

HOW FLANDERS KEPT HIS JOB

By MAXIMILIAN FOSTER

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Six weeks had passed since Flanders' departure without word or sign from him. The chief, uneasy at his long absence, was wondering whether he had not been too harsh, too ready to send him upon this mission, where death, in a sense, was wagered as the stakes. Now, the best that Tower could do was to promise himself that on the following day he would send out a trailer to find what had become of the missing man.

Down the main line at this moment the operator at Guamo Siding, in solitary possession of the place, was desolately lamenting the chance that had set him down as the surveying monarch of all its loneliness. Outside, the face of the landscape glistened in the torturing heat; the air dripped with the shrill voices of a myriad of insects, and the breeze, a veritable furnace breath, added to the inferno with the dust it drew up in its train. In desperation the operator set to filing points on his sounders and keys, but this only increased his torment. The rasp of the tool added to the manifold sounds from the superheated world outside, driving him to the brink of desperation. In disgust he threw down his file, spooked his hands of hot sweat from his brow and was tapping a glass of tepid water from the barrel in the corner when a low voice broke in on his reflections:

"Say, you there!"
At the window beside the keyboard a hand was holding up the curtain, and underneath appeared a face, dust stained, burned to a copper red and set with two marvellously gleaming eyes. Startled, the operator dropped the tin cup clattering to the floor and leaped to one side. The next instant he was with his back to the wall, a pistol gleaming in the dull light of the shaded station.

"What do you want?" he demanded shrilly.
"Well, I swan!" laughed the man. "The hot has got on yer nerves, sonny, ain't it? Put down that gun, you chuckle-headed brass pounder! I ain't goin' to hurt you, but I want to see you."

But the operator was too old a bird to be trapped. The man that had left the place before him had been trapped in just such a way and tied down to his desk, the western mail had been flagged almost in front of the siding, and the express and postal cars had been dynamited first and then rifled of their valuables. "Make a move if you dare," shrieked the operator, drawing a bead on the head in the window. "Don't you dare!"

In answer the man tossed a scrap of paper through the window. "Quick, you! Rush that to the main office. Tell 'em to dupe it to the chief—Tower, I mean. Get a hustle on 'em then skeedaddle out er this! You hear me? Skeedaddle! Vanoose lively, 'cause it'll be hotter here afore long than the hottest dog days that Gehenna ever saw. But don't you forget to send that dispatch, or by Sam Houston you won't be worth the fat to fry a doughnut next time we run agether. Adios, sonny, an' look out for yourself."

The face vanished from the window, and the operator, a palsy upon him, still stood shaking against the wall. Outside, the sounds of the day resumed their droning intonation, the breeze sighed fitfully, and, though he cracked his ears listening for some sign of stealthy attack, he became at last convinced that he was alone. With his revolver still ready he tiptoed across the floor and snatched up the scrap of paper. Then, with a sharp glance about, he read and at the next instant had jumped to his instrument. "G-x," "G-x," "G-x," he called, his hand banging the key at frantic speed— "G-x," "G-x," "G-x." Somewhere down the line another station, noting the extreme haste of an operator no toriously slow, cut in with the query, "What's up?" Letter by letter Guamo Siding cursed him for his interference, the key rattled and shook with reiterated appeal, "G-x," "G-x," "G-x," and then the main office answered.

Flattening the paper before him, the operator laid his pistol out and bent with vigor to send that dispatch, a sweating man pumping at the levers with his eyes turned fearfully over his shoulder. "Guamo Siding's dead!" called the dispatcher's operator from his desk. "I can't raise him at all. He's lit out or they've got him, one or the other. What's the orders for H-M? He's cut in on the board and got the news hot off the wire. Guess he's rattled some."
"H-M" was Hancy's Mill, the next station east of Guamo Siding. "Tell him to keep his mouth shut!" roared the dispatcher, snatching up the message from Guamo and rushing to the rail to meet the superintendent, who had burst through the doorway. "Here, read this, boss!" The dispatcher thrust the message into the superintendent's hand and then was back at the operator's shoulder.
Outside in the yard the western mail lay at the platform, a fresh engine backing down through the switch. "Hold her five minutes," the dispatcher ordered, "and tell those deputies to hurry. Have you heard from Tower yet? Ring up on the phone there. We can't wait all night."
But Tower himself at this moment bustled into the office. "It's all right!" he cried. "Flanders is one of my men. He's a daisy. I thought they'd stretch

