# Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

"A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." —Francis Bacon.

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

"Yes," continued the President, "owing to the recent sales of your real property in this country (sales, due, I fear, to a want of confidence in my administration), you have at this moment a sum of $300,000 in the bank safe. Now (don't interrupt me, please) the experience of a busy life teaches me that commercial reputation and probity depend on results, not on methods. Your directors have a prejudice against me and my government. That prejudices you, with your superior opportunities for judgment, cannot share. You will serve your employers best by doing for them what they haven't the sense and courage to do for themselves. I propose that you should assume the responsibility of lending me this money. The transaction will redound to the profit of the bank. It shall also," he added, slowly, "redound to your profit."

I began to see my way. But there were difficulties.

"What am I to tell the directors?" I asked.

"You will make the usual return of investments and debts outstanding—mortgages—loans on approved security—but you know better than I do."

"False returns, your excellency means?"

"They will no doubt be formally inaccurate," the President admitted.

"What if they ask for proofs?" said I.

"Sufficient unto the day," said the President.

"You have rather surprised me, sir," I said, "but I am most anxious to oblige you, and to forward the welfare of Aureataland. There are, however, two points which occur to me. First, how am I to be insured against not getting my interest? That I must have."

"Quite so," he interrupted. "And the second point I can anticipate. It is, what token of my gratitude for your timely assistance can I prevail on you to accept?"

"Your excellency's knowledge of human nature is surprising."

"Kindly give me your attention, Mr. Martin, and I will try to satisfy both your very reasonable requirements. You have $300,000; those you will hand over to me, receiving in return government 6 per cent bonds for that amount. I will then hand back to you $65,000; $45,000 you will retain as security for your interest; in the event of any failure on the part of Aureataland to meet her obligations honorably, you will pay the interest on the whole $300,000 out of that sum. That secures you for more than two years against absolute failure of interest, which in reality you need not fear. Till the money is wanted, you will have the use of it. The remaining $20,000 I shall beg of you to accept as your commission, or rather as a token of my esteem. $20,000 absolutely—$45,000 as long as the Aureataland pays interest! You must admit I deal with you as one gentleman with another, Mr. Martin. In the result, your directors get their interest, I get my loan, you get your bonus. We are all benefited, no one is hurt! All this is effected at the cost of a harmless stratagem."

I was full of admiration. The scheme was very neat, and, as far as the President and myself were concerned, he had been no more than just in pointing out its advantages. As for the directors, they would probably get their interest; anyhow, they would get it for two years. There was risk, of course; a demand for evidence of my alleged investments or a sudden order to realize a heavy sum at short notice would bring the house about my ears. But I did not anticipate this.

"Well, Mr. Martin," said the President, "do you agree?"

I still hesitated. The President rose and put his hand on my shoulder.

"Better say yes. I might take it, you know, and cause you to disappear—believe me, with reluctance, Mr. Martin. It is true I shouldn't like this course. It would perhaps make my position here untenable. But not having the money would certainly make it untenable."

I saw the force of this argument, and said:

"I can refuse your excellency nothing."

"Then take your hat and come along to the bank," said he.

This was sharp work.

"Your excellency does not mean to take the money now—to-night?" I exclaimed.

"Not to take, Mr. Martin—to receive it from you. We have made our bargain. What is the objection to carrying it out promptly?"

"But I must have the bonds. They must be prepared, sir."

"They are here," he said, taking a bundle from the drawer of a writing table. "$300,000 6 per cent stock, signed by myself, and countersigned by Don Antonio. Take your hat and come along."

I did as I was bid.

CHAPTER III.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, and Whittingham was looking her best as we made our way along the avenue leading to the Piazza 1871. The President walked briskly, silent but serene; I followed, the trouble in my mind reflected in a somewhat hang-dog air, and I was much comforted when the President broke the stillness of the night by saying:

"You have set your foot on the first rung of the ladder that leads to fame and wealth, Mr. Martin."

