



AT THE THREE-MILE BRIDGE.

BUT we don't take any great credit to ourselves, even if the newspapers did write a whole lot about it and about us. It was just what any one else would have done, most likely. We didn't know that there was going to be a big load of bullion on the express car that night, and we hadn't any idea that the other things would happen; if we had had, you bet we would have been somewhere else.

And then it seems funny that it should be us, Duffey and me, who discovered it. But that isn't so strange, after all, when you remember that we were always doing just such crazy things—navigating in an old birch-bark canoe, exploring abandoned lead mines and stealing rides on the "blind baggage" to Koshongong and back, once in awhile. Among other exploits, we liked to get up early and enjoy the freshness of the summer mornings, when the birds sing and the sun rises, and the dew on the grass is damp and cold to your feet. More than once we have walked clear out to the railroad bridge over the "three-mile creek" before breakfast, just for the sake of riding back on the little hand car of Mr. Stuntz, the watchman.

You see, where the Northwestern road crosses the three-mile creek there used to be a very high wooden trestle. I guess it was sixty feet high, built on a sharp curve. It was a dangerous place for a bridge, and the railroad company always kept a man there at night to watch and signal the engineers that everything was all right.

It used to frighten me just to stand at the door of Mr. Stuntz's shanty beside the track when the big trains flew by. You would think that they must surely jump the rails on the curve and rush right into you, or at least that the wind they raised would suck you in under the roaring wheels.

It occurred to us that we might walk out to the bridge some afternoon, sleep there all night and in the morning ride back with Mr. Stuntz on the hand car. Duffey was working in town and couldn't get away till late at



night, but a little before sunset I took a blanket from our house and started. My big brother had a variety of hunting implements in his room, and out of this store I had borrowed a thirty-two calibre revolver and a big hunting knife—took the revolver myself and loaned the knife to Duffey.

I reached the shanty all right, but had to wait quite awhile for Mr. Stuntz to arrive on his machine, but he came at last, and we sat outside talking, while the sun went down and the stars came out. Mr. Stuntz wasn't much of a conversationalist, and it wasn't long before I began to wish that Duffey would hurry. Nine o'clock came and no Duffey. It was a lonely walk over that railroad track, with dangerous bridges and deep cuts every little way, and I couldn't have blamed him if he did not come at all; only he had never failed me before. So I sat and listened for the sound of his duplex whistle. By and by I heard it down the track, half a mile away in the darkness, and pretty soon he came into the light of the lantern, brandishing a hickory club in one hand and the hunting knife in the other, and singing bravely to make sure that he was not afraid.

But even with Duffey there and Mr. Stuntz it seemed awful lonesome. The only sounds were the rippling of the creek down below, the tinkling of a cow bell far off, and the hooting of some old owl across the track.

There was no good place for us to lie down inside the shanty, and besides we had come for adventure and preferred to stay out of doors. We found a grassy place on the embankment, about fifteen feet away, where the ground sloped gently down. We used a railroad tie for a pillow and tried to make believe that it was heaps of fun.

"Say," said Duffey, "suppose that some one should try to wreck the 2 o'clock express? What would we do?"

"I don't know," I answered; "I guess we would run. What do you think we'd do?"

"Well, if there wasn't too many, we'd surprise 'em. Hit one or two of them over the head before they knew what was up, then be ready to shoot the rest if they moved. Then we would tie them and signal the train when it came by."

"Rats! We wouldn't do any such a thing. But I don't like to talk about it out here. It's too real. Let's go to sleep."

We lay there a long time after this without saying anything, while two freight trains pulled by and Mr. Stuntz's lantern went across the bridge and back after each one. By and by we quit looking at the stars, pulled our noses in under the blanket and tried to sleep. The last thing I heard was Duffey's "Yes, but 'sposed they should come," to which I wouldn't listen, but shivered at the thought and snuggled closer under the blanket.

I don't know just how long we had slept, but I woke up suddenly at Duffey's pinching me. I could feel that he was trembling. I looked, and there in front of the shanty I could just make out the forms of four men. The door was open and the light from the lantern shone out across the track. I could hear Mr. Stuntz's snores plainly.

