

The Blazed Trail

By STEWART EDWARD WHITE

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XXXII.

RAPIDLY THORPE explained what was to be done and thrust his knife into the Indian's hands. The latter listened in silence and solidity, then turned and without a word departed swiftly in the darkness. The two white men stood a minute attentive. Nothing was to be heard but the steady beat of rain and the roaring of the wind.

Near the bank of the river they encountered a man visible only as an uncertain black outline against the glow of the lanterns beyond. Thorpe, stopping him, found Big Junko.

"This is no time to quit," said Thorpe sharply.

"I ain't quittin'," replied Big Junko.

"Where are you going, then?"

Junko was partially and stammeringly unresponsive.

"Looks bad," commented Thorpe.

"You'd better get back to your job."

"Yes," agreed Junko helplessly. In the momentary slack tide of work the giant had conceived the idea of searching out the driver crew for purposes of pugilistic vengeance. Thorpe's suspicious stung him, but his simple mind could see no direct way to explanation.

All night long in the chill of a spring rain and wind storm the Fighting Forty and certain of the mill crew gave themselves to the labor of connecting the slanting stone cribs so strongly by means of heavy timbers chained end to end that the pressure of a break in the jam might not sweep aside the defenses. Wallace Carpenter, Shory, the chore boy, and Anderson, the barn boss, picked a dangerous passage back and forth carrying pails of red-hot coffee which Mrs. Hathaway constantly prepared. The cold water numbed the men's hands. With difficulty could they manipulate the heavy chains through the auger holes; with pain they twisted knots, bored holes. They did not complain. Behind them the jam quivered perilously near the bursting point. From it shrieked about the demons of pressure. Steadily the river rose an inch an hour. The key might snap at any given moment, they could

not tell, and with the rush they knew very well that themselves, the tug and the disabled pile driver would be swept from existence. The worst of it was that the blackness shrouded their experience into uselessness. They were utterly unable to tell by the ordinary visual symptoms how near the jam might be to collapse.

However, they persisted, as the old time river men always does, so that when dawn appeared the barrier was continuous and assured. Although the pressure of the river had already forced the logs against the defenses, the latter held the strain well.

The storm had settled into its gait. Overhead the sky was filled with gray, beneath which darker clouds flew across the zenith before a howling southwest wind. Out in the clear river one could hardly stand upright against the gusts. In the fan of many directions furious squalls swept over the open water below the booms, and an eager boiling current rushed to the lake.

Thorpe now gave orders that the tug and driver should take shelter. A few moments later he expressed himself as satisfied. The dripping crew, their harsh faces gray in the half light, picked their way to the shore.

In the darkness of that long night's work no man knew his neighbor. Men from the river, men from the mill, men from the yard, all worked side by side. Thus no one noticed especially a tall, slender, but well knit individual dressed in a faded mackinaw and a limp slouch hat which he wore pulled over his eyes. This young fellow occupied himself with the chains. Against the racing current the crew held the ends of the heavy booms while he fastened them together. He worked well, but seemed slow. Three times Shearer hustled him on after the others had finished, examining closely the work that had been done. On the third occasion he shrugged his shoulder somewhat impatiently.

The men struggled to bring the young fellow just described shoring up the rear. He walked as though tired out, hanging his head and dragging his feet. When, however, the boarding house door had closed on the last of those who preceded him and the town lay deserted in the dawn he suddenly became transformed. Casting a keen glance right and left to be sure of his opportunity he turned and hurried recklessly back over the logs to the center booms. There he knelt and busied himself with the chains.

In his slung progression over the jam he so blended with the morning shadows as to seem one of them, and he would have escaped quite unnoticed had not a sudden shifting of the logs under his feet compelled him to rise for a moment to his full height. So Wallace Carpenter, passing from his bedroom along the porch to the dining room, became aware of the man on the logs.

His first thought was that something demanding instant attention had happened to the boom. He therefore ran at once to the man's assistance, ready to help him personally or to call other aid as the exigency demanded. Owing to the precarious nature of the passage he could not see beyond his feet until



"You stand still!"

along, because now you'll have to come with me till this little row is over. You won't have to stay long. Your logs'll go out in an hour. I'll just trouble you to go into the brush with me for awhile."

The sealer picked his file from beside the weakened link.

"What have you against us, anyway?"

Dyer asked Wallace. His quick mind had conceived a plan. At the moment he was standing near the outer edge of the jam, but now as he spoke he stepped quietly to a boom log.

Dyer's black eyes gleamed at him suspiciously, but the movement appeared wholly natural in view of the return to shore.