I was rather afraid I had set it on the first rung of the ladder that leads to the gallows. But there the foot was; what the ladder turned out to be was in the hands of the gods; so I threw off care, and as we entered the Piazza I pointed to the statue, and said:

"Behold my inspiring example, your excellency!"

"Exactly," he replied, 'I make the most of my opportunities."

I knew he regarded me as one of his opportunities, and was making the most of me. This is not a pleasant point of view to regard one's self from, so I changed the subject, and said:

"Shall we call for Don Antonio?"

"Why?"

"Well, as he's minister of finance, I thought perhaps his presence would make the matter more regular."

"If the presence of the President," said that official, "can't make a matter regular, I don't know what can. Let him sleep on. Isn't his signature on the bonds enough?"

What could I do? I made one more weak objection:

"What shall we tell Jones?"

"What shall we tell Jones?" he echoed. "Really, Mr. Martin, you must use your discretion as to what you tell your employes. You can hardly expect me to tell Jones anything, beyond that it's a fine morning."

We had now reached the bank, which stood in Liberty street, a turning out of the Piazza. I took out my key, unlocked the door, and we entered together. We passed into my inner sanctum, where the safe stood.

"What's it in?" asked the President.

"United States bonds, and bills on New York and London," I replied.

"Good," said he. "Let me look."

I unlocked the safe and took out the securities. He examined them carefully, placing each after due scrutiny in a small handbag, in which he had brought down the bonds I was to receive. I stood by, holding a shaded candle. At this moment a voice cried from the door:

"If you move you're dead men!"

I started and looked up. The President looked up without starting. There was dear old Jones, descending from his upper chamber, where he and Mrs. Jones resided. He was clad only in his nightshirt, and was leveling a formidable gun full at the august head of his excellency.

"Ah, Mr. Jones," said the latter, "it's a fine morning."

"The President!" cried Jones; "and Mr. Martin! Why, what on earth, gentlemen——?"

The President gently waved one hand toward me, as if to say, "Mr. Martin will explain," and went on placing his securities in the bag. In the face of this crisis my hesitation left me.

"Mr. Martin received a cable from Europe, Jones," said the President, "instructing him to advance a sum of money to me."

"Cable?" said Jones. "Where is it?"

"We must have left it at the Golden House. I saw it was on the table just before we started. Though I presume Mr. Jones has no right——?"

"None at all," I said briskly.

"Yet, as a matter of concession, Mr. Martin will no doubt show it to him tomorrow?"

"Strictly as a matter of concession perhaps I will, though I am bound to say that I am surprised at your manner, Mr. Jones."

Jones looked sadly puzzled.

"It's all irregular, sir," said he.

"Hardly more so than your costume!" said the President, pleasantly.

Jones being thus made aware of the havoc the draught was playing with his airy covering, hastily closed the door, and said to me appealingly:

"It's all right, sir, I suppose?"

"Perfectly right," said I.

"But highly confidential," added the President. "And you will put me under a personal obligation, Mr. Jones, and at the same time fulfill your duty to your employers, if you preserve silence till the transaction is officially announced. A man who serves me does not regret it."

Here he was making the most of another opportunity—Jones this time.

"Enough of this," I said. "I will go over the matter in the morning."

His excellency walked up to Jones and looked hard at him.

"Silent men prosper best, and live longest, Mr. Jones."

Jones looked into his steely eyes, and suddenly fell all of a tremble.

The President was satisfied. He abruptly pushed him out of the room, and we heard his shambling steps going up the staircase. His excellency turned to me, and said with apparent annoyance:

"You leave a great deal to me, Mr. Martin."

He had certainly done more than tell Jones it was a fine morning. But I was too much troubled to thank him; I was thinking of the cable. The President divined my thoughts, and said:

"I must prepare that cable."

"Yes," I replied; "that would reassure him. But I haven't had much practice in that sort of thing, and I don't quite know—"

The President scribbled a few words on a bit of paper, and said:

"Take that to the postoffice, and they'll give you the proper form; I will fill it up."

Certainly some things go easily if the head of the State is your fellow criminal.

