastened into the school-house. Professor Dobbs, the principal, was a very tall, slender man, with a mild gray eye and bald head.

Dick thought the professor fixed his eye on him rather piercingly at his entrance, and began to ask himself if the professor could possibly know anything of the fight of the morning.

Two or three slight scratches which Dick had received were too slight to be noticed by a casual observer.

When the opening exercises were over the boys were sent away to their recitation rooms. As Dick was going with the others the principal said:

"Richard Donnelly, I want to see you in my office."

"When?" Dick asked, beginning to tremble a little with dread of the meeting.

"You can come in right now; I won't detain you but a few minutes."

Dick bowed, and went to the professor's room. The professor, who had preceded him, sat at his desk looking at a new gold watch which the scholars had given him the day before. Dick was one of the contributors to the fund which purchased the elegant timepiece, and the professor was very proud of his present.

"Sit down," said the professor, kindly, yet there was a sternness in his manner which moved him not a little. "This is a beautiful watch, Richard; yes, a very beautiful watch, and I am proud of it. I shall take it to the jeweler's and have a proper inscription placed upon it. But it wasn't to talk about the watch that I brought you here. Richard, I am sorry that one whom I have always boasted of as the

most quiet and best behaved boy in the whole school, should be engaged in a street brawl."

"Professor Dobbs, I could not help it," Dick declared. "Tom was beating a little boy, and the little boy's mother begged him not to do so."

Then with penitent tears he proceeded to recount the whole story of the fight from beginning to end, and when he had finished the professor said:

"Well, Richard, you have some mitigating circumstances in your favor, nevertheless you have violated one of the established rules of the school, and according to the rules you must be punished in some way. But I will defer until some future time, and now you can go to your recitation." As he spoke the professor laid his watch in a drawer of the desk, and, locking it, placed the key in his pocket.

Dick wondered why he did not put the watch in his pocket, but he saw that the professor wore his old watch and had heard him say that he was going to take the new one to the jeweler's to have some inscription cut upon it.

Though Dick Donnelly had been assured he must not be punished for violation of some of the established rules of the school he knew the punishment would not be either severe or greatly humiliating.

As Dick left the hall, which he did ahead of the other boys, he saw a slight form in knickerbockers speeding toward him. It was Benny Grayson, the incorrigible brother of Bessie. He disappeared around the corner before Professor Dobbs came out of his office, so that gentleman could not see the young scamp.

Dick wondered why Benny had been watching and waiting at the door of the professor's office. Alas, he was soon to learn Benny's object to his own sorrow.

CHAPTER II.

DICK IN DISGRACE.

As soon as school was out Dick Donnelly hastened across the open lots to his home and asked his Aunt Sue if she could go with Zack Bragg and the other boys nutting.

"No, you can't," declared his aunt, in falsetto high pitched voice, which indicated that she was in no very pleasant mood. As she spoke her brow gathered into a frown of firmness.

"Why not, Aunt Sue?" he asked, in a pleading voice.

"Because you can't, and that's enough."

"I have split all the kindling wood and carried in all the kindling, and there isn't anything to do, until time to go to pasture for the cows. I will be back long before you."

"Well, I say you shan't go, and that's enough. I am to run this house myself, as I own it, and not turn it over to you."

"I turned away, resolved in his own mind to go without her consent."

"I have obeyed her until I am a good big boy, and she has been kind and wise and worse on me all the time," he thought. He went to the wood shed where he busied himself a few moments until Aunt Sue's sewing machine indicated that she was absorbed in her work, and then started back to the school-house to meet the boys.

"I had not come yet, and while waiting for them I discovered that he had lost his knife. The last place I remembered seeing it was in the office of the professor, so I had given it to the principal to open the case for me. I found a new watch."

"I laid it on the desk, and it may be there yet," he thought. The professor seldom, if ever, locked his office, so he did the drawers of his desk. Dick ran up to the professor's apartment, pushed open the door and started back in search of the watch.

"The door was not over twelve or thirteen feet closed and I found one of the drawers of the principal's desk. Dick searched it all, and, bounding to his side, seized him by the arm and cried:

"Hold on, Ben Grayson. I know what you are about. I have the watch. I promised your sister to keep you from having it, and you shall not take it. It would do you no harm, if I could, and you shall not take it. It would do you no harm."

"I clung to the watch with wonderful determination, and strove to hide it about my person. Dick wrenched it from my hand, and threatened to report him, but the young fellow with the agility of a cat broke away, darted out of the door and bounded down the stairway and ran off across the street."

"Dick glanced at the watch and discovered that it had been tampered with, and he was glad to find it unharmed. He turned to the desk to put it back in the drawer, resolved for Bessie's sake to say nothing about the matter."

"The drawer was closed and locked."

"The young scamp has the key," said Dick, "and I don't want to leave it lying on the desk, for some one might take it. I will put it in my pocket and follow him and make him give me the key to return it to the drawer."

"But Benny, as fleet as a deer of the plains, was, by the time Dick reached the playground, out of sight."

"Zack Bragg and his companions who had assembled around him:

"Say, Dick, come, we are going now."

"Dick was puzzled what to do. He had the professor's key in his trousers pocket; he could not leave it, and he thought not to take it with him. But he must decide at once what he would do, and so decided to go nutting, and return the watch when he came back."

"I will find Benny," he thought, "and make him give me the key."

"That watch in Dick's pocket made him feel decidedly

uneasy. He first thought he would tell his companions all about it, but he could not do so without implicating Bessie's brother, so he decided to say nothing at all. They need never know what Benny had tried to do, and the lad might yet be redeemed. He cared very little for Ben himself, but he could not endure the thought of bringing the blush of shame to the pretty cheeks of Bessie. Dick was gallant, brave, honest, and yet he was weak in trying to conceal the fault of another; that a boy should never do.

"The watch bore so much on his mind that all the pleasure of nutting was lost."

"He might break it, or might lose it; then he should feel almost as badly as if he had stolen it. In the exciting chase after a squirrel he forgot all about the watch for the time being, and ran on until he stumbled over a log and fell, the watch flying from his pocket upon the ground."