"Nothing," he replied. "I didn't like your gang particularly, but that's not my log."

"Why do you take such nervy chances to injure us?" queried Carpenter.

"Because there's something in it," snapped the sealer. "Now, about face. Move!"

Like a flash, Wallace wheeled and dropped into the river, swimming as fast as possible below water before his breath should give out. The swift current hurried him away. When at last he rose for air the spit of Dyer's pistol caused him no uneasiness. A moment later he struck out boldly for shore.

What Dyer's ultimate plan might be he could not guess. He had stated confidently that the jam would break "in an hour." He might intend to start it with dynamite. Wallace dragged himself from the water and commenced breathlessly to run toward the boarding house.

Dyer had already reached shore. Wallace raised what was left of his voice in a despairing shout. The sealer mockingly waved his hat, then turned and ran swiftly and easily toward the shelter of the woods. At their border he paused again to bow in derision. Carpenter's cry brought men to the boarding house door. From the shadows of the forest two vivid flashes of light came. Dyer staggered, turned completely about, seemed partially to recover and disappeared. An instant later, across the open space where the sealer had stood, with rifle a-trail, the Indian leaped in pursuit.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"WHAT IS IT?" "What is the matter?" "What the — is up?" "What's happened?" burst on Wallace in a volley.

"It's Dyer!" gasped the young man. "I found him on the boom! He held me up with a gun while he filed the boom chains between the center pieces. They're just ready to go. I got away by diving. Hurry and put in a new chain. You haven't got much time!"

"He's a goer now," interjected Shory gruffly. "Charley is on his trail, and he is hot!"

Thorpe's intelligence leaped promptly to the practical question.

"Injun Charley—where'd he come from? I sent him up to Sadler & Smith's. It's twenty miles, even through the woods."

As though by way of colossal answer the whole surface of the jam moved inward and upward, thrusting the logs bristling against the horizon.

"She's going to break!" shouted

Thorpe, starting on a run toward the river. "A chain, quick!"

The men followed, strung high with excitement. Hamilton, the journalist, paused long enough to glance up stream. Then he, too, ran after them, screaming that the river above was full of logs. By that they all knew that Injun Charley's mission had failed and that something under 10,000,000 feet of logs were racing down the river like so many battering rams.

At the boom the great jam was already a-tremble with eagerness to spring. Indeed a miracle alone seemed to hold the timbers in their place.

"It's death, certain death, to go out on that boom," muttered Billy Mason.

Tim Shearer stepped forward coolly, ready as always to assume the perilous duty. He was thrust back by Thorpe, who seized the chain, cold-shut and hammer which Scotty Parsons brought and ran lightly over the booms, shouting:

"Back! Back! Don't follow me, on your lives! Keep 'em back, Tim!"

The swift water boiled under the booms. Bang! smash! bang! crashed the logs a mile up stream, but plainly audible above the waters and the wind. Thorpe knelt, dropped the cold-shut through on either side of the weakened link and prepared to close it with his hammer. He intended further to strengthen the connection with the other chain.

"Lemme hold her for you. You can't close her alone," said an unexpected voice next his elbow.

Thorpe looked up in surprise and anger. Over him leaned Big Junko. The men had been unable to prevent his following. Animated by the blind devotion of the animal for its master and further stung to action by that master's doubt of his fidelity, the giant had followed to assist as he might.

"You fool," cried Thorpe, exasperated, then held the hammer to him. "Strike while I keep the chain underneath!" he commanded.

Big Junko leaned forward to obey, kicking strongly his corks into the barked surface of the boom log. The spikes, worn blunt by the river work already accomplished, failed to grip. Big Junko slipped, caught himself by an effort, overbalanced in the other direction, and fell into the stream. The current at once swept him away, but fortunately in such a direction that he was enabled to catch the slanting end of a "dead head" log whose lower end was jammed in the crib. The dead head was slippery, the current strong. Big Junko had no crevice by which to assure his hold. In another moment he would be torn away.

"Let go and swim!" shouted Thorpe.

"I can't swim," replied Junko in so low a voice as to be scarcely audible.

For a moment Thorpe stared at him. "Tell Carrie," said Big Junko.

Then there beneath the swirling gray sky, under the frowning jam, in the midst of flood waters, Thorpe had his second great moment of decision. He did not pause to weigh reasons or chances, to discuss with himself expediency or the moralities of failure. His actions were preordained, mechanical. All at once the great forces which the winter had been bringing to power crystallized into something bigger than himself or his ideas. The trail lay before him; there was no choice.