"And now, Mr. Martin, it grows late. I have my securities; you have your bonds. We have won over Jones. All goes well. Aureataland is saved. You have made your fortune, for there lie your $65,000. And, in fine, I am much obliged to you. I will not trouble you to attend me on my return. Good-night, Mr. Martin."

He went out, and I threw myself down in my office chair, and sat gazing at the bonds he had left me. I wondered whether he had merely made a tool of me; whether I could trust him; whether I had done well to rely on his promises. And yet there lay my reward; and I soon arose, put the government bonds and the $65,000 in securities in the safe, locked up everything, and went home to my lodgings. As I went in it was broad daylight, for the clock had gone five, and I met Father Jacques sallying forth. He had already breakfasted, and was on his way to administer early consolation to the flower women in the Piazza. He stopped me with a grieved look, and said:

"Ah, my friend, these are untimely hours."

I saw I was laboring under an unjust suspicion.

"I have only just come from the bank. I had to dine at the Golden House and afterward returned to finish up a bit of work."

"Ah, that is well," he cried. "It is then the industrious and not the idle apprentice I meet?" referring to a series of famous prints with which my room was decorated, a gift from my father on my departure.

I nodded and passed on, saying to myself: "Very industrious, indeed. Not many men have done such a night's work as I have."

And that is how my fortune became bound up with those of the Aureataland national debt.

CHAPTER IV.

After the incidents above recorded, things went on quietly enough for some months. I had a serious talk with Jones, reproaching him gravely for his outrageous demeanor. He capitulated abjectly on being shown the cable, which was procured in the manner kindly indicated by the President. The latter had perhaps been in too great a hurry with his heavy guns, for his hint of violence had rather stirred than allayed Jones' apprehensions. If there were nothing to conceal, why should his excellency not stick at murder to hide it? However, I explained to him the consideration of high policy, dictating inviolable secrecy, and justifying a somewhat arbitrary way of dealing with a trusted official; and the marked graciousness with which Jones was received when he met the President at the Ministry of Finance on current business went far to obliterate his unpleasant recollections. I further bound him to my fortunes by obtaining for him a rise of salary from the directors, "in consequence of the favorable report of his conduct received from Mr. Martin."

Peaceful as matters seemed, I was not altogether at ease. To begin with, the new loan did not apparently at all improve the financial position of Aureataland. Desolation still reigned on the scene of the harbor works; there was the usual difficulty in paying salaries and meeting current expenditure. The President did not invite my confidence as to the disposal of his funds; indeed before long I was alarmed to see a growing coldness in his manner, which I considered at once ungrateful and menacing; and when the half-year came round he firmly refused to disburse more than half the amount of interest due on the second loan, thus forcing me to make an inroad on my reserve of $45,000. He gave me many good reasons for this course of conduct, dwelling chiefly on the necessary unproductiveness of public works in their early stages, and confidently promising full payment with arrears next time. Nevertheless I began to see that I must face the possibility of a continual drain on resources that I had fondly hoped woul be available for my own purposes for a considerable time at least. Thus one thing and another contributed to open a breach between his excellency and myself, and, although I never ceased to feel his charm as a private companion, my distrust of him as ruler, and, I may add, as a fellow-conspirator, steadily deepened.

Other influences were at this time at work in the same direction. Rich in the possession of my "bonus," I had plunged even more freely than before into the gaities of Whittingham, and where I was welcome before I was now a doubly honored guest. I became acquainted with the Signorina, the lady to whom the President had referred during his interview with me; and my acquaintance with the Signorina was very rich in results.

