

OUR STORY TELLER



TRAPPED BY APACHES.

His closely-cropped beard and mustache were whitened by the snows of many winters, but his eyes were still bright with the fire of manly vigor and his frame as upright and supple apparently as when he left West Point to take his first gazette. Long years had elapsed since that time, when a raw subaltern, possessed as they all are, with the belief that his presence was needed to improve the morals and discipline of the service, he had taken the train for the Southwest, where his regiment was distributed among the various frontier posts which at that time dotted the sand-covered plains of the territories. Many a brisk fight with hostile Indians and several pitched battles with them had seen him at the head of his platoon or troop, but all that was over as he stood before the fire-place and calmly smoked his after-dinner cigar. Still full of martial ardor, he was on the shelf. Father Time having registered the statutory number of years against him only a short time ago. He is on the retired list. His bronzed face is seamed with scars. They cross the wide forehead, made wider by the scant foliage which time has left, and mark that feature with furrows which add greatly to the stern and forbidding aspect. Yet he is as gentle as woman and noted for his kindly courtesy to the young. Major Malachi U. Cornwall, U. S. A., retired, is a fair type of the ancient warrior, full of years and reminiscences. All that is left to indicate his calling is the Loyal Legion button in the lapel of his coat and the unmistakable air which the military man cannot divest himself of.

"Major," said a young friend, for the old warrior much affects the society of his juniors, "pardon my curiosity, or rather let it be my excuse for seeming impertinence, but I have often wondered in what desperate conflict you received that scar on your forehead?"

"That, me boy," was the reply, as the major passed his hand over the indicated spot, "as you say, is the record of a fearful fight. No offense, not at all. I am always delighted to talk for my young friends, but, somehow, I never felt proud enough of that fight to tell it around the mess table. Gad, sir, as nearly as I can recall, I finished a bad second that time. Still, it was a beautiful fight, if I do say it myself."

"It was, indeed," murmured Colonel Herrick, also retired, who was a member of the party at the club that night.

"Tell us about it, major," was the eager demand of the group, which now numbered half a score. The old soldier's yarns were always interesting, and the boys, as he called them, never missed an opportunity to get him to talking of his youth when in the service.

"Hang it all, I didn't figure in that affair to any great extent," was the testy retort, as the major shook his grizzled head. "You tell it, Herrick."

"Not much," growled the colonel, lighting a fresh cigar. "It's your yarn, and if it is ever told, which I don't be-

lieve will be the case, you will reel it off. I had but little to do with it, anyway."

"The devil you didn't!" said the major. "Confound your obstinacy, don't you know that if it had not been for you I would not be here to-day?"

"This is growing interesting," said the first speaker. "Boys, the major's story. Silence for the major's story."

"Well, I suppose I must," growled the major. "Here, George, fill up all 'round," and the major settled himself comfortably and smoked in silence until the grog had been served and disposed of. Then he took his cigar in his fingers, leaned far back in his chair and with half closed eyes commenced as follows:

"You see Herrick and I were at the Point together. He was a first class man when I was a 'pleb.'"

"Never mind me, Malachi," said the colonel. "I have nothing to do with it,



"WE RODE AT THOSE INDIANS WITH THE YELL OF DEVILS."

or, rather, our experiences at the Point have not."

"May be not. Who's telling this story. Well, then, I did save you from getting 'skinned' once." In spite of the colonel's winks and waves of his hands as he deprecated the remarks of his old comrade.

"No use denying it, I did. Well, while we were not of the same class, we became great friends and when Herrick left for the regiment he made me promise to work for the same corps. Of course I had little to do with where I should go, but it fell out that when I was commissioned I got orders to report to the commanding officer at Fort Bayard, in New Mexico. I thought this pretty tough, but it was nothing compared to what followed not so darned long after. Well, I left the Point the biggest idiot of all the young fools who leave impressed with the belief that a field marshal's baton is the least that he could expect in the service. I joined my people, and as luck would have it found that I was one of the regiment to which Herrick had been assigned. This made it easier for me, as he introduced me to the regiment and everything was lovely. We were bachelors and were quartered near each other, although he got his grade since I saw him and now wore a bar in his shoulder strap.