Now clearly, with no shadow of doubt, he took the other view: There could be nothing better than love. Men, their works, their deeds, were little things. Success was a little thing, the opinion of men a little thing. Instantly he felt the truth of it.

And here was love in danger. That it held its moment's habitation in clay of the coarser mold had nothing to do with the great elemental truth of it. For the first time in his life Thorpe felt the full crushing power of an abstraction. Without thought, instinctively, he threw before the necessity of the moment all that was lesser. It was the triumph of what was real in the man over that which environment, alienation, difficulties, had raised up within him.

At Big Junko's words Thorpe raised his hammer and with one mighty blow severed the chains which bound the ends of the booms across the opening. The free end of one of the poles immediately swung down with the current in the direction of Big Junko. Thorpe, like a cat, ran to the end of

ed with spring, leaped with the crash of timbers settling to the leap. The men on shore could no longer see them for the smother. The great crush of logs had actually begun its first majestic sliding motion when at last they emerged to safety.

At first a few of the loose timbers found the opening, slipping quietly through with the current; then more. Finally the front of the jam dove forward, and an instant later the smooth, swift motion had gained its impetus and was sweeping the entire drive down through the gap.

Rank after rank like soldiers charging, they ran. The great force wind caught them up ahead of the current. In a moment the open river was full of logs jostling eagerly onward. Then suddenly far out above the uneven tossing sky line of Superior the strange northern "boom," or mirage, threw the specters of thousands of restless timbers rising and falling on the bosom of the lake.

CONTINUED

Old Time Grave Robbers.

Under the laws of Draco, the most severe code ever drawn up, all grave robbers were put to death without trial. The old Athenian laws put a slave to death for disturbing a body after interment, but in the case of a freeman a "condemnation of a moiety of his possessions" was the penalty. Constantine decreed that a woman might obtain a divorce if she could prove that her husband had disturbed the remains of the dead. At one time (in the time of the seventh and eighth centuries) the English law held that "it is deemed unlawful to open a grave for a second person, except for a husband or wife."

Vegetables of Liberia.

The most common vegetables of Liberia are the sweet potato, cassava, yam and tania. The cassava is a root varying in size from three to eight inches in length and from three to eight inches in circumference. When it is cooked it tastes very much like a fresh chestnut. This root is the vegetable most extensively cultivated by the natives and forams, with the rice, their chief diet. The fecula of the cassava is made from topioca.

Stage Managers.

Stage managers still consider it necessary to keep the actors bustling about the stage in a meaningless, unmeaning and distracting manner. In life I do not speak three or four sentences to my friend at one side of the room and then with him elaborately cross the room before I continue my discourse. Why should I do so on the stage?—London Academy.

Man the Slave.

It has taken ages of repression to bring the husband and father to his present condition of abject slavery to the wife and mother. He is the victim of a process that began in the garden of Eden and gives no promise of ending until he is called to the reward that awaits the humble on the other and brighter shore.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Putting Words in Her Mouth.

"I declare," said Bella sweetly, "your thoughts run exactly in unison with mine, Augustus. I had those very words in my mouth."

"Yes, and I saw him put 'em there," said little Tommy, who had seen the kissing going on.

Countries as Presents.

Cleopatra received Egypt as a present from Julius Caesar. Lucullus, Sulla and Pompey each gave away half a dozen kingdoms. Antony gave the little kingdom of Judea to Herod. One of the excellent stories of the past is that the Emperor Constantine gave Rome and all Italy to Pope Sylvester, who cured him of leprosy. King John, called Lackland, being excommunicated by Pope Innocent III, gave to that pope and his successors the kingdom of Ireland and England. The deed reads, "Not constrained with fear, but with my full consent and the advice of my liege men, for the remission of my sins against God and the church, I resign England and Ireland to God, St. Peter, St. Paul and our lord the Pope Innocent, and to his successors in the apostolic chair." Julius II, gave the estates of King Louis XII, to the Emperor Maximilian, Sixtus V., Gregory XIV. and Clement VIII. were ready to make a present of France to whomever Philip II. would have chosen for the husband of his daughter Clara Eugenia. Alexander VI. presented the East and West Indies to Spain and Portugal, which was like giving almost all the earth.

The Birch.

