

The Blazed Trail

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

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CONTINUED

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DURING perhaps ten seconds the survivors watched the end of Thorpe's rope trailing in the flood. Then the young man with a deep sigh began to pull it toward him.

At once a hundred surmises, questions, ejaculations, broke out. "What happened?" cried Wallace Carpenter.

"What was that man's name?" asked the Chicago journalist, with the eager instinct of his profession.

"This is terrible, terrible, terrible!" a white haired physician from Marquette kept repeating over and over.

He panted, holding out a canvas of strangely twisted wood.

"Where'd he get this?" inquired Thorpe quickly. "It's a piece of the dam," he explained to Wallace, who had drawn near.

"Picked it out of the current," replied the man.

"The foreman and his boss bent eagerly over the morsel. Then they stared with solemnity into each other's eyes.

"Dynamite!" exclaimed Shearer.

"For a moment the three men stared at each other without speaking.

"What does it mean?" almost whispered Carpenter.

"Mean? Foul play!" snarled Thorpe. "Come on, Tim."

"I wouldn't stir the boys up," he panted, for the pace was very swift.

"They'll kill me one over there; it'll be murder on both sides."

He received no answer. About mid night they came to the camp.

Two great fires leaped among the trees, and the men were grouped between them, talking. Evening had brought its accumulation of slow anger against the perpetrators of the outrage.

Even as the woodsmen joined their group they had reached the intensity of execution. Across their purpose Thorpe threw violently his personality.

"You must not go!" he commanded. Through their anger they looked at him askance.

"I forbid it!" Thorpe cried. They shrugged their indifference and arose. This was an affair of caste brotherhood, and the blood of their mates cried out to them.

"The work!" Thorpe shouted hoarsely. "The work! We must get those logs out! We haven't time!"

Eighteen hours a day the men or undriving crew worked like demons. Jams had no chance to form.

Wallace Carpenter could not understand how human flesh and blood endured. The men themselves had long since reached the point of practical exhaustion, but were carried through by the fire of their leader.

Impossibilities were puffed aside like chaff. The men went at them headlong. They gave way before the rush Thorpe always led. Not for a single instant of the day nor for many at night was he at rest.

After the camp had fallen asleep he would often lie awake half of the few hours of their night, every muscle tense, staring at the sky.

Through the dissolving iron mist of his striving a sharp thought cleaved like an arrow. It was that, after all, he did not care. Sub-consciousness, the other influence, was growing like a weed.

"You fellows make me sick," said he. "You haven't got the sense God gave a rooster. Don't you see you're playing right in those fellows' hands? What do you suppose they dynamited them dams for? To kill our boys? They never dreamed we was dry pickin' that dam. They sent some low lived white down there to hang our drive, and it looks like they was going to succeed, thanks to you mutton heads."

"Do you want to know how to get even?" he asked. "Do you want to know how to make those fellows sing so small you can't hear them? Well, I'll tell you. Take out this drive! Do it in spite of them. Show them they're no good when they buck up against Thorpe's One. Our boys died doing their duty, the way a river man ought to. Now hump yourselves! Don't let them die in vain!"

The crew stirred uneasily, looking at each other for approval of the conversion each had experienced. "Radway turned easily toward the blaze."

A CONVERTED ANARCHIST

(Original.)

The man who told me this story is dead or I could not tell it without almost surely occasioning his death.

"I was a poor man, though I belonged to a good family and had been well educated. At college I imbibed revolutionary, not to say communistic, doctrines which influenced me, but not seriously, until on coming out of the university I lost my father and the assistance he had given me; then, facing the world with no means, I was drawn to embrace anarchism. There was no excuse for me. I was young, and the world was before me. I was one of the impractical, theorizing kind who prefer trying to revolutionize natural laws rather than work. Added to this, I had the faculty of inspiring others. I joined a band of anarchists and became a leader among them.

"My mother had a brother of whom I had never heard. He was considered the black sheep of the family and was never spoken of to me, the only child of his only sister. He had run away as a boy and had broken his mother's heart by never writing a line. Up to the time I became an anarchist he had never been heard from. Judge of my surprise one day to learn through solicitors that this uncle had died in South America and left a fortune of \$850,000 to me.