This lady was, after the President, perhaps the best known person in Aureataland—best known, that is, by name and face and fame; for her antecedents and circumstances were wrapped in impenetrable mystery. When I arrived in the country the Signorina Christina Nugent had been settled there about a year. She had appeared originally as a member of an operatic company, which had paid a visit to our "National Theater" from the United States. The company passed on its not very brilliant way, but the Signoriana remained behind. It was said she had taken a fancy to Whittingham, and, being independent of her profession, had determined to make a sojourn there. At any rate, there she was. She established herself in a pretty villa, closely adjoining the Golden House; it stood opposite the presidential grounds, commanding a view of that stately enclosure; and here she dwelt, under the care of a lady whom she called "Aunt," known to the rest of the world as Mrs. Carrington. The title "Signorina" was purely professional; for all I know the name "Nugent" was equally a creature of choice; but, anyhow, the lady herself never professed to be anything but English, and openly stated that she retained her title simply because it was more musical that that of "Miss."

(To be continued.)

## MAKING OF CLOTHESPINS.

**Millions Are Turned Out Annually at a Maine Factory.**

Few persons ever wonder where clothespins come from; few ever heard of Bryant's Pond, Me., and yet a man there has been quietly turning trees into clothespins for years and supplying the world with them, amassing in the process as comfortable a fortune as many a man makes in a more pretentious business in some money centers, according to the New York Tribune. His name is Lewis Mann, and he began with a capital of $400, with which he purchased an old disused mill and began the manufacture of clothespins. Today he is the largest individual maker of this very necessary article in the world.

How large the clothespin industry really is may be gathered from the fact that no less than 1,250,000 five-gross boxes are manufactured every year in the United States alone. Much of the best machinery now used by Mr. Mann is the result of his own inventive genius and that of his son Edwin. Mr. Mann's machines turn out 30,000,000 pail handles, while of high-grade clothespin they produce more than 50,000 five-gross boxes, or 36,000,000 a year.

In the winter great piles of birch logs are accumulated about the mills, to feed the great saws, which snip them into two and one-half foot lengths as easily as though they were so many matches. These lengths are rapidly split by another saw into thin slabs, which are in turn converted into long, thin square strips by gang saws. Deft hands toss these strips on a revolving drum, which bears them against still other saws and turns them out in the form of oblong blocks.

Falling on to a moving belt, the blocks are whirled away to a number of lathes. If the blocks are to become pail handles, they are bored and turned in most ingenius fashion at a high rate of speed; if they are destined for clothespins, the boring is, of course, dispensed with, and they are simply turned into the desired shape.

From the lathes a belt convey the clothespins to a "slotter," which rapidly cuts the slot; the pins emerge with two symmetrical legs and are swiftly borne by still a third belt to the upper floor, where they and the pail handles are dried in vast heaps at a high temperature in the dry room, bleached with sulphur and finally polished with wax in a huge revolving drum. Thence they descend again to the packers, where they receive a final inspection, and all the pins that are not rejected are packed in boxes labeled "A" or "B," according to quality.

The rate of production is amazing; yet few are injured in the making, nearly every pin and handle emerging, after its tortuous journey, in perfect, polished form.

**Sad Story.**

Kind Lady—Poor man! You look so lean and seedy. Did you ever have an occupation?

Downan Outt—Yes, mum, I used to be a book agent, but I made a dismal failure of it.

Kind Lady—Indeed! What was the book called?

Downan Outt—"How to Succeed," mum.

**Comes Natural to Him.**

Slukers—Did you ever notice Reelton's hook nose and fishlike eyes?

Corker—Yes. It isn't any wonder that he tells such fishy stories.

In ten years there will hardly be enough big game in the West to tempt a hunter to take down his rifle—provided the present rate of slaughter is maintained.

From the Western States that have long been famed as the haunts of big game of all descriptions come stories of flagrant disregard of laws. Hunting is carried on out of season by ranchmen, and, if a game warden makes an arrest, it is almost impossible to find a jury that will convict. An occasional outsider is fined, but the "native" generally gets off scot-free, even if he has been caught with a wagon load of illegally slaughtered game in his possession.

In the last haunt of the elk, south of Yellowstone Park, in the Jackson Hole country, those noble animals are fast disappearing. Even the game of Yellowstone National Park is not exempt, if stories from Wyoming and Montana are correct, as it is claimed that poachers carry on a campaign of wholesale slaughter in the long winter months, when the park is snowbound and when it is practically impossible for soldiers to guard the great game preserve of the nation.