"Zack Bragg, who was at his side, saw the bright yellow case as it flew through the air, and alighted on the leaf covered earth."

"Hello, what's this?" he cried, picking it up.

"Is it broken?" asked Dick, rising and running to him.

"No. Is it yours?"

"No," answered Dick, snatching it away from him and thrusting it into his pocket.

"Well, what are you doing with it?" asked Zack.

"Oh, nothing; come on."

"You needn't be touchy about it. I've seen watches before," growled Zack. Then he muttered to himself so low that Dick could not hear him; "I wonder where he got it. It looks exactly like the one we all gave the schoolmaster. What is Dick doing with it?"

"If Dick thought that Zack was his friend he was very much mistaken. Dick's recent feats, the fact that he had been called a studious boy in school, and his recent popularity, had made Zack and his companions envious of him, and when Envy steps in Hate is on his heels."

"Dick felt a vague uneasiness all the afternoon, and was glad when the day's nutting was over and they all went home."

"I will go at once, hunt Ben, get the key and return the watch before I go home," he thought.

"But finding Ben was not an easy matter. No doubt the little rascal supposed that Dick would want to see him, and so kept carefully out of the way. Dick did not suppose that Zack had any evil intentions against him when they separated."

"Zack spoke so softly and so friendly, and hoped that he would go with them Saturday to the lake for a swim."

"We will have bushels of fun," he declared.

"I would like to go, but I don't know if aunt will let me," he answered.

"Oh, you must coax her, and coax her, until she is compelled to give her consent."

"I will try, but doubt if I can, especially as I went without her consent to-day. She will think it her religious duty to punish me for being disobedient."

"Yes, I know, these old women seem to think it is their religious duty to do a great many things, when they want to flog a boy just because they are mad at him. But the boy must bear the punishment just for the sake of their religious duty."

(To be Continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

WHERE DOGS ARE EATEN.

The use of the flesh of dogs as a food for man is becoming common, even in the capital. From necessity the German workingman has long made horse meat a substantial portion of his daily fare, but while Saxony consumes thousands of dogs annually, the practice of eating this meat has not until recently invaded Prussia. Now the overseers of the Berlin cattle yards have given their approval of a proposal to erect a municipal slaughterhouse for dogs at the yards, and it is expected that the police president will soon issue the required permit.

BRICKS BY PARCEL POST.

When Samuel Gordon, the postmaster, got to his office at South River, N. J., January 11, he was amazed to find a large truck loaded with bricks standing in front of the door. He was told by the driver that the bricks were to be sent by parcel post to the various agents of a local brick and tile company. Each of the bricks weighed five and three-quarter pounds and cost 18 cents to send by parcel post, whereas by express the concern would have had to pay 25 cents for each brick. The clerks labored all day. It is the biggest job the local post-office ever undertook.

BRONZE COINAGE DOOMED.

The bronze coinage of France is doomed, and will soon be replaced by coins made of pure nickel, with a round hole in the center. Visitors to this country have seen for themselves the battered and mutilated condition of the one-sou and two-sou pieces in circulation, due in a great measure to the fact that a great number of them bear the effigy of the late Emperor Napoleon III. Some time ago the mint issued nickel coins of the value of five sous, but they had no hole. These also are to be called in and rendered uniform with the rest. In payments and in giving change the nickel coinage will not be legal tender beyond the sum of five francs.

GERMANY HAS AN AEROPLANE STATION.

Germany has definitely decided on the institution of a large aerial center devoted entirely to naval work. This first center will be situated at Cuxhaven, where for the last few months the German Ministry of Marine has made extensive purchases of land, ostensibly for the purpose of a new artillery range. The site has an area of three and one-half square miles, and it is now known that it will be utilized for a combined aeroplane and airship station. Including levelling expenses and necessary preparation the land will have cost \$400,000. A large airship hangar, mounted on a rotating platform and capable of housing two Zeppelin dirigibles of the latest and most powerful type, will be erected at a further cost of \$425,000. A special aerial section is now in process of formation at the German navy headquarters and will be established at the new center, Cuxhaven.

SECOND-HAND ORANGE SKINS.

Now and then one sees in the English papers advertisements announcing that So-and-so has a large stock of orange skins for sale. As a matter of recommendation to quality the advertisement concludes with the statement that they are from such and such a music hall.

There is a big business in second-hand orange skins, lemon peel, etc., on the other side of the Atlantic. Many of them are bought by makers of jams and marmalades. This was brought out when there was an investigation into the preserving industry in England not long ago.

In certain portions of the theatres and music halls in London and other large British cities the seats are reserved. Admittance to the pit is generally sixpence. Once a person leaves his seat it is immediately grabbed by some one else. In order to get a good seat one must come early. One grows hungry as the hours go by before the performance ends. The favorite sustenance of those who sit in these cheap seats is oranges.

They consume them in large quantities and throw the skins on the floor. After each performance the skins are carefully gathered up and sold to dealers.

HANS WAGNER SETS RECORD WITH BALTIMORE

When Hans Wagner, the great shortstop of the Baltimore Pirates, turned in a batting average of .324 at the close of last season, he set a record which has never been equalled in the history of the game. Although there were some mighty hitters in the old days, none of them succeeded in batting over .300 for sixteen consecutive seasons, such being the mark established by the lumbering Honus.

To be sure, old "Pop" Anson, Wagner's greatest rival, batted over .300 in twenty different campaigns. He had together a string of fifteen select averages before he was dropped behind for a couple of years. Then he came back and held the place for five seasons, barely squeaking through with a .302 his last year, in 1897.

Wagner never reached the top notch of exclusiveness, batting more than .400, as Anson did in two years, but his steady work over a period of sixteen years gives a basis for the statement made last summer by Johnny Graw that Honus is the greatest of all living players. Wagner's highest average was compiled in 1900, when he hit up a .380, his lowest coming in 1898 at .305.

Wagner's complete record with Louisville and Pittsburgh is as follows: 1897, .344; 1898, .305; 1899, .359; 1900, .380; 1901, .352; 1902, .329; 1903, .355; 1904, .349; 1905, .363; 1906, .339; 1907, .350; 1908, .354; 1909, .339; 1910, .320; 1911, .330; 1912, .324.

