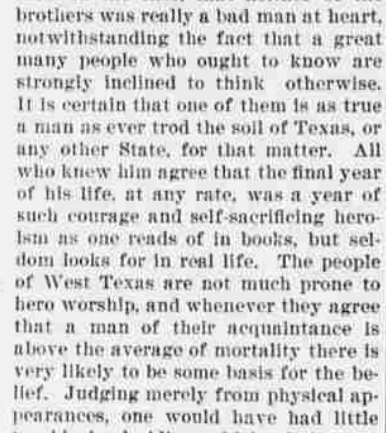
: THE LIE JOE SAVAGE TOLD. :

OLD settlers in the southern part of Baylor County, Texas, still make occasional reference to the Savages, or the Savage brothers, as they sometimes call them. This does not refer to the time when the Indians were in the country, although that time is by no means so far distant as to be beyond the memory of living man; nor does it imply anything especially wild and ferocious about the character of the men in question. It merely goes back to the first half of the '80s, when two brothers of that name were among the prominent inhabitants of that sparsely settled district. In some countries events of that period would be considered comparatively modern, but in Western Texas they are ranked as strictly ancient history.

It seems, from a careful survey of the facts in the case, that neither of the brothers was really a bad man at heart, notwithstanding the fact that a great many people who ought to know are strongly inclined to think otherwise. It is certain that one of them is as true a man as ever trod the soil of Texas, or any other State, for that matter. All who knew him agree that the final year of his life, at any rate, was a year of such courage and self-sacrificing heroism as one reads of in books, but seldom looks for in real life. The people of West Texas are not much prone to hero worship, and whenever they agree that a man of their acquaintance is above the average of mortality there is very likely to be some basis for the belief. Judging merely from physical appearances, one would have had little trouble in deciding which of the two men would be more likely to prove of heroic mold. Bill, the younger, was a man of magnificent physique, not unduly large, but with muscles of such herculean strength as perfect air and the free life of a Western cowboy are apt to impart. He was light-complexioned and is said to have possessed a vigorous, manly countenance, such as ought to have made him more successful in his love affairs than he really was. Joe, on the other hand, was as much a picture of weakness and deformity as his brother was of health and strength. He was not only a peaked-faced, slender slip of a man, but he was a cripple as well. When he was 5 years old and Bill was only 3, a cyclone had struck the log house in which the boys and their parents were living. The mother and father were killed, but when the neighbors came to look through the ruins of the cabin they found Joe crouched on the bed with his limbs spread out in such a manner as to protect his baby brother. A heavy log had fallen across his right foot and right wrist, crushing them both very badly, but Bill was still sleeping in ab-



"HELLO! ARE YOU LOST?"

solute unconsciousness of the existence of any such disturbing affairs as cyclones. As a result of his injuries at the time, Joe was "club-footed" through the whole of his life, and his right forearm had a big knot on it, and a crook that made his right hand turn out when it should have turned in. It is said that Joe was proud of his deformities rather than otherwise, presumably because they had been incurred in the defense of his baby brother, and that Bill was, for the most part, tenderly regardful of the brother who had sacrificed health and almost life for him.

Naturally enough, Bill was the more prosperous of the two. Before he was 30 he owned a considerable "bunch" of cattle, and leased quite a body of land in the eastern part of Baylor County as a ranch. Joe was his line rider, and in that capacity was able to do a great deal of such work as did not require any very great amount of mere muscular strength. Everything worked smoothly with them until May Conley came to live with a married brother of hers who lived only a few miles from the Savage ranch. She was not a highly educated girl, by any means, and it is doubtful if she was more than fairly intelligent; but she was pretty, and she was fickle—and that tells the whole story. In this case Joe was the first victim. He met May at one of the big camp meetings that are common in that country in the fall of the year, and after that he was very pronounced in his attentions to her for several months. Then his attentions ceased as suddenly and abruptly as they had begun. People noticed this and they also noticed that just about that time Bill began going to see her.

"Bill took it up just where Joe laid it down," remarked one cowboy to another during one of the intervals in a dance on one occasion.

"Naw, that ain't it," responded his friend. "I think Joe laid it down just where Bill took it up."

One day as the two brothers and one or two others were engaged in branding some of Bill's yearlings the subject was brought up.

"Sure enough, Joe, whatever made you quit goin' to see that Conley gal so suddent?" asked Jim Smith, one of the helpers, in a jocose way.

"I stopped so's to give Bill a chance," said Joe, with what was evidently a forced attempt at gayety.

"Shucks!" ejaculated his brother. "You needn't a stopped for that. If I couldn't beat you I'd better quit."

There was just the least bit of contemptuous emphasis on that word "you," and Joe noticed it. A slightly shamed, pained look came over his poor, thin face as he faltered:

"W—well, I didn't keer much for her, no way. I was just a foolin' from the first."

