

LORD OF THE DESERT

By PAUL de LANEY.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Trapper's Story.

"Tell us, Mr. Hammerley, about yourself," said Bertha, the night of the trapper's return after supper was over and the evening was before them. "Father," she continued, "has told me very much about you, but he only knows your late life. We are under so many obligations to you that I feel interested in your early history, your childhood, your birthplace, your father and mother, your brothers and sisters—everything about you, Mr. Hammerley!"

"You ask something that I know but little about, myself," replied the trapper. "I have been on these plains so long that the past all seems like a dream. In fact, it is so much like a dream that I sometimes get it confounded with my dreams and scarcely know which is real and which a dream."

"I was born in New York City. At least, when I first recollect, we were living in Boston, and my mother told me that I was born in New York, and that we had lived in Chicago. My step-father was a big coarse fellow, a ship-carrier, and as soon as I was large enough to be in the way was very cruel to me. It seems that he and my mother were married when I was only two years old, and that my father had died when I was only one year old. I do not even know his name. It is unfortunate, too, but I was so young and knew not the importance of having my own name, so I took the name of my step-father, though I bear the given name of my father. This much I learned, but I do not remember how I learned it."

"Anyway, my mother died when I was still a mere child and then I was sent to a sort of orphanage or place for the poor, and as soon as I got old enough to leave the place I did so, and drifted into the streets—was a common street arab for several years—sold papers, shined shoes and did such things as that class of boys do until I was fifteen years old. In the meantime I had been reading cheap novels—I had picked up a smattering education at the orphanage, and kept on reading. My soul was fired to go west and kill Indians, and be a hunter and trapper and do such other things that a frontier life might lead to."

"Well, one day I met Leonard Liggett, an Englishman, who said he had known my mother and father and took a great interest in me on that account. He said that he was going to join an immigrant train to cross the plains and asked me if I did not want to come. It was the thing I most desired, and I had no preparations to make, as I had all that I possessed in the world on my back."

"We joined the immigrant train early in the spring and I worked my way by driving stock, helping about camp and doing whatever fell to my lot. We had many adventures, were attacked by the Indians, some of the immigrants took sick and died, and the teams gave out, provisions ran short, in fact, we had the usual mishaps of a trip across this long stretch of uninhabited country."

"When we reached the Boise City military post my friend Liggett met Martin Lyle and after a few minutes conversation he got employment with him and came on to the desert. They seemed to know each other, or something of each other, and after they met they were never separated before they left for the plains. Liggett came and bade me good bye and said he was sorry he could not get me employment, too, but I did not care to come to the desert then, did not want to work on a ranch, and remained with the immigrant train under the protection of the military post."

"An old trapper by the name of Mike Hope came into Boise one day with a fine load of furs. He was dressed in furs and was scarred and rugged, and told of his adventures on the desert. I followed him about the post every day to hear him relate his adventures and when he had finally sold his furs at a good price and bought his supplies, among them being a number of large bear traps, I ventured to approach him and request that he take me along. He sized me up and after learning from some of the immigrants with whom I had crossed the plains that I was what he considered a true blue, he consented."

"We left and came to this very place, and while he had prepared a great deal of the improvements here, I assisted him in making more. But he had found the secret chamber, and it was always guarded as such and kept prepared as a refuge in case we were ever attacked by the Indians, though he always treated them right and often made them presents. On account of this course we were never attacked by them, though we often met them when they were on the war path."

"The second summer after I came poor old Mike left me in charge of the place and traps and he made another trip to Boise. That is the last I ever saw of him. He got into a game of cards and then a fight and he was killed along with several others in the fight. When I finally became alarmed I made the trip to Boise and learned the facts of his death. I also learned that he did his part in the fight."

"Left in this manner there was but one thing for me to do, I had learned the trapping business and liked it. There was money in it, and I returned and took charge of the place as my own. In a short time after my return I found my father under the circumstances I doubtless that he had explained to you and since that time I have had no occasion to get lonesome or give up the plains, as I have made his cause my cause and long to see him revenged against the terrible deed of his brother and his companion, Dan Follett."

"But did you ever meet your friend Liggett, again?" inquired Bertha. "No, not to talk with him. I only saw him once, but I do not think he recognized me. I stopped at the Stone House once for water and saw him there. I do not think he would know me now," said the trapper. "But you say he seemed to know my uncle?" replied Bertha. "No, I did not mean that," said the trapper. "They appeared to know something in common or to understand one another in some way. But that is also like a dream and I may have been mistaken."