Wagner was placed eleventh among the hitters in the National League last season, some of the younger ones like Zimmerman, Doyle, Meyers and Sweeney, nosing him out. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether some of his more parent superiors would not be given up in a trade for the mighty Dutchman by almost any manager.

THE KING OF CRIPPLE CREEK

OR,

THE BOY WITH A BARREL OF GOLD

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XXIII (Continued).

"By thunder! I believe you are right," whispered the colonel; "but how did you fellows get in here, anyhow? Are you driving at? Explain."

"I drew the colonel to the partition which divided the room from the next, and pointing to a small round hole which had been bored in it, whispered:

"Look! Listen, and then judge for yourself."

The colonel put his eye to the peep-hole, and then immediately withdrawing it pressed his ear against the partition and kept it there for some time.

"The man, who in the meantime had been released, remained standing quietly by.

"I've heard enough," the colonel breathed, pulling away from the hole a little. "Judge Dillon is even a greater scoundrel than I thought him to be, and I supposed that I knew him

"Hush! They are on the move!" whispered Ike, as the sound of heavy footsteps were heard in the adjoining room.

"Then, you keep in the background, Col. Wilfer. I can't deal faro here two years ago for nothing. I know the game as well as you do. Judge Dillon signs this little document I have drawn up or——"

At the same instant the door of the next room was heard to open and there were heavy footsteps in the hall.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

Jack never fired the shots in Magged's saloon.

He never even got the chance to draw his revolver. The men in the saloon were all tools of Appleyard, and the whole thing was simply a plot to capture Jack and hold him until after the auction was over, just as Col. Wilfer had said.

And Jack was most effectually captured.

He was instantly pounced upon and dragged through the door into the alley by Magged himself and two other men, while Appleyard, drawing his revolver, fired several shots at the ceiling for no other purpose than to draw in a crowd, and then to give it out that Jack was on a drunk.

Meanwhile, the King of Cripple Creek was hustled across the alley and taken into the rear building where the Swan was held forth.

The trap door was raised in the floor of the hall and Jack

forced to descend a flight of rickety stairs into the cellar, where he was locked in a brick wine vault in which the club kept their bottled beer, claret and champagne.

It was very humiliating to Jack, but he had been taken entirely by surprise and really there was no help for what had happened.

He was simply pushed through the door without being tied up in any way and left to his own reflections, which would have been anything but pleasant if he had not discovered a way to escape.

Jack struck a match and looked around. He could not help laughing out loud when he discovered that the lock which secured the door was on the inside.

Of course there was nothing to do but to unscrew it and walk out, as any boy with a stout jackknife in his pocket could readily do—all that was needed was a little time.

Jack was still working away at it and succeeding all right when suddenly heavy footsteps were heard in the hall overhead.

This was just as the lock came off in his hands.

There was a scuffle and the sound of a fall. Jack threw the door open and crept up the stairs, listening at the top.

"You will sign or die!" he heard a voice exclaim.

"They are having a row there," he thought; but it's none of my business. I'm not in it. I've got all I can do to attend to my own affairs."

He crept downstairs again, hurried over to one of the cellar windows, and opened the swinging sash. To climb up on the stone wall of the cellar, squeeze through the window and gain the back street, was all the work of a moment.

He had scarcely departed when the door at the head of the stairs flew open and Terry Tolliver, One-eyed Ike and Col. Wilfer came rushing down.

"You'll find him in the wine vault," cried Ike. "I know just where they have taken him, and unless they have changed the lock I've got a key that will fit. By thunder! He's not here! Ha, ha, ha! I might have known! He's unscrewed the lock and skipped."

* * * * *

Twelve o'clock on the mining exchange was usually the busiest hour of the day, and yet in those days at Cripple Creek this was always the time when the auction sale of claims took place.

For more than an hour Jack Hudson had been sitting quietly in one corner of the long room. Many of his fellow members came up and spoke to him during that time,

but for once the "King of Cripple Creek," usually talkative enough, had but little to say.

Twelve o'clock struck.

The auctioneer's hammer sounded at the same instant. There was to be a sale.

Just at that moment Col. Wilfer and Terry Tolliver walked upon the floor.

Both threw up their hands at sight of Jack and hurried to where he stood.

"Why, where in the world have you been?" exclaimed the colonel. "Terry and I have hunted for you all over town."

"I've been right here," replied Jack. "I've got to look after this sale. It's no use, colonel. We shall have to buy the claim in. One-eyed Ike had a plan to save it, but it has failed, and——"

"Failed nothing!" cried the colonel. "You were to meet Ike at the Spread Eagle——"

"Silence!" cried the auctioneer. "Gentlemen, I am about to offer for sale under the order of the court the well-known claim on Deer Creek, Kissing Canyon, known as Claim 11, Range 5, at present being worked by the firm of Hudson & Tolliver. That they hold this claim illegally has been decided by the Honorable Judge Dillon, and——"

"I protest!" broke in Jack, striding forward. "The sale stops right here. Mr. Merriman, you will please read that!"

Consternation came into the faces of a little clique of mining sharps who were acting for the swindler Appleyard, who, not being a member of the Exchange, was not present.

"An injunction signed by Judge Dillon himself!" called out the auctioneer. "The sale cannot proceed, and I for one am glad of it, for I believe it to be a swindle. Jack Hudson, I congratulate you. Gentlemen, I call for three cheers for the King of Cripple Creek!"

* * * * *

It was a simple ending to what appeared at one time likely to turn out a very serious matter, and it was an ending to all Jack Hudson's troubles as well.

One-eyed Ike's scheme had succeeded famously, for Judge Dillon and John Pardridge, Appleyard's representative on the floor of the Exchange, had discussed their villainous game a little too openly in the poker room of the Swan Club, and Col. Wilfer was able to name the exact amount of bribe money which Appleyard had paid the judge for doing his dirty work.

Caught in the passageway by the masked men, Judge Dillon was forced to sign the order putting an injunction on the sale of the mine.