him out. Your men ready? I'm going to see 'em."
The dispatcher jumped from his chair and strode down the room. "Where's that idiot Percy?" he demanded. "Ain't he ready yet?"
"He's coming, sir," was the answer. "Coming, is he?" growled the dispatcher testily. "He's always coming, but he doesn't ever seem to get anywhere. Oh, here you are, are you, Percy?"

The road detective bustled in, a crowd of deputies at his shoulder. "What's the orders?" he asked. The dispatcher thrust the message into his hand and then pushed him toward the door. "Read that and get it!" he cried. "The old man and Tower's going too. They'll tell you what to do."
The armed men at Percy's back trooped right about, and the company trooped down the stairs. "There'll be a hot time in Guamo tonight all right," muttered the dispatcher. "Wish I was with 'em."

"Night had fallen, and the yard gleamed with switch lights like a field of fireflies when the western mail drove out into the open. Tower and the superintendent, armed with short barreled riot guns, sat in the cab with the engineer. "Don't keep 'em waiting," the superintendent cautioned the oily man at the levers. "I wouldn't disappoint them for the world." The engineer nodded, and the locomotive, toiling with harsh breath up the long ascent, cleared the summit with a bound and ran rolling and swaying on the long down grade. "Guamo's the first stop," laughed the superintendent. "We go by there kiting usually, but tonight we'll tackle the stretch sort of slow. I guess you'd better cut her down to half speed, Bill—this to the engineer—when we leave the hill. I shouldn't wonder but they've arranged to chuck us off the iron."

In the baggage car behind, Percy, all excitement, bustled about with his orders. Long before they reached Hancy's Mill he had the lights out and the doors opened. Little heaps of buckshot cartridges lay within easy reach, and on the car platform at other deputies guarded the weakest flanks of the train. Then the locomotive whistled first the long yard signal, then two short blasts. "That's Guamo!" cried Percy. "Get to your places, men! An' mind—don't shoot the man in the white hat!"

Ahead, in the locomotive, Tower peered across the engineer's shoulder into the distance, scanning every foot of the iron hands glittering in the shine of the headlights. "There's a curve ahead," the engineer explained. "It won't show till we've rounded the— by thunder, there they are now!"

A black monument of railroad ties erected by a red lantern stood in the middle of the track. In the broad angle of light they saw for an instant a figure, ghostlike in the pale glow, stand on the car platform at other deputies. "That's a good one," he said, "but I'll give you the right to go down there an' run in the whole outfit from A to Z. Say, chief, guess my job's good yet, ain't it?"

"Good? Why?" And the chief fell to laughing uproariously.

THE COSSACKS.

A Favorite Camp Story Which Generally Are Criticized.
Unlike other Russian soldiers, the Cossacks are very intelligent in military matters and do not hesitate to criticize their generals freely among themselves. They have bitter tongues and a genius for satire. There is a favorite story which has been told in Cossack camps for generations. It is handed down from father to son, the names being changed to fit the military commanders of the day. Freely translated, it runs something like this: The war god of Russia was asleep in heaven one day when he was awakened by the confused clamor of two hosts in battle on the earth beneath. He shouted to the Angel Gabriel: "Look out and see what my Cossacks are doing."
"They are fighting the Turks, and Prince Potemkin is leading them."
"Oh, that's all right," said the war god. "He's a good man."
So the deity went asleep again, only to be awakened by another turmoil.
"What's that?" he asked sleepily.
"They are fighting the Turks again under Suwarow."
"He's a fine fellow. They'll do all right."
And so the story goes on interminably around the campfire, each man adding the name of his favorite commander until at last one of them makes the Angel Gabriel mention the name of some general who happens to be regarded by the Cossacks as a dufer. Then the next man makes the war god reply in accents of great alarm.
"Oh, my beloved Cossacks! They must be perishing under that man! It is time I interfered. Hasten, Gabriel, and bring me my long boots, for I must go down at once and save them."