Old writers in mentioning birch trees seldom failed to say solemnly that they were useful to grow branches with which to give boys thrashings. Turner regards the supply of "flexible, pendant branches" for purposes of punishment as the chief merit of the tree. Coles also based his estimate of the birch chiefly on its use in the supply of rods as instruments of punishment, for he writes: "The civil uses wherewith the birch serveth are many, as for the punishment of children, both at home and at school; for it hath an admirable influence upon them to quiet them when they are out of order, and therefore some call it makepeace." In ancient Rome the fessens of the flectores, with which they cleared the way for magistrates, were formed with rods of birch, and their influence was sufficient to insure a rapid dispersion of men assembled where they would impede the passage of the administrators of the law. From that time to within a comparatively recent period the birchen rod was regarded as one of the most important deterrents of juvenile depravity.

KICKING A HINDOO

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While we were capturing wild beasts for Hagenbeck in the district of Bengal, India, we one day heard of a one-eyed tiger which had killed at least a dozen people and alarmed a district ten miles square. We were arranging for his capture when a native, who looked to be at least eighty years old, came forward and besought us not to meddle with the beast, as it was his mascot and had been for years. We ridiculed and hooded the idea, and when the old man became persistent and insolent our manager, whose name was Robbins, kicked him out of camp.

The Hindoo went away cursing, and that afternoon Robbins had a pit dug on a jungle patch and a goat tied to a stake to bait the tiger. Some time during the night the Hindoo's mascot appeared, and in trying to seize the goat he fell into the trap.

It took us more than two days to get the fellow out of the pit and into a cage, and the cage had to be doubly strengthened to prevent escape. He had scarcely arrived in camp when the old man showed up again. The tiger not only recognized him at once, but exhibited every sign of pleasure at his presence.

The man began by offering us a fair cash value for the captive and finally raised his figures until the sum was doubled. The rest of us were for selling the beast, as he would fetch no money in Europe, but Robbins was sulky and spiteful and declared that no money could buy him. The Hindoo left us in as bad a temper as before, vowing that he would have his tiger back if it cost a hundred lives, and the animal's exertions to get free frightened most of the natives out of camp for an hour or two.

It was a month later that we reached Benares and landed our large collection of captive wild animals at the shipping depot. I had general charge of the depot, with forty or more native assistants. As the animals came in they were transferred to the usual iron cages used when shipping.

For ten days and nights all had gone well, but on a certain Sunday night, a quarter of an hour before I was to start out on my last round, I heard the one-eyed tiger cry out in a peculiar manner. It was just such a cry as he uttered when the Hindoo came into our camp in the jungle, a cry which you might imagine combined a hail of welcome and a threat of vengeance. I instantly suspected that the fakir must be in the building, and, reaching down for my revolver, I stepped out of the room. Just then there was a terrific roar from tigers, panthers, wolves and hyenas, followed by shouts from the men and queer noises from the elephants and buffaloes. I knew that I was too late. As I stood by the door pandemonium broke loose.

The Hindoo had kept his vow and followed us to Benares to secure vengeance. After his tiger had been placed in the shipping depot the man began work on the superstition of two of my native assistants, and after a few nights they let him into the enclosure and gave him the key to the animal's cage. On this night, after being in the cage with the tiger for half an hour, he had turned the beast loose in the big room and encouraged him to attack one of the elephants.

The man at once began freeing other animals, and as fast as one was freed he attacked another. Every assistant had rushed into the room at the first alarm, and not a dozen of them got out again alive. They were mauled and mangled by the elephants and buffaloes and attacked on sight by the tigers and panthers. In five minutes after the tiger's first scream every animal in the building was madd with fright and a desire for blood, and had I a hundred men at my back nothing could have been done.

In fleeing down a passage to get to an outside door I ran against a buffalo, crept under the belly of an elephant and brushed a tiger which was lapping up blood. I reached the door and passed out to find a crowd of a thousand people surrounding the building. I was hardly out when the central structure took fire from the broken lamps, and then the uproar became something positively terrific.

The door to the forage room had been broken open—it had been fastened by the Hindoo, who meant that every human being in the buildings should suffer death—and ten or twelve men pulled out alive. Of these two died next day of their injuries. No one dared to open the great doors and let the maddened animals out, nor did the firemen who came out from the city dare go inside to fight the flames. A portion of the depot was saved by a change of wind, but what beasts and birds escaped the flames were suffocated by the smoke.

Not one single captive of any sort was taken out alive. Among the dead were the Hindoo and his tiger. The man had been gored to death by a buffalo as he moved about inciting the animals to attack each other, and the tiger was dead from the bite of a cobra, which he had attacked as it glided about.