"After a few moments of silence the trapper continued: "So that is my own story, so far as I know it, and sally just before night, but in the open the Indians had an advantage from behind the rocks and fences and the cowboys returned with some loss in wounded."

It was then that the Lord of the Desert decided to send for relief. General Crook had recently arrived at old Fort Warner and, expecting that the Indians would guard the trail toward this point, Martin Lyle knew but one man that he could trust to reach the Fort, and that was William Hammerley. He called for a volunteer to carry a message to the trapper and Metaker, anxious to return to the trapper's abode was quick to volunteer and was more quickly selected to carry the message. He had slipped through the enemy's lines without mishap and made his way to the trapper's quarters bringing the trapper a request from the Lord of the Desert to go to the government fort for aid at once and promising him a liberal reward for his trouble.

(To be Continued.)

POLICEMAN'S LESSON.

One Tells How Reckless He Was with His Weapons at First.

"Experience is certainly a good teacher," observed a member of the Washington police force while discussing the order of Maj. Sylvester concerning the establishment of a school of instruction. "Some instruction to new appointees," he added, "is absolutely necessary, and with the proper start experience will do the rest."

"I remember my first tour of duty, which was many years ago, and I also remember that it not only came near being my last, but came near resulting disastrously for me. Having been sworn in and sent out to police duty without being instructed as to my rights, I started over the beat to which I was assigned armed with all the dangerous weapons usually carried by policemen."

"These weapons were not intended for mere playthings I thought and that I had a right to use them under any and all circumstances I did not doubt. Should I want to make an arrest for any violation of the law and was unable to overtake the offender I was satisfied that I had the right to stop him with a bullet."

"During the evening," the policeman continued, according to the Washington Star, "I came across a party of crack shooters on the commons, and that I thought was an opportunity to distinguish myself. Being unable to overtake those who had participated in the game I proceeded to send bullets toward them, and only gave up my efforts when I had emptied my pistol."

So far as I was concerned the affair was fun for me, but I nearly dropped dead when a friend informed me that I might have been given a penitentiary sentence had one of the bullets from my pistol taken effect.

"During the succeeding twenty years or more I did not find it necessary to discharge my revolver. Experience proved a good teacher for me, although proper instruction at the time of my appointment would have avoided the possibility of my being sent to prison."

SUCCEEDS HIS FATHER AS

SULTAN OF ZANZIBAR.

Prince Said Ali, who visited London as Zanzibar's representative to the coronation, has been proclaimed sultan, to succeed his father, who died recently.



His Highness Said Ali.

The new sultan is not yet 20. He was accompanied to London by Gen. Raikes, the English officer who is in command of the army and police in Zanzibar. The crowded London streets and the rush of life there according to cable dispatches, dazed the prince, and he was exceedingly anxious to get back to his own country. The picture is from a photograph taken in London.

AN UP-COUNTRY SOLOMON.

He Rendered a Very Wise and Equitable Decision.

In a small town in one of the central counties of New York State lives an old German, who, because of the high esteem in which he is held in the community, was elected justice of the peace. The old gentleman was once called upon, says the New York Times, to decide a most perplexing question. One of his fellow citizens owned a dog which, although not very vicious, had a bad habit of barking at passers-by. A neighbor vowed vengeance. His chance came when he was returning from a shooting trip, gun in hand. The dog ran out and barked savagely at him, and he fired at the animal. As his aim was bad, the dog escaped, reeling, with nothing more serious than a wounded tail.

The owner of the dog had his neighbor brought before the old justice on a charge of cruelty to animals, and the court-room was crowded with the partisans of both men. The justice heard the charge, and then the defense that the dog was a dangerous animal and a menace to the neighborhood. The old German cleared his throat and delivered the dictum:

"Der man—he has been guilty of cruelty to animals." And one side of the court-room applauded the justice of the decision. "But der other—he was a vicious dog." And the other side voiced its approval. "I will fine der man five dollars." Another murmur in the court-room. "But I will gif him another shot at der dog."

CHRISTMAS AT THE OLD HOME.

MIRANDY. We will, if you say the word. Hasn't old-fashioned time on Christmas day? These still rooms will ring as in days of yore. When the children were small and full of play.

The homestead seems lonesome when Christmas time comes. And nute as the light of a mouse or a With no one but you and me, left alone. Grown thoughtful with age—like the dog and the cat.