"How quickly my theories of the world's wrongs vanished! I did not dare to break my connection with anarchists, but gradually ceased to attend meetings. One day I was horrified at receiving an order to assassinate one of the crowned heads of Europe. I knew well that should I refuse I would be myself assassinated. One advantage I would have in disobeying the order—I was rich and could isolate myself from any one who might attempt to kill me. I turned my fortune into gold and disappeared. A few weeks later I turned up in one of the southern states. My hair, which had been a light brown, was black. My beard, which had been but a few tufts, was now luxuriant. My name was changed. Indeed, as little of my old self remained as I could help. I bought a small plantation and pretended to raise cotton. In its center was my house, and no one could reach me without passing a number of my employees, whose duty it was to keep off an enemy.

"I lived for my several years without hearing from my old associates, but this only assured me that at the outset I had eluded them. I knew that I had been condemned and some one had been appointed to kill me. The only question was, Would my executioner fire of the work or be withdrawn for lack of funds or other causes?

"One day I noticed that a new candy store had been opened in the village. I went inside and looked over the stock. It was very meager, and I bought nothing. A young woman who stood behind the counter looked disappointed and asked me to give an order for anything I liked and she would execute it. I am fond of chocolate and told her to make me some chocolate creams. She promised to have them ready the next day and sent them to me. Instead of sending she brought them. When she was announced I told my guards to admit her. She was a very attractive looking person, and I did not desire to keep her away. She asked me to try her chocolates and tell her wherein they did not please me. I ate a few of them and pronounced them excellent. That seemed to satisfy her, and she left at once, though I would have been glad to have her remain longer.

"In a week I went by the candy shop, stopped and gave her an order for some more chocolates. She told me that she knew of a new kind that was sure I had never eaten. I gave her an order for some of them, telling her that I would not put her to the trouble of sending them, but would call for them. I did so, but they were not ready. I called again, but still they had not been made. The woman told me that certain ingredients were required, for which she had been obliged to send to the city. She would bring them when they were ready.

"Meanwhile I never relaxed my vigilance in keeping any suspicious person from my house, and both there and when I went out I was secretly armed to the teeth.

Remembering an Elephant.

The tools for trimming elephants' feet are a carpenter's drawknife and a rasp for the soles and a horseshoer's knife and sandpaper for the toe nails.

A Bird That is Feared. The elster (Pica candata) is a bird that is respected and feared throughout south Germany. It belongs to the raven tribe and is about the size of a dove, with black and white feathers and long, pointed tail.

Animals Become Insane. Insanity in the human subject is supposed by some to have no analogue in the lower animals. Very many cases, according to Dr. Snelson, will lead to the permanent loss of self control.

Dividing the Sexes. While worshipping in a little chapel-of-ice a few miles from Ruthia, in the Wrexham road, the sexes are so strictly divided that they cannot even see one another.

The Cuban Workman. The Cuban workman is a kind husband and a fond father of a family usually of patriarchal size. He lives simply. At the bedchamber he buys his tasajo (jerked beef), rice, vegetables and cheap wine, and very savory are the stews his meek little wife prepares at one hearty meal of the day, about 5:30 p. m.

Rapid Typewriting. An official stenographer, Deming, at Albany, years ago reported court proceedings on a typewriter at the rate of 150 and 170 words a minute.

Happiness. "I am sometimes accused," writes Sir John Lubbock, "of being too optimistic. But I have never ignored nor denied the troubles and sorrows of life. I have never said that men are happy, but only that they might be; that if they are not so the fault is generally their own; that most of us throw away more happiness than we enjoy."

Too Deserving. A young village maiden had obtained the modest prize. "I suppose then, my child," said a Parisian lady addressing her, "you are the most modest girl in the parish?"



"You must not go!" he commanded. another. Then Shearer caught his arm, motioning the dazed and bloody victim of the attack to get out of sight. Thorpe shook his foreman off with one impatient motion and strode away up the river, his head erect, his eyes flashing, his nostrils dilated.

George Francis Train's Wit. One of George Francis Train's sayings was: "People call me insane. I don't wonder. What would a village of peanuts say if a coconut rolled in among them?"

Not For the Cannibals. There was a fair maid from Decatur who was known as a red-hot potato. "I don't wonder," said a man who was with her, "what would a village of peanuts say if a coconut rolled in among them?"

Teeth. How strange it is that you tell a horse's age by the horse's teeth, but a chicken's age by your own!—Town Topics.

Don't say a man is shiftless. Be polite and say that he is too contented to ever get rich.—Michigan Globe.

Not Exciting. I had had such a slow time when I had that night. I had heard you were playing with me—with my wife, your wife, I don't know. Not in earnest, but just for fun.—Philadelphia Press.

"Jack told me to give this to you."