Exposed by Col. Wilfer afterward in the public press, he found it convenient to disappear from Cripple Creek between two days, and after he was gone it was discovered that he had robbed his clients of large sums.

Before this the man Appleyard also made himself scarce, and the whole affair fell flat; but Jack to secure himself applied to the government for a new mining grant of Claim 11, Range 5, and got it. To-day the mine is still being worked, and is down thousands of feet. It is one of the richest and best known at Cripple Creek.

Now, of course, we have not given the real names of our heroes in this tale.

It would not do. Jack and Terry still live at Creek, and are known far and wide.

They are many times millionaires, and highly respected. They control many mines and Jack is a member of the legislature of Colorado to-day. To some this will undoubtedly give a clue to our hero's real name.

Jack married Ethel, and after Col. Wilfer's death a year he took hold of the smelting works.

He and Terry now live in the big house on the hill which they first entered two poor, ragged boys.

One-eyed Ike is Jack's managing man, and it was very hard to get a better one, for Ike is not only full of energy, honest as the sun, and as sharp as a razor, but he is thoroughly devoted to the interests of the King of Cripple Creek.

THE END.

OUT NEXT WEEK

Read the New Serial

FIGHTING WITH GOMEZ

—OR—

TEXAS COWBOYS IN CUBA

By "PAWNEE JACK"

Do Not Miss It

OUT NEXT WEEK

PROFITABLE MAINE TRAPPING.

It is estimated that 1,500 foxes have been shot and trapped for their hides in Somerset County this season, according to a Skowhegan correspondent. The fur claim that the foxes and mink have never been so successful. The fox skins have brought more money per skin in several years back. It is estimated that the trappers have realized from fox skins alone in the county \$15,000.

One of the most unusual things in connection with the industry, one man alone in the county caught in the time a black fox and a gray one that brought him \$2,500 and in a week's time this man trapped ten foxes.

This is getting to be one of the greatest industries in Maine, many farmers are making as much money hunting foxes to earn on the farm during the rest of the season. They have earned enough money from catching foxes and mink to pay the mortgages on their farms. A fox skin average this year brings \$5.

One farmer this winter let his dog out of doors in the morning and it immediately left for the woods. In the middle of the forenoon the man, while sitting in the house, heard a noise in the entry and opened the door and a red fox, closely followed by the dog, rushed in.

The kitchen window was open and before the man could stop it the fox had made a leap for it, but when he he knocked the stick out that held the window up, the fox was caught by the window as it fell and was then

TIMELY TOPICS

many uses of the motor cycle are shown daily. It was recently decided to equip the game wardens of the State of Oregon with motor cycles. W. L. Finley, Game Warden, believes that he and his deputies can cover more country, and that even the mountain territories offer no obstacles that cannot be overcome by the motor cycle. The State Board of Fish and Game Commissioners has authorized the purchase of three cycles for this purpose. Others will be added when they have made

Mexico was fourth in rank among the gold-producing countries in 1911, according to the figures of the United States Geological Survey, the output for the year being \$20,000,000. This was an increase over the 1910 figures of \$18,000,000, despite the unsettled conditions that prevailed in some portions of the republic during the year. With a return to settled conditions and the gradual introduction of modern mining and metallurgical methods into Mexico leading to renewed development of the great metal resources of the country, the gold output may be expected to increase still more rapidly.

Enough jewelry to stock a small store was recovered today by beach combers from the sands of Rockaway Beach, N. Y. The valuables had been lost in the past years, and some bore evidences of having lain in the sand for a considerable time. The jewelry had been washed up on the beach by the recent gale, and when news spread, several hundred persons were soon at work sifting the sand. Among articles recovered were: Three watches, one set with diamonds. More than a score of diamond rings. Fifty neck chains. One lavalliere. Three bracelets set with diamonds and pearls. Thirty bracelets. One ladies' ring set with a ruby and 15 diamonds. One ladies' watch with gold buckle, bearing the initial B. A quantity of gold pins. In anticipation of the effect of the storm, several persons visited the beach later in an effort to identify their lost treasures.

The restoration of the army canteen and the enactment of legislation for the elimination from the army of unfit personnel are among the recommendations contained in the annual report of General Leonard Wood, chief of staff, published recently. General Wood also emphasizes what he has said many times before about the concentration of personnel on strategic lines and the transfer of the personnel of the staff to the line, thus doing away with the staff and line friction. He recommends placing the responsibility of advancement for merit in the hands of boards of officers chosen from the army. Of the canteen he says: "The great majority of officers of the army are of the opinion that the re-establishment of the canteen under military supervision would tend to improve the health, discipline and efficiency of the service. I concur in this opinion."

Among the queer trades of London, to be discovered in the new issue of Kelly's London Directory, is one which has a deep personal interest for the youth of all nations. The birch rod maker has advertised his abode. In a large building in Red Lion Square, Holborn, which has the appearance of a private dwelling rather than the fount of juvenile chastisement, orders are executed for hundreds of thousands of birch rods guaranteed to give entire satisfaction to the schoolmaster. During the year birch rods are despatched to all corners of the earth, and their sterling qualities are felt in all countries. Though the industry thrives ominously, there is some consolation for the schoolboy in the fact that there is no sign of a birch rod "boom." The manufacturers have observed a conservative policy, and the old style of a thin handle and a set number of birch twigs bunched at the end has survived.

A route has been suggested by the members of the Long Island Planning Committee for the proposed boulevard from Brooklyn to Montauk Point, N. Y. The proposition is declared to be an important one for all Long Island; in fact, the greatest benefit it has ever had. The route in Nassau, Queens and Kings counties was planned some time ago. From Farmingdale the road is to run north of the railroad track as far as Ronkonkoma, and at some point between Ronkonkoma and Yaphank it crosses the railroad and runs eastward a short distance south of the track of the railroad to within a quarter mile south of Riverhead, where it branches off toward Southampton, following the north course through the town over the Shinnecock Hills, taking the Peconic Bay side to Bridgehampton, where it is to connect with the road which the East Hampton people have adopted, which goes north of the villages of East Hampton and Amagansett and on to Montauk.