"It would have been all right if it

there was trouble with roving bands of Apaches all the time, and the old post, abandoned now, was heavily garrisoned all the time. This order took our major with the four troops away from Bayard into the region of the heavy forests and hills south of the Grand Canyon of Colorado. Well, from that time on it was field duty nearly all the time. I was sent out to scout and spy on the Indians, and but for my sergeant, a veteran Indian fighter, might have been left there to bleach my bones as a second lieutenant. One of my fool tricks—you see, I thought I knew it all and disputed the wisdom of a suggestion of my sergeant's while away on the plains and got myself and little command in a devil of a fix. It makes me tired now when I think of it.

"This is where Herrick gets into the game once more. I was out on this scouting trip and kept on going, when it would have been better to turn back. I thought it would be great fun to round up all the redskins in Arizona with half a troop. That's where I missed my guess. I was years wiser when it was all over. We trailed the band I was sent out to scout for two or three days and saw them safely in the lava rocks. It was my business to locate them where they had reason to believe we could not follow and then retire until I fell back on Somers, commanding B troop, Gordon's and my own, K troop, or rather the balance of mine. I knew these fellows were on my trail somewhere, though where the Lord only knew, so I decided to push on and have it out with the reds. You see, I wanted stars and other trappings before I knew the value of an empty strap.

"I think the Lord loves a fool. That's the only hypothesis to go on in this case anyway. Well, we marched ahead, in spite of McIntire's protests—he was my sergeant—until what he feared actually happened. We went into camp one night and saw the watch fires of the red devils all around us. We were

trapped, instead of trapping the other fellows. Then I had sense enough left to listen to reason and on the suggestion of Mac I sent a Pueblo out to find a good place to make a stand. It was all off if this could not be done. I had twenty rounds and fifteen men to go against 400 or 500 reds. Yuh, it makes me feel chilly to think of it. Well, that Indian found a spot where my little force could be hidden and if attacked could keep under cover, while making every bullet count. So we silently struck camp and stole away like a lot of thieves, hunting for safety.

"Did we make that hole? Not without a scrap. We had only about 200 yards to go, but we had scarcely gone half the distance when ping! and my cap flew into the air. I stooped to get it—we were dismounted—and another shot sung out where my head would have been if I had been erect. We formed in square and the men speedily got ready for the charge which seemed inevitable, but it did not come. These Indians just kept up an annoying fire until they saw where we were going to, and then they cut loose with a volley which nearly swept me off my feet. 'In with you, sir,' screamed the sergeant, as he gave me a shove and soon afterward followed with the boys, some of whom showed signs of being hit. I found myself in a natural stronghold, covered on all sides from plunging fire, closed in so that the enemy could only approach by one narrow way and safe as long as my ammunition held out. Water there was none, and the sergeant was the first to deplore this.

"Well, I placed my little force as well as possible, told them not to waste a shot, and then sat down to wait for daylight and the conflict which my foolhardiness had brought on. It came before. We had just got in readiness when the sergeant held up a warning finger and crept out to the mouth of our fortress. He kept his body 'arefully screened, and waved for me. I went to him and found the reds massing for a charge. The old trooper said this was the best possible indication that they knew exactly how many men I had. I ordered up a few of the boys, and then we waited until the dusky forms got out into the moonlight. I saw it was fight, and made up my mind to leave my marks. As the leading files rose over the hills until they were fully revealed I ordered the men to fire.

"Each picked out his man and let drive. The effect must have been fearful, as the men were picked shots, and they wasted no lead that night. They

fired regularly and steadily half a dozen shots each, and the attacking party melted away. They replied, but we were so well covered that we suffered no loss. Thus the night wore away with desultory firing on the part of the Indians and the sharp replies by my good fellows whenever an Apache was indiscreet enough to get in range. Then a new danger arose which nearly cost us all our lives.