I remember the children's Christmas mirth. And how we together sat and plan. Just before Christmas, arranging to have. A merry good time, same as now we can.

Mirandy, we will, if you say the word. Just stating our warmest and fullest desire. For friends and kindred to share a big feast. At the old homestead, 'round a roasting good fire.

The garret shall echo with youth's mirthful laughter. And the children free to explore. We'll build a nest bower of fresh evergreen. And straw dyed pink, as we used to before.

A Christmas tree will add zest to the feast. And polish big eyes of the girls and the boys. Just as it did when our children were tota. And shared in the harvest of Christmas-time joys.

Then let us prepare for an old-fashioned time. In honor of Christ—in pure gratitude. For favors received and blessings enjoyed. Our hearts will relapse a happier mood.

Our twilight of life begins to descend. And age, like a hawk, is drifting away. To the westward of youth, father and fast. While time plucks swifter the moments each day.

So let us invite, as I say, a brief note. Just stating our warmest and fullest desire. For friends and kindred to share a big feast. At the old homestead, 'round a roasting good fire.

YU-E-TIDE REFORMATION.

BY DR. WILLARD MACKENZIE.

CHRISTMAS Day promised to dawn bright and fair, for the western sky was one great mass of glowing pink, but pretty Madge Early was not in harmony with the beauty and sentiment of the occasion. Her fair face was clouded, and although arranging the Christmas tree for the children, more than once a sad tear fell across her eyelids.

Madge had a lover, and that was the secret. There was not a truer-hearted lad in all the county than Ned Walters. They had exchanged vows of constancy to be confronted by her stern, self-willed father who the ultimatum that he would sooner see her dead than wedded to a son of his bitterest enemy!

It was an old-time feud, and the lovers had supposed it long since buried with old Rufus Walters himself—a lawsuit over a trade, won by Walters fairly, but the obstinate farmer would not forget or forgive.

When his edict came Madge demurred. Ned rebelled, and they met clandestinely. The morning before Christmas Early had learned of this. There had been a violent scene. He threatened to turn Nellie from the house if she ever countenanced Ned again.

"Father," she sobbed piteously, "I love him!" "And I hate him!" snarled Early, "and all the Walters brood, and always shall! He'll defy me, eh? I'll hitch up after dinner and drive to Newburg. He's cashier in the bank, and Darrel owns it. Well, I've got over eight thousand dollars on deposit. I'll draw it out and inform Darrel not a penny do I put in again while that young jackanapes is in his employ. Insult me by defying my will, eh? Try to steal my daughter? Why, I'll drive him from Newburg, a beggar!"

"Oh, father, you wouldn't be so cruel!" moaned poor Madge. "I'll show you!"

Early went on his willful way. He drew his money, partly in gold, and placed it in a satchel under his buggy seat. Then he visited some storekeepers, put in the afternoon and about dusk started for home.

A two-wheeled cart passed him as he approached Dobbin's Grove, a lonely place of timber near the burning ground, but two strangers drove it, and he barely noticed them. Then, as he turned a bend he was halted summarily. The gig was standing unattended. One of its recent occupants grabbed his horse's bridle, the other presented a revolver, and reaching under the buggy seat drew out the treasure satchel.

"Keep still, or I'll shoot!" he gruffly warned, and the frightened farmer knew that he had been followed from town by robbers.

The thief tossed the satchel to his companion, who threw it into their own vehicle. Then both pulled Early from his buggy, overpowered him, tied him hand and foot, and giving his horse a cut with the whip, sent him flying down the road. The frightened Early saw their own house, started by the runaway, dash into the timber at full speed, but the robbers, now absorbed in his capture, did not notice this fact. He was carried through a thicket and dropped at the edge of a fence.

"He'll be safe from harm or help till we're far from pursuit!" laughed one of the men.

They went away. Early found himself helpless. It was very cold, and his limbs began to stiffen.

The moon had risen, and he could see the scintillating frost flakes in the air. He wondered if he would remain undiscovered until he had frozen to death.

Death! The thought chilled him to the bone. What a fearful Christmas Eve! Death? He quivered, as the first frost he noted that he lay near the fence surrounding the township cemetery.

Yes, and there yonder—that tall stone, standing so close, so clear, so seemingly accusing in the white moonlight—the conscience-stricken man recognized as the monument of the enemy he so bitterly hated.