Two murderers and a burglar whose sentences run from ten years to life imprisonment drove quietly out of the State penitentiary at Joliet, Ill., the other afternoon in a stolen automobile while a watchful guard obligingly opened the great barred gates for them. Outside they threw on the high speed gear and whirled to freedom, south and east of the penitentiary, while the guard was trying to explain to his superiors how he came to let them go and why he did not guard more closely the automobile, the fast machine belonging to A. C. Loomis, general accountant at the prison. The three escaped convicts, all from Cook County, are Sigmund Roche, murderer; Stephen Ayres, murderer, and Edward Sheldon, burglar. Chief of Police McWeeny sent out automobile after automobile loaded with policemen armed with rifles and pistols from the south and southwest Chicago stations, warned every Chicago policeman to be on the watch for the men, and finally sent out Captain Halpin's "Own Rifles," which have scoured the city in vain with rifles for auto bandits.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

A Danish scientist, M. Hannover, has invented a metallic sponge, which has recently come into industrial use. It is composed of an alloy of lead and antimony, and consists of a loose-meshed network inclosing spaces of larger or smaller size. It is employed for absorbing resins, oils, etc. A description was given to the French Academy of Sciences by M. Le Chatelier and is reported in *La Revue*.

A. Kantrowitz, a dealer in ice cream at Tarrytown, N. Y., while driving his automobile through John D. Rockefeller's estate at Pocantico Hills, the other day, saw a deer. Kantrowitz chased the deer for half a mile and tried to go through a fence. Kantrowitz turned his car after the animal and rammed it up against the fence, but the deer worked loose and dashed off into the Rockefeller woods. Kantrowitz says he could have killed the deer if he had had a club.

Roger Bresnahan, formerly manager of the St. Louis National League baseball team, will wear a Chicago Club uniform next season, according to Charles W. Murphy, president of the club, at Chicago, January 6. "He is a great acquisition," said Murphy. "I won't say what salary Bresnahan is going to get, but I had to outbid Dreyfuss of Pittsburgh for him, and that shows what others think of Bresnahan. I intend to use him as a catcher with Archer." Murphy said Roger has not signed yet, but that a three-year contract will be mailed to Bresnahan's home in Toledo, O.

William Haase, fourteen, of Englewood, N. J., was given a rifle on Christmas and, later, with William Bisig, ten, and some other boys, he went to play on the railroad tracks of the New York and Northern road at Englewood. In the play the gun was discharged, the bullet striking Bisig in the head. The other boys ran for help. Bisig was taken to the Englewood Hospital, where he died. No definite official action has been taken so far. Ferdinand Bisig, the dead boy's father, was lamed recently by the explosion of a home-made cannon. Walter, twelve, another son, lost his right leg when part of the exploded cannon struck him.

On December 14th Antony Jannus finally reached Orleans in his Benoist tractor hydro-aeroplane, fitted a Roberts 75 horsepower two-cycle motor. Jannus has nearly two months making the trip, which was accomplished above the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. A part of the distance, which totals over 1,500 miles, he tried a passenger. At the start of his flight Mr. Benoist tempted to keep up with him in an automobile, but he was unable to do so. Jannus made exhibition flights at various places and demonstrated the possibility of touring in hydro-aeroplane, even under unfavorable weather conditions. Almost every flight he made was either started or finished in the rain. Nevertheless, Jannus persevered and finally reached his goal without having experienced a severe accident. The Benoist biplane is fitted with a monoplane body, and has a novel feature in the form of adjustable balancing planes located between the main planes at each end of the machine.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Blinks—This room is very close. Can't I have a bit of fresh air? Waiter—Cert'nly, sir. (Yells.) One more! Fresh!

"Forty years ago that fellow arrived in our town with a cent." "I suppose he owns half the city now?" "No, he's still broke."

Mrs. Goodheart—So you won't chop the wood? Hobo—No, lady. I'm a kleptomaniac. I'm afraid I might steal some of it.

Baron (to pastor who is a mediocre minister)—I'll give you Monday preaching the best. Pastor—But, baron, I never preach on Mondays! Baron—That is the reason.

"Look at the beautiful engagement ring George gave me!" "Why don't you do as Belle did?" "What did she do?" "She made him have the stones reset when he gave it to her."

First Farmer—'Ere, you remember telling me you gave me your 'oss turpentine when 'e 'ad colic. Second Farmer—Ay! First Farmer—Well, I gave my 'oss turpentine, 'e died. Second Farmer—Well, mine died, too!

In a recent examination in one of the schools of Baltimore more a teacher asked this question: "Name three classes of people." One of the answers was, "Men, women and babies." In answer to "Name one animal which provides you with both food and clothing," one boy said, "My mother."

There had been a domestic spat at breakfast. "You're a monster!" snapped the matron, who was always scolding. "You are not like my two former husbands. They were tender men." "I never doubted that they were tender men," ventured the meek man, "when you kept them hot water all the time." And he just cleared the fire-porch two yards ahead of the rolling-pin.

FOUND DROWNED.

By John Sherman.

Some years now since I was attached to the Thames division of the Metropolitan Police, and during the short time I was with them I had some of the most curious and interesting experiences that ever fell to the lot of any man to whom such duties and on the river, but my investigations were confined to matters relating to the business carried on upon the Thames.

On a dark, foggy and cheerless night one of the boats was found in a body of a stout, though well built, middle-aged man. At first we thought it a case of suicide, for his hands and chain were still upon him. The watch had stopped at five minutes past eleven, and as he was picked up about twelve, he evidently had not been long in the water. There was no money on the body beyond a few shillings in one of the pockets; not a scrap of paper of any kind to lend the slightest clue to identification.

When the inquest came to be held the evidence of the doctor who had made the post-mortem examination threw a more serious complexion on the affair than we had at first thought possible. There was a bruise on the forehead, and at this spot he found the skull fractured, the result evidently of a blow from some blunt instrument, probably the thick end of a loaded cane. That blow he was certain had been received in life, and before the deceased had got in the water. The presence of a watch—valuable one—and the chain was, however, a stumbling block in the way of the robbery theory, and after considerable discussion a verdict of "Found drowned" was returned, which is always unsatisfactory, to my way of thinking, as it is really no verdict at all. The authorities, however, thought the affair of sufficient importance to offer a substantial reward for the arrest and conviction of the guilty ones.