"As the firing continued the smoke of the carbines was driven back into our den. This was a good thing for the men at the doorway, for it cleared their vision for another shot, but it nearly choked the other men to death. It filled the little chamber after a while, and I saw that unless some means were devised to get it out, the dread of all would be realized, we would have to abandon the only position which held out any hope of rescue. Still we could not stop, as that meant death for all in its most horrible form. Well, to make a long story short, we were cooped up in that hole for the better part of two days. Three of the men were dead, McIntire had a shattered bridle arm, and the scouts were lying in front of our position, mute evidences of the fate which awaited us as soon as our cartridges failed.

"Finally I concluded that, with no water and the men almost insane from thirst, it was all over. I decided to make a dash and go down fighting in the open. I asked the men to follow me and they all shouted their approval. We masked our intended movement as well as possible and rushed out to the plains with a yell of defiance. A rattling volley fell around us, but fortunately the surprise of our dash prevented the Indians from taking accurate aim and a few unimportant flesh wounds were all that were received. I was drunk with despair and so were the men. It was certain death we all believed, and we rode at those Indians with the yells of devils.

"I shall never forget the shock of our contact. We rode down the first lines, but were too weak to force our way through their entire column. The carbines were emptied at half pistol distance as we charged, and the heavy revolvers made sweet music as we advanced at a furious gallop. Then there was the shock of the meeting and we knew that we were making our last stand. The bright steel circled around the heads of that band of desperate men and the enemy toppled and fell in windrows about each horse. The men shouted, yelled and laughed as they fought on with the fury of demons. They were going down too rapidly, however, for that unequal contest to last long. I was blind from a slash across the forehead and cut away with all the strength of my arm, scarcely knowing what I was doing. I seemed to be in some horrible dream, where blood was water and I was trying to swim out. The waves rose higher and higher and I was being rapidly engulfed in that red flood.

"Suddenly I felt a sharp pain as if a red-hot iron had been drawn across my forehead, there was a wild shriek, the rapid thud of horses' feet, and I fell to the ground in a faint. I was told later that I was down and an Indian had commenced the process of scalping me, when the troops rode down into that struggling bunch and Herrick's saber swept off the head of my assailant.

"I don't know much about the succeeding events. When I came to I was stretched out on the floor of our ambulance, my head splitting and bound in bandages. Near me, with his arm in a sling, was McIntire. As we were driven along Somers poked his head into the wagon and complimented me on my stand and the skill shown in choosing the position from which I had worn out the reds. I was too sick then to say anything, but when they talked of recommending me for a Congressional medal for my first fight I rebelled and told the regiment how I had made a d—d fool of myself. McIntire wears the medal, and I have this scar as a memento of my first setto with old Chihuahua."—Chicago Chronicle.

An Awful Risk.

Two impetuous Scotsmen came upon a saloon. They had only "saxpence" between them, so they ordered one "nip o' whisky." They were hesitating who should have the first drink, when an acquaintance joined them. Pretending that they had just drunk, one of them handed the new-comer the whisky, requesting him to join them in a drink. He drank, and, after a few minutes of painful and silent suspense, said: "Now, boys, you'll have one with me?" "Wasna that weel managed, mon?" said one to his pal afterward. "Ay, it was," said the other, solemnly; "but it was a dreadful risk!"

Shielding Off Lightning.

It is reported that an official inquiry recently made in Germany concerning the effect of telephone wires on atmospheric electricity, showed that a network of such wires extending over a town tended to diminish the danger from lightning during thunderstorms. Reports were compared from 900 towns, of which 500 possessed telephone systems, and the conclusion drawn was that a network of wires lessens the danger in the ratio of 1 to 4.6.

Nearly every woman knows a man who is the slowest man on earth.

SHEEP NONSENSE

When the price of coal carouses, How we all might scorn its price. Could we only heat our houses By the warmth of our remarks.

—Washington Star.

Wiley—"Tell me something good for a joke." Driley—"Point."—Boston Traveler.

The ignorance that is bliss is the ignorance of the man who thinks he knows it all.—Puck.

Mr. Dooley—"She is always running people down." Mr. Gurley—"A good eh?" "No, a scorcher."—Life.