My very deliberate opinion is that this statement was a lie. It is my opinion, furthermore, that in this single, ungrammatical, mispronounced, mutilated lie there was a loftiness of thought and purity of purpose such as an angel in heaven might well aspire to. Bill did not take any such view of the matter, though, for he only looked up and retorted angrily:

"My opinion of anybody that would go foolin' 'round a woman when he didn't care nothing for her is that he ain't much man."

"He's pretty small potatoes—he shore is," put in Tom Jackson, the fourth man at the branding. Nobody noticed the remark particularly at the time, but subsequent events caused them to think a great deal about it later on.

"I'm surprised at you, Joe," said Bill.

The ghost of a forced smile hovered piteously on Joe's lips for a moment, but he merely rubbed his forehead with the knob on his wrist in the nervous way peculiar to him on such occasions, and said nothing.

Aside from one or two little incidents like this—which are hardly worth counting as exceptions—Bill's courtship was an illustration of the fact that, notwithstanding a certain very eminent authority to the contrary, the course of true love does occasionally run smooth—for awhile. In this case it ran smooth down to the very day set for the wedding. The ceremony was to be performed at what was known as Plum Creek school house, and early in the morning Bill went with a number of his friends to get ready for the festivities. In some countries it might not be considered as a part of the groom's duties to make these preparations, but in Texas it is etiquette for anybody to do anything provided there was not some one else to do it.

The ceremony was to take place at 10 o'clock. Perhaps half an hour before that time Joe and his friend Jim Smith were riding through the timber which always abounds around creek bottoms in Texas, and were much astonished when, at a sudden bend in the trail, they came across the supposed prospective bride. She was on horseback and unaccompanied.

"Hello!" exclaimed Joe in surprise. "Are you lost?"

"Yes," answered May, with a nervous laugh. "I never was so glad to see anybody in my life. This here creek bottom timber's so thick a wildcat would mighty nigh get lost in it—let alone a woman."

"I should think you and Bill had been to Plum Creek schoolhouse often enough to know the way by this time?"

"I ain't goin' to Plum Creek," said May, with a foolish giggle.

"What! Ain't you goin' to get married?"

"Yes."

"Well, Bill's at the schoolhouse now, a waitin' for ye."

May tossed her head and then giggled again.

"I ain't waitin' for him none," she said. "I might as well tell you now as any time. I'm goin' to be married to Tom Jackson this morning at Round Timbers. I've lost my way there and I want you to tell me how to go."

At the mention of Jackson's name Joe's face hardened for a moment. He was the man who had been so quick to take Bill's part in the quarrel with his brother. Then Joe began to reason with Mary as to her conduct, but a very few moments sufficed to show him the futility of the attempt. Promptly changing his plans, he gave her a detailed account of the way to Round Timbers.

"Say!" interrupted Jim Smith, who had listened in profound astonishment to the whole conversation, "you're mistaken about——"

"No, I ain't," retorted Joe. "The trail's been changed lately. That's all right, May. Come on, Jim."

"I still think you were mistaken about that trail," said Jim, as the two men rode on together.

"No, I wasn't mistaken," said Joe. "I just lied—that was all. I did it for Bill's sake. If May goes the way I sent her she'll not get to Round Timbers this morning."

After they had ridden a few moments in silence, Joe began again:

"Jim, old fellow, for God's sake don't let on that you've seen or heard nothing this morning. It'll be plenty tough on Bill, anyway."

"I shore won't," said Jim.

There was quite a crowd assembled around the door of the little log school house when these two men rode up. The groom was there and so was the preacher; so also were the people. The house was decorated within and without with flowers and leaves and other ornaments more or less appropriate to the occasion. However, there was one ornament generally considered necessary on wedding occasions which was still missing—namely, the bride.

"See anything of May lately?" asked Bill, stepping to the front as the new comers rode up. There was just a trace of anxiety in his voice as he spoke.

"Naw," answered Joe promptly. His face looked perfectly unconcerned as he spoke, but in a very few moments a cloud began to rest upon it. I suspect, though, that instead of grieving over the lie he had told—as of course he should have been—he was merely wondering how he might spare Bill the mortification which a public discovery of the real facts in regard to May might occasion. He was now sitting with one leg thrown over the horn of his saddle. Suddenly his face lighted up with its old sickly smile, and in a voice that trembled a little in spite of the bravado he tried to throw into it, he began:

"Say, Bill, that was the devil of a lie I told you about May just now. I saw her not over half an hour ago."

"You did, did you? When will she be here?"

"She won't be here at all."

Bill's face grew stern and white.

"Why won't she?" he demanded.

"Because I directed her in the wrong road. Jim tried to tell her right and I wouldn't let him. Ain't that so, Jim?"