When examining the corpse I found that he had worn two solitaires to fasten his wristbands. These were fashioned in the form of cherub's heads, and from the appearance of the metal were certainly of ancient make. I saw one of them in the plural, but in fact there was only one, on the left wristband. The solitaire which should have fastened the right wristband was missing, and not only missing, but the shirt cuff was torn at the button-hole. This stud or solitaire had evidently been torn from the cuff in a struggle, and in all probability had fallen to the ground unperceived, and would mark the spot where the encounter had taken place.

Three weeks after I was making my way toward Highgate, Wapping, when on passing through a dingy, dirty boat abutting on the river my attention was caught by a window of what is technically known as a "penny shop," an unlicensed pawnbroker's, in fact. It advertised a circus, a wild beast show, or something of the kind. In stopping to look at that, my eye rested upon a glass-covered case containing a few articles of jewelry—a brooch, a scarfpin, a pair of ear-rings and—yes, on the very top—my missing solitaire! I was in the shop in a twinkling.

"Will you let me look at that solitaire in the window?" I asked of the fat, greasy looking Jewess who came out of an inner room in answer to my knock on the counter.

She eyed me very suspiciously, and I saw in an instant that she knew me.

She knew it would have been worse than useless objecting, so she lifted the little case from the window, but with an evident bad grace.

"Yes, I thought I knew it," I said, as I took the little ornament in my hand. There, sure enough, was a monogram, "W. H.," engraved—the fac simile of that on the solitaire already in my possession.

Mrs. Rachael fenced my questions as to how she became possessed of this little trinket, but at last she confessed that she had given Tim Reilly sixpence for the thing, and more than it was worth.

I knew "Tim"—a longshore laborer—and his haunts pretty well, and I interviewed that gentleman at his favorite resort, "The Jolly Pilot," that very night, and in our conversation was short, it certainly was to the point.

"A word with you, Tim," I said. "Where did you get that little silver stud you sold to Mrs. Rachael the other day?" I asked.

Tim's jaw dropped.

"The little angel's head—is it that ye mane?"

I nodded.

"I found it down at Mither Abbott's wharf. 'Twas the other morning, and it was meself that showed it to Mither Finnigen—leastways, Mither Carston—an' he tould me it was of no great value. 'But ye can keep it, Tim,' he says, says he, 'and maybe ye'll get the price of a drop o' whisky for it.' An' so I did, begorrah. An' that's all meself knows about it at all."

Mr. Carston was Mr. Abbott's managing clerk, and my next interview was with him. He remembered the circumstance of Tim finding the solitaire perfectly well, and as he thought it of little or no value, had told Tim he might dispose of it as he thought best. But when I told him what the finding of that little ornament on Mr. Abbott's wharf portended, he became suddenly very grave and very reticent.

"Dear me; you do not imagine that anything so dreadful as a murder took place on our wharf! I feel as though I were implicated already. It is very shocking. I would not like this to reach Mr. Abbott's ears, for he has been in a delicate state of health for some time—mental worry, you know."

"Indeed!" I ejaculated.

"Yes. Some mortgages on some property falling due, and as he can't redeem them, the mortgagee threatens to foreclose, if he has not already done so. But the peculiar part about it is that the money was raised to pay off some liabilities incurred by a younger brother, who has since died, leaving a widow and a young family, and I believe that if the property is sold they will be absolutely penniless."

"It is a sad case indeed," he went on, "and, acquainted as I am with Mr. Abbott's affairs, I do not see how he is going to redeem the mortgages. The fellow was here on the 2d, and from what I could make out he would not wait any longer than a month, and here's the 30th! Only three more days, and, so far as I know, nothing done."

"Yes, the time is short," I replied, mentally making a note of the date—the body was found on the night of the 2d. I was, as you will perceive, already making a connection in my own mind. "I should imagine it was not a very pleasant interview," I continued.

"Rather the reverse," replied Cranston, with a dry smile. "I could hear their voices raised to a high pitch, even though the door was closed; and when Houldsworth came out of Mr. Abbott's room his face was certainly flushed, as if with passion."

"Houldsworth?" I repeated, inquiringly.

"Yes, the mortgagee. Oh, ah—I forgot! I didn't tell you the fellow calls himself Wilbraham Houldsworth—though in reality he is a Jew money lender, his right name being Jacob Abrahams. I know him well, as he comes from my part of the country—Bristol; though I am thankful to say he doesn't know me."

"Wilbraham Houldsworth!" I repeated, thinking of the "W. H." on the solitaires. "As you know him so well, you would easily recognize his portrait?" I said, producing the photograph suddenly.

"Yes, yes—no—that is," said Carston, "it's something like him. Mr. Abbott must not know anything about it if you can possibly help it. And he was here late that very night, too. Curious—very curious!"

I found that Mr. Jacob Abrahams, otherwise known as Wilbraham Houldsworth, had resided at Bristol, and the photograph was positively identified as that of Mr. Houldsworth, who had journeyed to London on the first day of the month and had not been seen since. The case was clear. Driven to bay, Abbott had inveigled the money-lender to his wharf late that evening on some pretext or other, and there murdered him, possessed himself of the mortgages and other documents, and then cast the body of his victim into the river as the safest hiding place.

Of course he was arrested, and his explanation of his possession of the mortgage deeds was simply that he had redeemed them in the usual way, and had raised the money partly by selling out stock and partly by a mortgage, which he had raised for that purpose, on the wharf. This was easily proved. But then, contending the counsel for the crown, this raising of money might have been a blind, and there was no evidence of the money having been paid to the dead man; for, with the exception of a few pence, his pockets were absolutely empty.

Against this it was argued that the absence of any money upon the person of the deceased might be due to either one of two things. Either Mr. Houldsworth had deposited the money in a place of safety after receiving it from Mr. Abbott, or he had been robbed of it by some third party who knew of his having it, and had enticed him to the wharf and there robbed him. This was really the theory of the defense.