The Lady—"If you do not move on, shall whistle for the dog. The Man—"Let me sell you a whistle, mum.—Truth.

Mamma—"Mrs. Brown says her little boy looks very much like ours." Papa—"Then ours must be better-looking."—Puck.

Harry, do you love your little baby brother?" "What's the use? He would n't know it if I did."—New York Evening Journal.

"By the way, what is Mand's band worth?" "I hear that her father gave \$300,000 for him."—Chicago Times-Herald.

"Is this a free translation?" asked the girl in the book store. "No, miss," replied the clerk; "it costs fifty cents."—Boston Traveler.

Marie—"Just think of the nerve of the fellow to propose to me." Merrie—"Nerve? Why, it was absolute treachery."—Truth.

Skaggs—"I thought Softy had quit drinking?" Dragg—"Oh, he did. He's now celebrating his reformation."—Kentucky Colonel.

Lady (admiring gifts at wedding)—"Ah, these are the souvenir spoons." Maid (indignantly)—"No, indeed, mamma. They're solid silver."—Judge.

She—"What fine, broad shoulders you have!" He—"They're necessary for a half back." She—"My! how broad the full backs must be."—Judge.

Teacher—"Did you study this lesson?" Pupil—"I looked over it." Teacher—"Well, hereafter, just lower your gaze a little."—Philadelphia Record.

May—Were there any men at the shore? Pamela—Yes, one; but he wasn't popular. May—Who was he? Pamela—The armless wonder.—Truth.

Charlie Flyup—"Now that you're married don't you find it rather settling down?" George Fastus—"No, nearly so hard, old boy, as settling up."—Kentucky Colonel.

Wazbey—"Sort of a far away land in Bingley's eyes, isn't there?" Comy—"Yes; that's because since election he has had them on a consularship in South Africa."—Roxbury Gazette.

Miss Wellalob (making a call)—"Katie, you are getting to be quite a girl. How old are you?" Katie—"Five. You're getting to be quite a girl, too. How old are you?"—Chicago Tribune.

She yawned, but still he lingered there. (Of bores he was the greatest). Until she murmured, in despair, "You're up-to-date, I must declare. For you're the very latest."—Washington Star.

She—Of course I love the Princess eleven; they all treated me so sweetly. He—I hadn't heard that you had met them. She—I haven't, but I won't pounds of candy on the game.—New York Evening World.

Her Mental Strain—"Have you been busy lately, Mrs. Plodgett?" "Yes, I just worn myself out trying to think what all those things were that Mr. Plodgett promised to buy me after the election."—Chicago Record.

"Do you hear that whining in the next room?" "Yes; who is it?" "That's the football rusher who got off those manly utterances at the end of the game; his wife is rubbing his lame shoulder."—Chicago Record.

Yabsley—"The truest test of a man's friendship is his willingness to lend you money." Mudge—"Oh, 'most anybody will lend money. The real test is when you strike him for a second loan."—Indianapolis Journal.

Teacher—Tommy, what do you mean, you naughty boy? Tommy—I ain't doin' nothin'. Teacher—Why, Tommy, you whistled; I heard you. Tommy—My mother says you shouldn't believe all you hear.—Boston Transcript.

"Mamma," said little Mary, "what does amen mean?" "It means that you join in with what has been said, dear—that you approve of and believe in." "O, yes, I know," said the little girl. "It's the opposite of nit!"—Harper's Bazar.

"And the presents?" He waited for the reply with bated breath. "Harris," she replied, placing a tiny hand on his shoulder and gazing soulfully into his eyes, "there are only three duplicates." "Great Scott!" he gasped; "I was figuring on twenty at least to sell. How shall we get through the year?" They both realized, as never before, that their marriage is a lottery.—Boston Herald.



"EACH PICKED OUT HIS MAN AND LET DRIVE."

had ended there, but it didn't. Not long after I joined, our squadron—we were in the cavalry—was ordered to Flagstaff, A. T., as dismal a place at that time as ever happened. You see

each picked out his man and let drive. The effect must have been fearful, as the men were picked shots, and they wasted no lead that night. They