What fearful thoughts ran riot through his mind! How dwindling was his courage in the light of his awful peril! It almost seemed like a rebellion, his being left here to die, struggling to beggar the son of the man towards whom, in this moment of weakness, loomed—realized he had loomed.

An hour went by. He was chilled to the marrow. He felt that long before midnight the cold would prove fatal. Suddenly he caught the echo of hoofs on the frozen highway. His hoarse voice rang out in piercing, desperate accents.

What was that? Help! relief? Oh, surely, a vehicle was picking a difficult course through the timber. A man sprang out, came towards him. He was rather sinister looking, for he wore a long black beard and a great enveloping ulster.

"Why?" he cried, "it's Mr. Early." "You know me," shivered the farmer. "I don't know you, but for mercy's sake, untie me, get me home!"

The stranger cut the ropes. He had to lift Early into the vehicle. As they quade towards the road, the farmer told what had happened.

His companion was strangely silent. He drove rapidly towards Early's farm. When they reached it he helped him out and up to the door.

"Come in, stranger. I've lost a little fortune to-night, but my life is saved, and you shall not go unrewarded."

"It'll be in soon as I tie the horse," promised the other.

The half-frozen Early tottered through the doorway. His rescuer went to the vehicle and lifted out something, hid it under his coat and also entered the kitchen.

Before the great log blaze in the old-fashioned fireplace Early crouched and shivered. Near him, pale and starved, stood Madge. Her father was narrating his misadventures.

"Madge," he said, "as I lay freezing to death, so near the grave of Seth Walters, it seemed like retribution. I've been wrong in my hatred. I see it different now. I've done a mean thing in trying to drive his son from Newburg."

"Oh, father!" "And you can tell him so. I've been un-Christianlike this Christmas eve, and my life has been spared when I gave it up for lost. I take it as a warning, and the loss of my money as a punishment."

Madge, crying, was on her knees at his side. "Oh, father," she sobbed, "then Ned—"

"Can come here when he wants." "Thank you, Mr. Early." "Ned!" quavered Madge.

After some, everybody sits around in a small circle as possible. A sheet is stretched across the circle, and held securely under each person's chin. Some one takes a small, downy feather, and letting it float in the air, gives it a puff. The person before whom it falls, blows it up and towards some one else. If it falls upon him, or if he lets it touch the sheet a forfeit is demanded.

An absurd game, called "Jack's Alive," requires a small piece of firewood, which, after being held in the fire until ablaze, is extinguished, leaving the end to smolder. The stick is passed from hand to hand. Each one blows it to keep it lighted, saying "Jack's Alive" as long as the spark remains. The person in whose hands "Jack" dies pays a forfeit.

There is a game called "Rooster" which causes no end of merriment, but it is necessary that one person of the party shall not know the game. The leader says aloud that he will whisper to each person the name of an animal, whose peculiar cry they must imitate at a signal from him. To all but the uninitiated person he whispers "keep perfectly still." To that one he whispers "Rooster." The leader then counts "One, two, three." At three a loud, prolonged and lusty crow from the victim of the joke initiates him into the mysteries of the rooster game.

Roast Peacock. In the earlier times a peacock was perhaps the most gorgeous and decorative

OMENS OF NEW YEAR.

Some superstitions of a People in Peculiar Signs.

IT is the custom of all nations to have some superstitions cluster about New Year's day, and some form of divination to foretell the future is practiced almost every land on Jan. 1. This, of course, is particularly the case with young people who desire to know whether they will get married during the coming year or soon thereafter. In the country districts of England and Germany there is a tea and coffee fest which is most satisfactory. A teaspoon is balanced carefully on the edge of a cup. Then tea or coffee, as the case may be, is dropped into it, drop by drop. Every drop that the spoon will hold without losing its balance means another year before the wedding. One or two large drops will usually upset the spoon, and so this is a very popular way of looking into the future.

The actions and voices of domestic animals on New Year's day are perhaps more significant than any other omens. A dog's cheerful bark on the morning is a most auspicious sign, while his howl

DEPARTURE OF THE OLD YEAR AND ARRIVAL OF THE NEW



"Hello!" gasped the astonished farmer, for, tearing off his false beard, the old man's rescuer revealed his real identity.

In few words Ned Walters explained the mystery. He felt that he must see Madge that Christmas eve, and disguising himself as an old man, he had taken a short cut through the timber, so came across the vehicle and horse of the robbers. He had driven on, hoping to find an owner, when Early's cries for help had attracted him.