Now I knew a little more than Mr. Carston gave me credit for. I knew that Mr. Abbott was home at eight o'clock, and we had direct evidence that the deed must have been committed somewhere about eleven o'clock.

"Why not have produced the evidence which would have established this alibi?" you will ask. I reply, for the reason that only Mrs. Abbott could have proved this, and, as you know, a wife cannot give evidence for or against her husband in a case of this kind.

"I know," exclaimed the poor lady to me, "I know he is innocent. He was at home with me the whole evening talking over this affair, and saying how well Mr. Houldsworth had behaved in the matter."

You will remember that in the doctor's evidence it was demonstrated that the dead man had received a blow on the right temple, and he had further said, though I do not think I mentioned it at the time, that it must have been dealt by a left-handed man. I did not think much of this at the time, but after the preliminary inquiry before the magistrate, I was present when the witnesses signed their depositions, and, to my surprise, Carston, changing his walking-stick from his left to his right hand, took a pen in his left hand and so signed.

"Yes," he explained, "my right hand is practically useless; I injured it when a boy. But use, you know, I made my left hand as though it were my right, and the muscles of this arm are wonderfully developed."

This conversation recurred to me after my doubts had been aroused as to the misstatements as to the conversation between Mr. Abbott and Houldsworth on the day of the murder. What motive has actuated Carston in this desire to throw me on the wrong scent. And what screen the actual perpetrator. And who was that? Himself!

Imbued with this idea, I quietly prosecuted my inquiries while the preparations for the trial of Mr. Abbott were going on. A messenger had called at the boarding-house where Mr. Houldsworth was staying, asking him if he would wait upon Mr. Abbott some time that evening. The note shall be here until ten," said the note, which, carried enough, was found and handed to me, and which, disguised as it was, I was certain that it was in the handwriting of Carston.

At a public house not far from the wharf I learned that a man had called for and drunk some brandy in such a way as to excite the landlord's attention, at about eleven o'clock.

I conveyed the landlord to the Old Bailey when Mr. Abbott was put on trial, and took care he should be identified in court when Carston stepped into the witness box. Carston identified him positively. This was enough for me, and when Joseph Carston stepped out of the witness box he stepped into the arms of a policeman, who immediately arrested him upon suspicion of being concerned in the murder. And we brought it home to him, sure enough. He had inveigled Houldsworth to the office, struck him a tremendous blow with his loaded walking stick, with his left hand and strong left arm, plundered the body, and then thrown the body into the river.

He did not, however, in his death "afford a spectacle to the multitude," for he perished by his own hand on the day previous to that fixed for his execution. He had some way secreted a small portion of aconite about his person, and this very soon did its destined work.

Various unusual materials have been tried in the manufacture of surface car wheels, but it has remained for the far West to conceive of the possibilities of rubber. In Enid, Okla., several trolley cars, fitted with rubber wheels, are now being operated experimentally, and the results so far have been decidedly satisfactory.

NEWS OF THE DAY

Reyes, ex-president of Colombia, sailed from Cherbourg January 7 to visit the United States and make a tour of the South American republics. In an interview he said: "I am hopeful of securing the submission to the arbitral tribunal of Colombia's differences with the United States over the manner in which the latter acquired the Panama territory. We were not fairly treated in that respect. We don't ask the United States to pay us money for damages, but other recognition should be given. We believe Panama should pay a portion of our national debt."

The doubling of the wheat crop of the United States is the possibility raised by scientific discoveries made by Prof. Aaronsohn of Jerusalem, according to the announcement made at the University of Chicago. Prof. Aaronsohn is director of the agricultural station in Palestine, an institution financed by J. Rosenwald and Judge Sam Mack of Chicago. The investigator, who found the original wheat plant growing wild in Palestine after years of search, is engaged in crossing the plant with better varieties of wheat in an effort to produce a superior one. He described his progress to his Chicago friends when he passed through the city a few weeks ago on his way to the World's lands congress in Canada.

Following the lines of some of the road races on the Continent in the early days, the Californians are now considering the project of holding a road race from Los Angeles to San Francisco. Don Lee, a Los Angeles dealer, has proposed that there be such a race on July 4 next, and that the purse be \$50,000. To back up his proposal, he has offered to contribute \$1,000 toward the purse. The road would lead through the San Joaquin Valley, and it is figured that dealers, motorists and townspeople generally in Modesto, Merced, Fresno and other towns through which the runners would pass should be willing to contribute to the purse. It is proposed to rebuild the roads for the race, and with a large purse it is figured that the pick of American and foreign drivers would be secured.

Struck on the head by a large clock which stood in front of the jewelry store of J. Bendix & Son, John Gannon, of No. 40 East Thirty-sixth street, was taken to the New York Hospital in a serious condition the other day. The accident was the result of a heavy automobile skidding against the pillar support of the clock and knocking it down. William Young, of No. 211 East Fortieth street, driver of the car, was locked up in the East Thirty-fifth street station on a technical charge of assault. Philip Gannon said he and his brother were just about to walk past the jewelry store when the truck skidded into the clock, and before he could get his brother out of the way John was struck on the head. At the hospital it was said that Gannon was suffering from a compound fracture of the skull.

The Hamburg-American Company's new liner Imperator will sail on May 7 on her maiden voyage to New York. The Imperator is the largest liner in the world. She is an eleven-story floating palace 919 feet long, with engines of 80,000 horsepower. Her displacement is 50,000 tons and she can accommodate 5,000 passengers. Among other luxuries the Imperator is fitted with three electric elevators, a winter garden, summer houses, a theatre, a gymnasium, a Ritz restaurant, swimming baths, a ballroom, telephone and a cottage cafe. The swimming bath is the copy of one unearthed at Pompeii, with mosaic pavements that are reproductions of those discovered at Treves. The first class dining saloon is in the Louis XVI style. It is 500 feet long.