TURTLE FLESH.

The Handsomeness of the Animals Gives the Worst Meat.
No one really knows how to eat a turtle, but certainly there does not appear to be much in any exaggeration attached to the statements of Piny and Strabo, who, describing the chelonophag of the Red Sea, say that they utilized the shells of the turtles they had eaten as roofs to their huts and boots for their feeble voyages.
Strange to say, the handsomest turtle, the hawk's bill variety, "Belone limbatu," furnishes the worst flesh, being so strongly flavored with musk as to be almost uneatable. This peculiarity would seem to point to a diet of squid since these mollusks are exceedingly musky. But it may not be of place to remark here that turtle flesh, even of the best sorts, is not nice. As Sam Weller's pie-man hoarsely whispered, "It's the seasoning as does it."
A diet of turtle soup, of hashed turtle or of turtle soup, as a natural, would soon sicken any one but a savage. For sixpence or its equivalent in most of the West India islands towns one can get a heaped plate of turtle steak with bread or jams or sweet potatoes ad lib. But I never knew even a hungry sailor who wanted more than one meal a week of it, for all its cheapness. The fact is that the cult of turtle soup we are following is a long way off. It is true the example set by the Chinese, who love gelatinous soups and pay fabulous prices for the nests of the sea swallows, the holothurians, or sea slug, and the sharks' fins because of their gelatinous qualities.—Frank T. Bullen in Leslie's.

Big Sense of Feeling.

"Are you sure that mule is blind?"
"Yes, sah—in his eyes he is, but his feet order he can feel for you with his toes."—Atlanta Constitution.

A MILITANT PARSON.

When the settlements on the Forked Deer river were new and western Tennessee was still Chickasaw country attempts to start religious services were for a long time broken up by a gang of young outlaws who drove the ministers away. At last the Rev. Arvid Davis, a muscular Christian, came. They had given him notice that he should preach on Lower Forked Deer. Mr. Davis went to the forbidden ground and preached to a large audience. When the service was over he stepped out into the grove which surrounded the log church and, taking off his coat and cap, placed them on a stump. The outlaws had gathered on one side, the church people on the other. Turning to one of the church people, Mr. Davis gave him a message for his wife and then, facing the outlaws, demanded that they select their champion.

"You said I should not preach," he said, "but I have preached. You say I shall not preach again. Well, I say I shall unless you kill me now. Come on, one at a time, fair play, and we'll see who is right."
The outlaws looked at him in amazement. Then the leader stepped forward, holding out his hand.
"I'm with you, Mr. Davis," he declared. "Any man who has got your courage can be parson here as long as he likes. Boys, step up and shake hands with the minister."
Thereupon the "fighting parson" held forth regularly in the Forked Deer country.

CANARY BIRDS.

They Are, Barring Men and Peacocks, the Valiest of Creatures.
"Do you know," said an observant gentleman, "that, barring a man and a peacock, I believe a canary bird is the valiest of all creatures? Both my wife and myself are very fond of pets, and we keep several of these little songsters always in the house. One of the cages was an old affair, which had been in the family for years and was used as much for traditions as for economy's sake. I had frequently remarked to my wife that I believed the occupant of this cage was somewhat ashamed of his shabby dwelling place and observed with anxious eyes the fact that the other songsters were more artistically lodged. Well, the old cage finally collapsed, and it became necessary to purchase a new one. In order to test my belief in the intelligence of my feathered friend, I made it a point to get him the prettiest little brass house I could find. The effect was magical. No sooner was he turned into his new home than he began to sing as if he had never sung before, completely drowning out the music of the other birds and behaving otherwise in a manner altogether becoming his sudden rise in life. No proud parson coming unexpectedly into an inheritance of great riches could more gracefully have assumed a greater degree of vanity."