Then three of the forms stepped into the glare of the lantern and went inside. We saw that they wore masks and were armed. The fourth man kept his place outside. All at once there was the noise of a short scuffle from the shanty—a muffled yell, a confusion of low oaths, the lantern was kicked over and smashed and we could hear a body falling to the floor, and then we heard a strange voice say: "Tie him up and gag the old cuss." Then followed some muffled swearing.

Were we scared? We were fairly stiff with fright. My hair stood on end and whole breezes ran up and down my spinal column. It was awful—they might be murdering Mr. Stuntz. Somehow we didn't even once think of making an attack on the robbers. We just slid out from under that blanket as fast and as quietly as we could, working our way, feet first, on our stomachs, down the hill. We would have been in a dreadful fix if one of us had started a stone to rolling or had snapped a twig. But none of these things happened and the man who kept watch at the door never saw us or heard us at all.

At the bottom of the gully we stopped and took hold of each other for company. I still held my revolver and Duffey the bowie knife. My teeth were chattering and Duffey shook like a leaf.

"They're going to wreck the 2 o'clock express and we've got to stop 'em," said Duffey, his voice trembling.

This is where he made a little mistake. The robbers did not mean to wreck the train, because it would have been very easy to flag it, just as if something were the matter with the bridge, and then rob the express car before the train crew really knew what was the matter.

Now, we didn't know what time it was nor how many confederates the robbers might have strung out along the track to keep watch. But we guessed that it was near 2 o'clock and that we would have to go through the woods for a long way and be mighty lively if we were going to stop that train. So we felt for the barbed-wire fence that lined the right of way, crawled under it into the black woods and started toward town. It was so dark that you couldn't see your own hand, and we were nearly scared to death as we ran into trees and caught on prickly bushes time and again.

After a quarter of a mile of this we pushed out toward the edge of the woods and found that the railroad track had made a turn and that the shanty was out of sight.

Just then we heard the train whistle. We slipped under the fence again into the ditch and then stumbled up onto the track. Already we could hear the steady roar of the big, hoarse smokestack and the steady sh-sh-sh as the monstrous six-foot driving wheels pounded the rails. She was coming a-flying. Not eighty rods away she rounded the curve and the fierce eye of the headlight glared at us and a red band of whirling smoke appeared in the air as they opened the door of the firebox. It was like standing in front

of a roaring, fiery dragon that comes at you at the rate of fifty miles an hour.

How were we to stop her? We hadn't thought of that before. It wouldn't do to stand in the middle of the track till the engineer should see us, and we had just two matches and nothing to make a blaze with. It was here that Duffey showed his genius. Quick as a flash he had jerked off his coat and touched a match to the flimsy cotton lining. The first match went out. He tried the second. It caught; a tiny flame crept up and grew larger and larger. In ten seconds that coat was one solid flame and Duffey was swinging it wildly around his head.

The engine was bearing down on us with a frightful screech. The engineer saw us, and not a second too soon. There was a snapping of air brakes, a grinding of wheels and a groaning and shaking of the whole train as she slowed up. But even then we had to jump quick to save ourselves.

The train came to a standstill and crew and passengers poured out to see what was up. I suppose we were a funny-looking couple. I was still gripping my revolver, and if I looked half as queer as I felt I must have been a sight. And as for Duffey, the bowie knife was sticking conspicuously out of his back pocket. His face was pale beneath the smoke, his eyebrows were singed and his hand blistered. The coat was a ruin.

We told our story as well as we could, which wasn't very well, because we were still frightened, but they understood what the trouble was when we said "Robbers, bridge" and "Killed the watchman."

They put us into the train and a crowd of men with guns and revolvers piled onto the engine and front cars. But by the time the train reached the bridge the robbers had skipped without leaving a trace, except Mr. Stuntz, who was bound and gagged and knocked insensible with a coupling pin. They picked him up and put him on the baggage car. There was a doctor aboard, who soon had him fixed up in good shape. He wasn't very badly hurt.

At the first station they telegraphed back to Janesville and a posse was sent after the robbers, but did not get them.

So we didn't sleep outdoors after all that night. They carried us clear up to St. Paul on the sleeping car and treated us royally, too, and gave Duffey a whole new suit of clothes.—Chicago Record.

HE HAD PITCHED BALL.

That Was How the Slender Man Won at Tenpins.

They were making up opposing teams in one of the swagger bowling clubs. Both of the captains were a little wary about choosing the tall, slender man whose hair was tinged with gray and whose outward appearance suggested a lack of physical stamina. He said nothing and quietly accepted a place with the eleventh-hour fellows, says the Detroit Free Press.