"It is the same rig, Mr. Early," said Ned. "for here is a Christmas present for you, sir!"

The smiling Ned drew from under his coat the old man's satchel found under the seat of the gig.

Nellie was trembling with joy. With eagerness her father inspected the contents of the satchel. Then his eyes lifted to the handsome, manly features of the person who had saved his life and his property.

He arose, and solemnly joined Ned and Madge, hand in hand.

"And there, Ned Walters," he said heartily, "there is your Christmas present."

He usually is in the evening, after the Christmas dinner, when the platable plum pudding, has put everybody in good humor with the world. Somebody asks, "What shall we do?" Some one suggests "Those foolish Christmas games we used to play." And, in short order, staid men and dignified women are congregated about a table.

Col. Kentucky—Uncle, what's the price of yon turkey?

Uncle Reuben—Well, sah! dat dog he got my trousseau and some of mah leg; but I don't grieve dah price—no, sah!

Somewhat Uncertain. Lena—Are you going to give Mary a Christmas present?

Josie—Dear me! I don't know yet. I can't find out whether she's going to give me anything.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Where Are Last Year's Toys. Oh little girl, oh little boy, you took ahead with glee.

And wonder what the gifts the Saint shall bring to you next year! A thousand fancies fill your heads, a thousand dreams you dream Of dollars made in wondrous ways or things that go by steam:

You'll like whatever comes, you know, And childishly you vow To keep your treasures well, but oh Where are the toys of last year now?

You shouted at the Jumbling Jack you'd begged the Saint to bring; You laughed to see the antics of the monkey on the string.

The fairy book, the pictured blocks, the little train, the doll— Ah how you danced with gladness as you looked upon them all!

But that was long, so long ago, And you, you know, somehow Have newer toys to-day, and oh Where are the toys of last year now?

Which you— A loving glance, a happy strength to take New-found responsibilities for woman's sake!

You grasp new hands and gladly go, And faithfully you vow To cherish and to love, but oh Where are the toys of last year now? —Chicago Record-Herald.

Latest Quotation. Col. Kentucky—Uncle, what's the price of yon turkey?

Uncle Reuben—Well, sah! dat dog he got my trousseau and some of mah leg; but I don't grieve dah price—no, sah!

Somewhat Uncertain. Lena—Are you going to give Mary a Christmas present?

Josie—Dear me! I don't know yet. I can't find out whether she's going to give me anything.—Philadelphia Bulletin.

is very unfavorable. To meet a cat on the morn of the new year is considered by people in the Latin countries as a sign that they will change their residence, and it also betokens ill for the future.

Throughout southern Europe it is regarded as a most fortunate sign to see a pig, signifying plenty for the coming twelvemonth. The sight of a snake is the worst conceivable omen, for it means death by violence. To see a jackal, magpie or crow is a sign that the beholder will be cheated on all sides during the following year.

On New Year's day a hard-headed Scotchman will take a Bible and place it upon a table, letting it fall open of its own accord. Then, without looking, he will place his finger upon the page where it has opened and read the verse on which it rests. (This is supposed to indicate his fortune for the coming twelvemonth.)

In France the children do not hang up their stockings on Christmas, but on New Year's eve. These are not filled by Santa Claus, but by the Christ child. He comes with a whole convoy of angels to help him carry the gifts which he brings to make the little ones happy. The latter do not enter the parlor, where the stockings hung until such one has knelt in prayer to the father of the family and received his blessing.

New Year's day in Persia is celebrated much like the Christian New Year. The women cap is a very important part of the costume. There is a custom of exchanging presents on this occasion.

It is a custom to give a Christmas gift to members of the family and limit your other gifts to your acquaintances.

Christmas is the stand up and cause to give themselves, and the much more peace and comfort to the family as Christmas has been even been possible under the "exchange system."

Your dearest friends—those you especially delight in making happy—you can remember in the most interesting way, on their birthday anniversaries, and such gifts, made informally and unexpectedly, are without the odious return idea which has in some measure marred the beautiful custom of Christmas giving.—Ada C. Sweet in Woman's Home Companion.

To the New Year. Up to the great heights and With gentler dream and glow— Row down the perfect need— Blind dread wounds that bleed And lift, from darkest night Earth to eternal light! —Atlanta Constitution.

The best thing to put in a warm Christmas stocking is a poor child's foot.