The Gately in the Old Days.

In the old days, before the deadly magazine rifle was invented, hunting the grizzly was a very different affair, and no animal on the American continent was more dreaded, his ferociousness and vital force when wounded filling the most reckless hunters with a wholesome dread. It was not at all unusual for a grizzly with a bullet through his heart to pursue and tear to pieces the hunter, whose long, single-barreled, muzzle loading rifle, with its one round lead bullet, was altogether inadequate for such a contest. It is a strange thing, too, that, while the grizzly bear is an omnivorous feeder, living on anything, from roots and nuts to steer and buffalo meat, he has never been known to devour human flesh.—St. Nicholas.

Quaint Custom in Land Tenure.

At Chingford, in Essex, England, an estate is held by a very curious condition. Whenever it passes into new hands the owner, with his wife, manservant and maid-servant, comes on horseback to the parsonage and pays his homage by blowing three blasts upon a horn. He carries a hawk upon his wrist, and his servant has a greyhound in a slip, both for the use of the rector for that day. He receives a chicken for the hawk, a peck of oats for his horse and a loaf of bread for his greyhound. After dinner the owner blows three more blasts and then, with his party, withdraws from the rectory.

He Was Awful Homely.

One day while on a hunting expedition in the Alps Victor Emmanuel met an old woman gathering brambles. She inquired of the stranger whether it was true, as she had heard, that the king was in the neighborhood. If so, was there any chance of seeing him?
"Yes," said his majesty, "he is about. Would you like to see him?"
The old woman declared that few sights would give her more pleasure.
"Well, mother, I am the king."
She stared at him for a moment and broke into a grin.
"Get out with you, jester! Do you think any woman like the queen would marry a chap like you, with that hideous mug?"
The king was not offended. Perhaps the compliment to his wife mollified him. He gave the woman a piece of money, with which he was always free, and passed along.

Lightning Roasted Duck.

An extraordinary instance of lightning is reported from Lake Grandville, in the Nantes region. A violent tempest burst over the lake, with vivid lightning and thunder. A number of boats were on the lake, and while they were hurrying to bank there was a tremendous peal of thunder. Almost immediately there fell among the boats the dead bodies of a large flock of wild ducks, and some charred to a cinder. Roast duck cooked by lightning reads like a novelty, even in the freaks of meteorology. If it could only be adapted to the "quick lunch" system!

Made Another Bag of Him.

"My first wife married me because I neither smoked, drank nor played cards. She—How did you play?"
"I never played."—Scholar.

WOMAN AND FASHION

One of the season's smartest novelties is the military coat. Of course any shade may be used, but the most chic combination is dark blue cloth, with a dash of red for collar, cuffs, pocket and shoulder straps, the coat being fastened with big bullet shaped brass buttons. Gray, tan, brown and black coats in this style are seen, but blue is the most fetching. Such a coat is shown in the accompanying illustration, which is reproduced from the New York Mail.

FRICKS OF THE BRAIN.