When the first match came off he did only fairly well, until he appeared as the last man on the last frame, and with 200 to beat. Enthusiastic members of the team now tell that when he let go of the first ball it left a streak of fire all the way down the alley. Pins flew as though in an explosion. He piled up strikes and spares till the on-lookers held their breath, and the boy who set up the pins wanted to resign while he was alive. Only a raise in salary held him.

But all was not good luck, for an occasional pin would stand up in apparent defiance of all nature's laws. At the last there were the corner ones. Two would tie all would win. "Take your time!" "Steady, old man!" "Hold your nerve!" "Roll a slow one!" were among the things he heard. He did everything but roll a slow one. The ball went like a rifle shot, struck the head pin just right, it knocked down another one and the ball caromed on the third. The rest of the team shouted themselves hoarse and the asked how on earth he kept that terrific pace.

"Plaster on my back," he whispered. Next time all the others wore plasters, some as high as three, judiciously distributed. They were practically in straitjackets; the team lost, and the old man vowed he would never joke again.

He had worn no plaster at all, but he had pitched fourteen years in an amateur base-ball team.

FR IN SNOW TO SNOW.

Around the Capitol building Uncle Sam has a great garden of spring delicacies. The first garden delicacies of the season are found there. On the southern slope of the lawn, under the protection of the terrace and exposed to the sun, dandelions sprout in very early spring. Mushrooms of the best variety, as well as dandelions, grow in great abundance on this broad lawn, and it is a source of supply of "greens" or mushrooms almost from the time snow disappears until winter comes again.

QUICKSILVER FINDS IN TEXAS.

The quicksilver finds in Brewster County, Texas, have already proved the most extensive in the United States.

LASSOED A MOUNTAIN LION.

Texas Girl Captured a Wild Beast and Took Him Home.

The girl of the Southwest, if reports are to be credited, is a marvel of personal bravery. One girl in Texas has been made famous in the country around Marble Falls by an achievement that would daunt the hardest frontiersman in the land. Her name is Norma Diorn and she lives with her father near the headwaters of the Guadalupe. She, with two sisters, was accustomed to go out on the range to look after her father's cattle. One Sunday morning recently Miss Norma, who is the oldest and most daring of the three, started to ride the fence of a small pasture, expecting to return in time to attend church, and not wishing to desecrate the Sabbath she swung her Winchester on a gate post, remarking that she guessed she would not have any use for a gun as she was not going very far.

She had traveled hardly out of sight of the ranch house before she seriously regretted that she had left the weapon at home. A monster Mexican lion sprang over the wire fence just in front of the girl's pony, and, after looking at her for a moment out of glaring eyes it uttered one of its wild shrieks and sprang away in the direction of a small bunch of cows and calves.

The old cows instantly charged the lion and the mother of the calf gave him such an ugly thrust with her sharp horns that he was forced to relinquish his hold on his prey. The sight of the frightened little calf aroused Miss Norma's ire, and swinging her rope



over her head she rode at the lion, which started to beat a hasty retreat.

Summoning all the strength of her lungs, the girl screamed at the lion and urged her pony to pursue him. The beast frequently looked back and snarled threateningly, but he failed to find courage enough to offer battle. Suddenly it occurred to the girl that there was no reason why she could not choke the lion to death. An attempt was worth making, for this one monster was capable of destroying a hundred young calves and yearlings in a single night.

Suiting her actions to her thoughts she swung her lariat over her head, and as the trained pony sprang forward at his greatest speed, she sent the rope hissing through the air and dropped the noose with certain precision about the lion's neck. The pony instantly braced himself on his haunches, digging his forefeet in the ground, and the lion turned a somersault, striking the earth with his head toward his pursuers. Crouching and emitting a roar that chilled the blood of the young girl, he sprang into the air with all his strength, expecting to land on the pony's neck and tear his pursuers to fragments. The agile little horse turned just in time to feel the claws of the lion grazing his haunches. Realizing that her life depended upon the strength and speed of her pony, for she had not time to release the lariat from the saddle, leaned forward and urged her frightened pony to do his best. She reached the ranch gate at her home just as her sisters, accompanied by two young men of the neighborhood, were about to pass through it on their way to church.