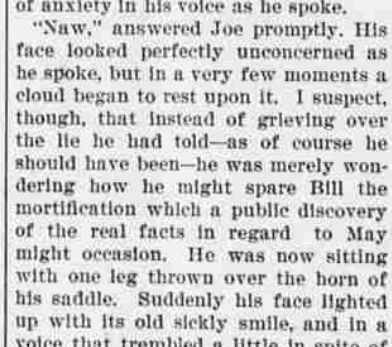
Jim nodded grimly. With faces that now began to grow drawn and anxious, the spectators glanced from one speaker to the other in turn. Bill's face was fairly livid with rage, and his voice trembled with the awfulness of repressed fury as he asked the next question:

"What did you do it for?"

The expectant silence that followed was deathlike, but even then Joe's voice was hardly audible as he answered with the same sickly smile hovering about his white lips:

"Because I useter court her myself and you cut me out!"

Before the words were fairly out of his mouth Bill sprang at him with the fury of a wild beast. With all the force of his mighty arm he struck and the



THE BLOW DESCENDED UPON THE ARM.

blow descended upon the arm—the crippled, knotted arm—which Joe had interposed to ward it off. Some say it descended upon the very knot itself. He fell from his pony as if he had been shot, and lay for several moments on the turf where he had fallen.

"Which way did you send her?" asked Bill, in the same awful tones he had used before.

"I won't tell," gasped Joe.

"Then get off that ground!"

Joe meekly obeyed.

"Get on your pony—no, I see it's got away from you. Then saddle up mine yonder and go after May and bring her back at once, sir! Do you hear?"

Joe meekly took the huge Texas saddle in his left hand and carried it to where the pony was grazing, tied by a long rope to a tree. His right arm hung limp by his side. After some ineffectual efforts to throw on the saddle with his left arm he gave up the attempt.

"I can't get the thing on," he said.

"Use your right arm, sir!" called his brother.

"I think you've broke his game arm, Bill," said Jim Smith.

"It's a lie!" shouted Joe, "that arm's as good as ever it was."

To prove the truth of this assertion he made a mighty effort and managed to lift his arm to his shoulder, though the wrist still dangled loosely from his elbow. Even then he could not restrain his face from wincing and his teeth from clinching with the pain. Dropping the saddle he turned abruptly and limped off into the woods without a word.

Jim Smith afterward said that only his solemn promise to Joe kept him from telling the whole truth at this juncture just as he knew it to be, and that he had to grit his teeth hard and say cuss words under his breath to do it then. As to the rest of the crowd, it must be remembered that they knew nothing but Joe's own statement about the matter, and consequently they all sympathized with Bill. After some moments of condolence and consultation with the crowd, Bill, with some four or five others, started out to find Joe.

"Get that rope off your saddle there and bring it along," he said to one of the men.

"You ain't goin' to string him up, are you, Bill?" was the rather anxious reply.

"No; just want to skeer him a little. Come on."

In a very short time they found the man they were looking for.

"Are you ready to tell where May is, or to go after her?" Bill demanded.

"N-no," faltered Joe, with a distrustful glance at the little group of attendants.

Again his brother sprang at him. This time he threw him to the ground and held him there with his grasp firm upon his throat.

"Don't, Bill, old fellow, for God's sake," gasped Joe, as his brother somewhat relaxed the grip on his throat. "I didn't mean no harm by it—honest, I didn't. I won't do it no more. What are you going to do with that rope, Bill? You're not going to kill your poor, no-account brother, are you, old boy?"

Without a word Bill and his attendants continued wrapping the rope around Joe. Then they stood him up beside a tree and tied him to it, so that his club foot touched the ground, while the other, the strong one, was doubled back in the coil of rope.

"Now, you ungrateful whelp," said Bill, as he started to leave, "I'll be back in thirty minutes to see if you're ready to tell me."

"Didn't he kiss your hand as you was tying him?" asked some one as they walked away.

"Dogged if I know," said Bill. "Did he?"

Hardly had they left when Jim Smith came up and at once began to untie the ropes.

"Don't!" said Joe. "Bill will be back in a few minutes. Just unslip this loop here. Thank you! The strain was on my right arm, and it hurt, because it was sore. Jim, this is hard—but I guess I can stand it, for Bill's sake. I ain't hurtin' so much now, though, as I was. It's mostly all a joke. Bill was always a powerful fellow to joke. I wisht you'd go tell him when he comes back please not to bring anybody else with him."

At the appointed time, Bill saddled his pony and rode off to where Joe was.

"I'll take the hoss, so that if Joe's ready by now he can start off after May and bring her back. I rather guess he's ready by now, too. Maybe we'll get to eat a wedding dinner today, yet—only a little late, of course."