The severe cold which has been general over all California has done the most damage in the southern counties, where the loss to the orange and lemon crops will reach \$20,000,000. The mercury fell below the freezing point in most parts of the State for the first time in many years. Most of the Southern California citrus crop was on the trees, so that the damage was very heavy. At first it was believed the loss would be 70 per cent. of the crop, but later estimates show that it will be about 40 per cent. This is a severe blow to orange and lemon growers, as most of them have no other resources. If the citrus fruit is killed, then they have no crop at all. Throughout Northern California the weather was as cold as in the south, but the loss will be merely nominal, because the deciduous fruit was not in bud. The snowfall in the mountains was heavy, which assures an ample supply of water for the miners for the coming season. Snow also fell in San Francisco and other coast towns for the first time in years.

Landing at Cape Canaveral near Titusville, Fla., January 7, after a rough trip in a small power boat, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Chesebrough of New York, accompanied by four men of their yacht Huntress, told of the explosion of their vessel Monday off Cape Canaveral, east of this city, and the loss of three of their seamen. The accident occurred at 4 o'clock in the morning, when the Huntress was on the way from New York to Miami, where Mr. and Mrs. Chesebrough were to pass the winter. Immediately after the explosion, which riddled the handsome craft, causing her to sink, the small power launch was boarded and the survivors shoved off and proceeded to Canaveral. The cook, steward and a seaman were killed in the explosion, their bodies not being recovered. From Canaveral, the shipwrecked party was brought to this city by Capt. Peterson. Mr. and Mrs. Chesebrough left here soon afterward for their destination. The Huntress was ninety feet long. Her owner is a member of the New York Yacht Club. The yacht cost \$30,000. Mr. Chesebrough is the youngest son of Robert A. Chesebrough, the vaseline manufacturer of New York. Mrs. Chesebrough's jewelry was lost in the wreck.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

SAN FRANCISCO SURGEON PERFORMS REMARKABLE OPERATION.

An operation performed by Dr. Milton F. Clark on a mongrel dog, in which a piece of bone was removed from the hind leg at the joint and a diamond-bearing, sterling silver hinge substituted, is attracting attention as one of the most remarkable feats of surgery in recent years and liable to have an important bearing on the treatment of humans. The dog was suffering from a diseased joint which prevented its walking, and Dr. Clark, who is widely noted as a surgeon and is Vice-Consul for Greece, determined to try an experiment he had long in mind. With the assistance of Dr. A. S. Tuchler he performed the operation, substituting the silver hinge without disturbing the nerves or ligaments, and when the cur came out of the anaesthetic he yelped a couple of times and trotted around the room.

POCKET BILLIARD CHAMPIONSHIP.

Harry Hart, of Brooklyn, N. Y., has challenged the winner of the pending contest between Alfredo De Oro and Thomas Hueston for the pocket billiard championship, and has deposited with the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company the amount required to validate such a procedure. De Oro and Hueston will compete the latter part of February. The champion will practice at Tim Flynn's, while Hueston will prepare at Sam Gruhn's. In twenty-three years De Oro has lost only four pocket billiard matches. He has been beaten several times in tournaments, but has been almost invincible in matches. His first defeat was at the hands of Powers, at Hardman Hall, New York, on May 8, 9 and 10, 1889. Four years later, Clearwater mastered him in a contest at Pittsburgh, on November 2, 3 and 4. In 1889, in a six nights' competition, at 150 balls each night, at Maurice Daly's, Keogh beat him. His last defeat in a match took place at St. Louis on November 16, 17 and 18, 1908, when Hueston won the championship.

BLUNDER RUINS 20,000,000 PANAMA STAMPS.

More than twenty million two-cent stamps of the Panama exposition series have been destroyed by the Post-office Department because of an error in the printing.

All the stamps bore the inscription, "Gatun Locks," but the beautiful view set forth represented San Pedro Miguel. The department, not wishing to subject itself to criticism, ordered the entire issue destroyed. The error on the die will be corrected, new plates made and a fresh supply printed. It is doubtful if one of the wrongly printed stamps ever reaches the public.

The new issue will bear the inscription, "Panama Canal." Never before has so vast a quantity of stamps of a single type been destroyed, especially one that had never been issued.

The one, five and ten cent stamps commemorating the exposition were placed on sale on January 1, but the set is yet incomplete.

HARVARD ATHLETIC STUDENTS.

According to statistics compiled by the athletic societies of Harvard University, nearly 1,000 students participated in athletics during the first three months of the college year. This number shows a large increase over the previous year, according to previous reports from the same source.

Football led all the other branches of sport at the university, 197 men reporting for work on Soldiers Field. Rowing came next, with 153 students. Tennis tournaments brought out a total of 149 competitors, and 177 competed in track events. Baseball, soccer, hockey, swimming, fencing and gymnastics combined brought out 100 athletes.

Arrangements have been completed by the managers of the Yale and Harvard track teams for the proposed athletic games with the combined teams of Oxford and Cambridge in the Harvard stadium, and the event needs only the satisfaction by the Oxford and Cambridge authorities to assure the American colleges a visit to the Britons. Pending the acceptance of the agreement, the managers of the two teams have declined to make public the date of the games, but it is said on authority that the date within two weeks of the intercollegiate championships will be selected. This would make the date of the games the middle of June.

ARCTIC EXPLORERS IN PERIL.

The Berlin correspondent of The London Times graphed recently:

"Captain Berg, who is destined to command the German Arctic expedition, received a telegram from Captain Ritschel, which says that the Herzog Ernest is in at Treurenburg Bay, and that no news has been received from Lieutenant Schroder Stranz and his companions left the ship in August on a sledging expedition.

"The ship's crew left the Herzog Ernest on September 9. The oceanographer, Dr. Rudiger, was left behind at the Wijde Bay station with a frozen foot. He had no provisions 'until January.'

"Captain Ritschel and three companions went on ahead. They were detained at Cape Petermann by weather and darkness. On December 10 Captain Ritschel went on alone to Advent Bay, where he arrived December 27, while his three companions returned to the ship. Captain Ritschel says he will probably lose some toes. He is confident that the Herzog Ernest is safe and can be fetched at the end of the summer.

"Captain Ritschel refuses to be pessimistic about the news, but, as will be seen, there is no real explanation of what happened, and, above all, it is not understood why Captain Ritschel left his ship. As regards the success of the expedition, it is hoped that it may reach the station at Cross Bay."