Experiments which Physiologists Theorize Fall to Explain.
An uncle of mine with whom I was walking in a part of Yorkshire near Skipton, where neither of us had ever before, stopped suddenly to say, "When we turn that corner you will see on the right an Elizabethan house partly surrounded by trees, with a lake or large pond showing through them, and in the middle of the water a little artificial island."
When we turned the corner we saw precisely what he had described, and yet he had never seen or heard or read of the place. The dual brain theory falls here, since neither lobe of the brain had received an impression of Jean Jacques Rousseau in his "Confessions" says he foresaw in a reverie while taking a solitary walk all the incidents of the happiest day of his life as they occurred eight years later.
"I saw myself, as in an ecstasy, transported into that happy time and occasion, where my heart, possessing all the happiness possible, enjoyed it with inexpressible raptures, without thinking of anything sensual. I do not remember being ever thrown into the future with more force or an illusion so complete as that which I then experienced. What struck me most in the recollection of that reverie, now that it has been realized, is to have found objects so exactly as I had pictured them. If ever the dream of a man awake had the air of a prophetic vision that was assuredly such."
It is, I think, noteworthy that in all clairvoyant cases of this kind the body is through overwork or ill health or fasting or congenitally in the subdued state to which the Indian mystic and miracle monger reduces his own by maceration. It was so with Scott and Rousseau, and with William Hose recorded in his memoir. When worn out with overwork he was shown into a certain room in a certain part of London where he had never been before.
"On looking around everything appeared perfectly familiar to me. I seemed to recognize every object. I said to myself: 'What is this? I was never here before, and yet I have seen all this, and if so there is a very peculiar knot in the shutter. I opened the shutter and found the knot. Now, then, I thought, here is something I cannot explain on my principles; there must be some power beyond matter.'"
And from being a pronounced materialist he became a believer in spirits, and, indeed, eventually a profoundly religious soul.—T. P.'s London Weekly.



SMART MILITARY COAT.

Angel Sleeves in Evening Gowns.
Angel sleeves adorn many of the evening gowns, and very beautiful they are, because the soft drapery is in the silk tissues, liberty silk, chiffon or mousseline de soie or some such clinging material.
A charming toilet with a trained skirt of heliotrope satin with three scant volantes, each supporting a founce of valenciennes lace. A lace jacket is worn with this white valenciennes made up over a heliotrope satin lining. But the lace sleeves barely reach the elbow, and from them descend long "angel" drapery of violet tinted liberty silk, the gziest of fabrics. The drapery is caught up again and held in to the under-sleeve at the wrist.

Favorite Collars.

Green is being nearly as much worn as white in the Riviera, again in the entire gamut of shades, from palest duck's egg to spinach, the latter a somewhat trying shade for any complexion which cannot show "milk and roses" enough to counteract its somewhat softening effect. It is smart in itself, however, if somewhat crude and voyant. Just now these strong, bright shades are in the ascendant. Violet is a good deal worn and a certain shade of orange, but the latter is chiefly used to give a note of color, just a touch in tie, hat and belt.—Paris Fashions.

A Modish Blouse.

Very modish blouse of fine white linen, having broad box plait down the front, with design done in cross stitch.



MADE OF FINE WHITE LINEN.

embroidery and tucks on either side of this to give yoke effect. Embroidery on standing collar and sleeves. Deep cuffs fastened with pearl buttons.

Decorative Bolero Trimmings.

Many of the exquisite trimmings this year are converted into boleros. A dark cloth gown will show a lot of oriental embroidery. The embroidery may be of a Japanese or Egyptian design in warm blues and greens and pale reds, worked on a foundation of deep cerise canvas or peau de soie, while a chiffon gown may have a charming bolero added to it by a little bolero of silver gauze, with the trimming of silk embroidered orchids as its decoration, each flower cut out and applied upon the shimmering foundation.

One Obstacle Only.

Scholar—Professor, your mnemonic system is wonderful, and I am sure that any one, after mastering the rules, can learn to remember any thing. But I am handicapped by one difficulty. Professor—What is it? Scholar—I can't remember the rule.—Town and Country.

Physicists are constantly discovering some popular pastime or mode of attire that injures health.

But the average of human life remains about the same. Washington Star.