The battle between the beasts and the conflagration lasted for the best part of two hours, and never were people treated to a more barbaric exhibition. While attacking the assistants the beasts also fought each other, and even had no fire started I doubt if we should have saved beast or animal except in a crippled condition.

Robbins had the satisfaction of kicking a Hindoo who dared to talk back to him, but Hagenbeck had to pay for it to the tune of \$100,000, to say nothing of the many lives lost and the interruption to business.

M. QUAD.

THE KEY TO SIBERIA

VLADIVOSTOK, THE CZAR'S FINEST SEAPORT IN THE EAST.

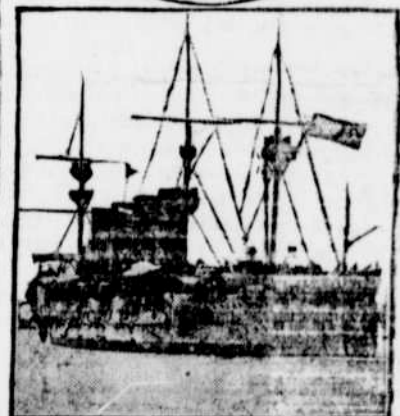
Pacific Terminus of the Trans-Siberian Railway and an Important Naval Station on Russian Soil in the Orient.

Vladivostok, so frequently mentioned in reports from the war in the orient, is the capital of Russia's empire on the Pacific and the key to the vast territory of eastern Siberia. For many years it was the chief Russian city in the far east and, next to Port Arthur, is today the most important naval station on Russian soil.

The city is situated on the Muraviev peninsula, which extends into Peter the Great gulf, and because of its proximity to Korea and Manchuria is a strategically of great importance in the present struggle with Japan. Vladivostok much resembles Port Arthur, both being situated on peninsulas that can be approached by the enemy's boats on three sides, an undesirable position, as the recent bombardments of the ports have proved.

The harbor is approached by way of the eastern Bosphorus strait and Amur bay. The channel is clear throughout, with depths of from 75 to 150 feet, and the Golden Horn inlet, as the harbor is named (from its resemblance to the Golden Horn at Constantinople), has not less than 55 feet at its entrance, with 35 to 40 feet off the town. The Golden Horn (or Zeltai Rog) is about three miles long and half a mile wide, the city being built along the shore for a distance of about two miles. The main fortifications occupy the northern shore, the dry dock is near the middle of the inlet, and the barracks are on the extreme east. Both sides of the entrance are strongly fortified, and batteries are also planted on the Amur bay side of the long spit which incloses the harbor.

Vladivostok is the eastern terminus of the Trans-Siberian railway, or the Chinese Southern, as that branch of it which crosses Manchuria is called. It is thus in communication by rail with Harbin, Mukden and Port Arthur. It is also connected by rail with Khabarovsk, the capital of the Amur



CAPTAIN REITZENSTEIN AND HIS FLAGSHIP GROMOV.

region, 475 miles distant to the northeast. It is closed by ice about two months in the year.

The city was founded in 1861. Russia came into possession of the maritime province, of which Vladivostok is the capital, by the treaty of Argun made with China in 1860. By the treaty an immense tract of country lying between the Yumen, Ussuri and Amur rivers was obtained by the czar. The Chinese, it is said, were unaware of the treaty's full meaning.

The population of Vladivostok is stated to be between 30,000 and 40,000 in normal peace times, but the figures given out as to its population at various periods of its career are somewhat puzzling. Since the completion of the railroads the city has greatly developed, and as Vladivostok is the seat of the viceroy of the east it contains many handsome government buildings as well as churches, one of which, a Greek church, has five domes. There are also gymnasiums for boys and girls, several professional schools, a naval hospital, mechanical and naval works, steam sawmills, flour mills and various other manufacturing plants.

The docking accommodation consists of one dry dock, two floating docks and one small commercial dock. The dry dock is 550 feet long by 60 feet wide, while the largest floating dock is 302 feet in length by 74½ feet in width. The dry dock is superior to that at Port Arthur, and it would be of immense advantage to the Russian navy if Admiral Makaroff could remain there with his damaged battleships.

Captain Reitzenstein, who is in command of the naval forces at Vladivostok, has four splendid ships in his squadron—the Gromov, the Moskva, the Rosla, armored cruisers of the most powerful class, and the protected cruiser Rogozsky—but despite the fact that his ships are swift and powerful Captain Reitzenstein dares not leave the protection of the forts except for short dashes into the sea, where, so far as has no effect on the naval station.

Now that the ice has left the Golden Horn the Japs may mean another descent on Vladivostok. It is a terrible attack from both land and sea.