In the Northwest little or no attention is paid to laws protecting those rare animals, mountain goats; while in Colorado and other Rocky Mountain States, whose peaks are the grazing ground of the mountain sheep, those beautiful animals are being killed off in spite of a farcical "perpetual closed season."

Less than a decade ago a man could get all kinds of deer hunting in Colorado; and a score of years ago the buffalo were still rooming the plains east of the Rockies. But today the deer is getting almost as rare as the buffalo. The elk long ago left Colorado's mountains and drifted north into Wyoming, where bands of them are still to be found in Jackson's Hole. But the laws of Wyoming, while "making it hot" for any outsider who kills elk out of season, are inadequate when put in operation against the game hunter. It is the Western rancman who is doing most of the illegal killing. It is impossible to convince the average rancher that he is not privileged to go out and get "fresh meat" whenever he wants it, regardless of game laws. The deer or elk come down to his very fences in winter and there is little chance of discovery if one of the animals is killed. Even if a stray game warden happens along and puts him under arrest, there is little to fear, as a jury is pretty sure to be made up of ranchmen who are all tarred with the same stick. So the game hog gets off free and goes on with his work of slaughter in season and out.

Even the setting aside of government forest reserves and parks has done little to stop the slaughter of game. In the summer, when the reserves are patroled by rangers, and when Yellowstone Park is guarded by soldiers, there is little or no illegal killing done. But in the winter, when there are no rangers in the reserves, and when the snowbound roads make it impossible for the soldiers to patrol the big park thoroughly, the work of slaughter goes on. There are two big forest reserves adjoining Yellowstone Park—the Teton reserve and the Yellowstone reserve. Both are alive with game, as is the park itself. A limited amount of game can be killed in the reserves, in season, in conformity with the game laws of Wyoming, but the season in the park is always closed. No firearms are admitted into the park save those carried by the soldiers. If one insists on carrying a gun into the park he must have it sealed.

But all these rules and regulations cut little figure in the eyes of the skilled and experienced poachers who live in the vicinity of the park. These men do no killing in summer or autumn. They make their $5 a day as guides for hunting parties of Easterners. But in the winter, when the snows are deep and the tremendous winter of the Yellowstone country has set in, they get very busy. On snowshoes these poachers find it easy to enter the forest reserves and the park, and to kill all the game they want. Magnificent elk, deer and other game fall before their rifles. If a lonely soldier sights the poachers at work, the chances are he pays no attention, for the reason that it would only result in his own death.

In addition to the work of the white game hog, many of the Western States have troubles with wandering bands of Indians, that carry on indiscriminate slaughter of game. These Indians have no business off their reservations, but many of the agents find it impossible to keep their wards within the boundaries prescribed by the government. The Uintah Ute Indians, who have a reservation in Utah, make pilgrimages to the deer country in Northwestern Colorado, and they spare nothing in their long hunt. Bucks, does and fawns all fall before the rifles of the red men, and by the time the State authorities of Colorado arrive on the scene, the Indians are back in Utah, with their "jerked meat" and their loads of buckskin.

Apparently, the forest reserves are the only hope for partial preservation of wild game. With the reserves under heavy patrol, winter as well as summer, and with stringent government laws for the punishment of offenders, there would be some hope of saving America's wild game heritage from the game hog. But as matters stand to-day the outlook is discouraging, and the hunting country that was once regarded as the finest in the world promises to hold nothing but memories for the huntsman.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

## ONCE NEARLY STARVED.

**Now Oku, Hero of Nanshan, Is at Head of Japanese Army.**

Baron Oku, who succeeded Gen. Kodama as the head of the Japanese army, is 62 years old. After receiving a collegiate education he entered the army at the age of 27, and in 1877, when a major, he found himself in command of the Emperor's forces in Kamamoto Castle, in southern Japan, during the Satsuma rebellion. After being nearly starved he led a desperate sortie, cut his way through the rebels and joined the imperial relieving forces. For this act of valor he was promoted and decorated.