FACTS IN FEW LINES

The population of Russia is increasing 1,500,000 annually.
The average yield of wheat in Russia is less than half that of the United States.
The export of sole leather from the United States averages about \$500,000 a month.
Sugar beets thrive in different kinds of soil in diverse climates and over a large area.
Exclusive of locomotives we manufacture 30,000 engines of 2,000,000 horsepower every year.
An admiral flies his flag at the mainmast, a vice admiral at the fore and a rear admiral at the mizzen.
The Russian official organ in St. Petersburg has the name for the newspapers. It is the Pravitelstvi Vlastnik.
In the province of Samara, Russia, 405,000 persons get their subsistence from less than three acres of land per capita.
This is how a Welsh paper wished its readers a happy new year: "Dioch yn fawr i chi! yr na peth I chwithau, llawer o honyr! ah."
An orange measuring twelve inches in diameter and weighing nine pounds has been grown by F. Gerber of Braam River, Kouga, South Africa.
A sealed bottle containing four pints of liquid air was sent from Berlin to Geneva, but on arrival it was found that three and a half pints had evaporated.
With a population of about 2,500,000 Paris has fewer than 100 negroes within its limits. It is claimed that the colored population of all France is less than 550.
The new cathedral at Liverpool will be remarkable for its high vaulting of the nave and choir—116 feet, measured in the barrel vaulting, and in the high transepts 140 feet.
A monumental work of reference, an encyclopedia of sixteen large volumes, is just being published in New York city. Whether by design or accident, not a page is numbered.
The United States is not the only government that is feeling a little nervous about the big guns on its warships. The new British 9.2 inch gun is not coming up to expectations.
Adult suffrage was tried for the first time in the commonwealth of Australia in the federal elections held on Dec. 16, 1903. The total number of voters registered was 1,700,000, of whom in round numbers 700,000 were men.
If one could save a cent the first day of the month, 2 cents the next day, 4 cents the next and so on, doubling the amount each day, he would have nearly \$3,000,000 at the end of the month, provided the month had thirty-one days and his salary could stand the pressure.
The characteristic feature of the automobile train invented in France is the principle that each car propels itself. The propelling force only is furnished by the locomotive. The latter, therefore, as it has no pulling to perform, but only to supply power, can be built proportionately very light.
The coal for Japan's navy comes from Hakodate and Otaru, on the island of Yesso, which lies directly north of Nippon, upon which Tokyo is situated. They are two of the greatest coal shipping ports in the world. The island is about 500 miles, or two days' steaming for a man-of-war, from Vladivostok.
A Boston professor takes a whack at history by declaring that Columbus was a highly respectable and fairly wealthy gentleman, who paid a large part of the cost of his voyage, that he was tall and red haired, utterly unlike his portraits, and that Isabella had no jewels to pawn, having hypothesized them several years before 1492.
A recent bulletin of the department of agriculture says, "It appears that practically all soils contain sufficient plant food for good crop yield, that this supply will be indefinitely maintained and that this actual yield of plants adapted to the soil depends mainly under favorable conditions upon the cultural methods and suitable crop rotation."
The navy department has been making experiments as to the possibility of a crew escaping from a submarine in case of an accident while the boat is submerged. Two dogs were expelled successfully from the torpedo tubes by means of compressed air, with a water plug behind them. Just as the torpedoes are fired. The tests show that men could escape in the same way.
Newspaper work in Russia is not pleasant. The government spends more money on its press censors than on its schools. Last year eighty-three papers were suspended for various periods, and twenty-six were forbidden to accept all advertisements, while 250 editors were told they could have a short vacation in Siberia if they continued their methods of reviving various public questions.
The Irish potato crop last year sold for \$151,038,004 and vies with the tobacco crop with returning the greatest amount per acre of any of the principal crops. Although there were less than 3,000,000 acres devoted to it, the yield of 84.7 bushels an acre, at an average price of 61.4 cents, is equivalent to an average net realization of \$52 an acre. "Subsists yields, according to the figures given, \$53.46 an acre."
At nearly all the larger railroad stations in Manchuria Russian settlements have made their appearance. Besides railroad offices and houses for employees there are also many private buildings. There is one impediment to the expansion of these settlements, for no regular lots are yet arranged for. It is said, however, that there will be a regular auction sale of lots organized. In the meantime private persons are allowed to occupy lots temporarily.
Far Away.
The Brute—What are you thinking of, Mamie?
Mamie—I am dreaming of my youth.
The Brute—I thought you had a far-away look in your eyes.—Princeton Tiger.
More Important.
"With your daughter as my wife, sir, I can conquer the world."
"But that isn't the question. Can you junk enough money to keep your wife in clothes?"—Life.