One of the young men put a bullet through the animal's head. As a reward for her bravery the Texas Cattle Association has presented Miss Norma with a handsome silver-mounted revolver.

WORTHY OF IMITATION.

The Animal Protective League of New York City is composed of "chapters" of children who are banded together for the purpose of making the life of dumb animals pleasanter, states the Boston Home Journal. The reports are excellent reading, and show that the average small boy is not kept from deeds of kindness by the dignity that prevents much good work among adults. For instance, one small boy saw a horse trying to feed while the strap of its nosebag was broken. The lad was too short to fix the strap, so he put the bag on his head and held it there while the horse finished its dinner.

DOG CHECKS.

In the Philippines the American soldiers are all wearing "dog checks." A "dog check" is a lead medal about the size of a dollar, with the volunteer's name, regiment and company stamped on it. It is hung on a leather string around the neck, and serves to identify the dead or severely wounded.

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Our bodies should be well cared for, keep clean, both outwardly and inwardly, and made strong. The inward cleansing is accomplished by Hood's Sarsaparilla. It expels all bad things from the blood and keeps it pure and rich. It cures all disorders of the stomach, nerves, kidneys and bowels, which, if left unchecked, would cause great suffering.

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THE WHISKY TRAFFIC.

Henry W. Grady once said of the whisky traffic: "It is the mortal enemy of peace and order, the despoiler of men and terror of women, the cloud that shadows the faces of children, the demon that has dug more graves and sent more souls unshrined to judgment than all the pestilences that have wasted life since God sent the plague to Egypt, and all the wars since Joshua stood beyond Jericho."

CHRISTIANITY AND THEOLOGY.

One of the most unfortunate mistakes ever made by the Christian church was to slide into the habit of identifying Christianity with theology. We have had brains given us to use, and there are no themes that so magnificently challenge a man's intellectual powers as the themes that associate themselves with religions and with the Christian religion. But even so, theology is not Christianity.—Rev. Dr. Farkhurst.

I am sure Piso's Cure for Consumption saved my life three years ago.—Mrs. THOS. ROBBINS, Maple Street, Norwich, N. Y. Feb. 17, 1900.

"Very often," remarked the long-haired man, "the printer mixes up words in his poems, thus creating different meanings and thoughts from what I intended."

"That so?" inquired the practical man. "How much does he charge you?"—Indianapolis Sun.

Skill in the dairy is important, but the art of butter making does not depend altogether upon skill in the manipulation of the milk, cream and butter. Inferior cows, that are half fed, or not fed properly, will not furnish milk of the desired quality for producing the best butter. On some farms, during the warm days of summer, the cows suffer from lack of water. It will not do to simply water them morning and night, but they must have an abundant supply. The food should also be varied and of the best quality.

NO HOPE FOR HER.

Mr. Peck—Here's a plucky girl. On her way to her wedding she was thrown out of her carriage and hurt, but she insisted on going to the church and having the ceremony performed.

Mrs. Peck—Well, the poor, misguided thing deserves her fate, then.—Philadelphia North American.

"Yes," said the young woman, "I find books in the running brooks."

"Well," said Farmer Cornstossel, "them summer boarders littered the novels up terribly with their trashy novels last year. Me an' ma done the best we could to burn 'em all in the cook stove, but they do seem to keep turnin' up."—Washington Star.

Daily toil is a moral safeguard.—Rev. Dr. Kent.

CHARITY THINKETH NO EVIL.

If we would live in peace, let us make the best constructions of one another's words and actions. Charity judgeth the best, and thinks no evil. If words and actions may be construed in a good sense, let us never put a bad construction on them.—John Bunyan.

Friend—I heard your wife giving you fits again this morning.

Jinks—That wasn't my wife. That was the servant girl.—N. Y. Weekly.

Religion is the product of an implanted life; its blossom is frequent, pervading the world; its fruitage is perfect, satisfying hungry multitudes. The Gospel does not provide experiences which are merely pleasurable, but the invitation is to life.—Rev. J. J. Parsons.

BEST FOR THE BOWELS

If you haven't a regular, healthy movement of the bowels every day, you're sick, or will be. Keep your bowels open, and be well. Force, in the shape of violent physic or pill poison, is dangerous. The smoothest, easiest, most perfect way of keeping the bowels clear and clean is to take



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