After some time had elapsed and neither brother had "showed up," as the phrase goes in Texas, Jim Smith walked to the place where he had left Joe. There the poor fellow was, still tied to the tree—but dead! The thirty minutes' strain had been too much for his crippled leg to bear, and it had gradually given way, and this had allowed the poor fellow to choke to death. Of course, Jim lost no time in rousing the quasi wedding guests, and in telling the real facts about May. It is not the first instance in the history of the world where a man has had the truth told about him too late to do him any good. A pursuing party was out after Bill at once, but all was to no avail. Some say he committed suicide shortly afterward in San Antonio; others, that he is still alive in New Mexico; still others, that he is to-day in the insane asylum at Terrell. I do not know what the truth about it is. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Jackson still live in Cottle County, Texas. Jim Smith is the man who first told me this story. Joe Savage is buried on the banks of Plum Creek, and on his wooden headboard you can still decipher the inscription: "He Loved Mutch."

The Scripture had to be misquoted to suit the gender of the pronoun and the spelling is slightly peculiar, but I can not help thinking the inscription a good one. Many people consider love a very good thing, and Prof. Drummond has written a book to prove that it is The Greatest Thing in the World. If these estimates are correct Joe Savage was certainly a great and good man; for greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend.—Utica Globe.

The dance they sit out is the most delightful to a pair of lovers.

Among the many curious inventions in which electricity plays the principal role is mentioned a pen, provided with the point with a minute incandescent lamp, intended to illuminate a small space on the paper, and prevented from shining into the eyes of the writer by a little reflector placed just above it.

In a concert hall of Paris, electric energy has been put to the novel use of moving the ceiling. This is in two parts, which are drawn back on traveling cranes, opening the hall to the glass roof by day. The opening or closing of the ceiling is effected in one minute by two electric motors.

A wealthy lady who possesses a pet Maltese cat found recently that the cat's eyesight began to fail, so she took him to an oculist. By means of a picture of a mouse the oculist quickly learned what was the matter, and was able to fit the cat with glasses. The lenses were set in gold frames especially made, and now the cat's eyesight is as good as ever.

Dr. G. K. Gilbert, of the Geological Survey, says that a comparison of gauge records for a period of twenty years shows that the land surrounding the Great Lakes is being gradually tilted from northeast to southwest at such a rate that, of two points 100 miles apart, the northern rises five inches with reference to the southern in 100 years. At Chicago the lake level rises about one inch in ten years. Dr. Gilbert predicts that, if this movement continues, in about 3,000 years all the upper lakes will discharge into the Illinois River, the Detroit and St. Clair Rivers will flow backward, carrying the water of Lake Erie into Lake Huron, and the Niagara River will run dry.

A new fireproof paper, made in Berlin, is reported to be capable of resisting even the direct influence of flame, while it may be placed in a white heat without harm. It consists of 9€ parts of the best asbestos fibre, which is washed in a solution of permanganate of calcium, and then treated with sulphuric acid and 5 parts of ground wood pulp, the entire mass being placed in the agitating box, with the addition of some lime water and borax. After thorough mixing, the material is pumped into a regulating box, and allowed to flow out of a gate into an endless wire cloth, where it enters the usual paper-making machinery.

The electric trolley has been a source of great injury to metallic pipes in its vicinity, causing their corrosion by electrolysis. Recently it has been found that the operation of the syphon recorder of the submarine telegraph cable at Cape Town, South Africa, was interfered with by the new trolley line. The shore end of the submarine cable for the length of a mile was at a mean distance of one-half a mile from the trolley line. As a remedy, a second or dummy cable, with an earth plate, was laid as nearly as possible over the old one, and this effectually cancelled the disturbances. Observations made in London have shown that the earth's magnetic field is disturbed over the whole neighborhood of the City and South London Electric Railroad, and in the United States the utility of the magnetic observatory in the new naval observatory is threatened by the trolley.

QUEER STORIES

An American company is making estimates of the cost of a cable road from the City of Mexico to the sulphur deposits in the crater of Popocatepetl.

A doctor says that in society one may always tell the girls whose parents have risen from the humbler class to wealth by the superior quality of their hair.

Some people in the South are predicting that the current trend in cotton manufacture will flood the North with negro operatives and the South with Yankee white girls.

Several cases of bloomers were among the booty taken by tramps from a freight car at Chillicothe, Ohio. The police are puzzled to know what the marauders intend to do with the garments.

A quaint inscription has lately been noted upon a tombstone, without name and without date, in a cemetery. The dead man or woman, as the case may be, had ordered the following words should be placed over the grave: "Pass on, oh, reader! Waste not thy time in reading vain prose and still less useful words. My tomb tells thee what I am; what I was concerns thee not." "Vanitas vanitatum" was evidently in the thoughts of this philosophically resigned person.