After the declaration of war against Russia in 1904 Japan hurled four great armies against the enemy in Manchuria. One of these, under Gen. Nogi,

GEN. BARON OKU.

besieged and took Port Arthur. Of the other three, which repeatedly engaged Kuropatkin to the north, Oku commanded the one which landed near Dalny and swept up the Liaotung peninsula. Another, which landed in Korea, cleared the enemy from the Yalu river and united with Oku at Liaoyang, was commanded by Gen. Tamemoto Kuroki, whose desperate attempt to flank Kuropatkin forced the Russians back on Mukden but failed to bag the enemy. The fourth commander was Gen. Michitsura Nodzu, a hero of the China war, who swung his army northward from Takushan, west of the Yalu.

These four generals operated in harmony under the direction of Field Marshal Marquis Oyama and his great chief of staff, Gen. Baron Kodama, who superseded him as supreme head of the army on April 1 of this year, and whose death recently made way for the promotion of Gen. Oku to the head of the general staff.

Gen. Oku, who before the arrival of Oyama and Kodama, operated alone, won a series of half a dozen brilliant victories, beginning with the bloody battle of Nanshan Hill, steadily beating Kuropatkin back for 250 miles, until joined by the other three armies. He never lost a fight. At Naushan, Kaiping, Tehlisz, Tashiachou and Haicheng he whipped the Russians out of the trenches.

**Humor as a Study.**

Can the sense of humor be cultivated? I think if a boy with the literal directness of a small Briton, the despair of his humorous father. A systematic course was begun, in the hope that the child's life might be broadened and brightened. Each week one or two evenings were devoted to a careful explanation of the jokes as they appeared in three of the humorous weeklies of the better class. Puns were avoided, as they were more easily detected and often enjoyed, while the father had no desire for a punster son. At first the evenings were strenuous, disliked by both; to the humorous side, so potent to the onlooker, father and son alike were oblivious. But at 25, while he is not an original joker, none can excel this young man in the ease and quickness with which he detects a hidden meaning. The initiative seems not to be granted him, but a fund of enjoyment is his which undoubtedly would have been lost but for his consistent training.—Good Housekeeping.

## BRILLIANT WOMAN AUTHOR.

**Mrs. Pearl Craigie Was One of the Most Popular Novelists.**

The sudden death of Mrs. Pearl Craigie, better known under the pen name of John Oliver Hobbes, in London recently removed one of the brilliant novelists of the day. Her demise was totally unexpected, she having been apparently in the best of health when she retired the evening previous. She was found dead in bed, having evidently passed away while asleep. Heart disease was the cause.

MRS. PEARL CRAIGIE

Mrs. Craigie was an American, although she had resided for a great many years in England. She was the daughter of John Morgan Richards and was born in Boston 38 years ago. She was a near relative of the famous Field family. Her father was wealthy and she was given every educational advantage. She traveled extensively abroad and took courses in classics and philosophy in London. When 19 she was married to Reginald Walpole Craigie, an Englishman of good family who was a clerk in the Bank of England. Their married life was unhappy. In 1895 she brought suit for divorce in a London court, alleging shocking brutality on his part, and procured a decree, with the custody of her son.

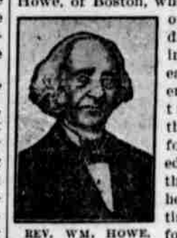
The name of John Oliver Hobbes first appeared appended to a short novel called "Some Emotions and a Moral," in 1891. The sharp cynicism and high flavor of the book gained instant recognition for the writer. It was at first supposed that the author was a man. Not until some time afterwards did Mrs. Craigie reveal her identity. "The Sinner's Comedy," a second story along the same lines, and "A Bundle of Life" followed, gaining wide favor. "The Gods, Some Mortals and Lord Wickersham" attracted much attention, as did another of her popular successes, "The School for Saints," brought out in 1897. Her last novel, published in 1905, was "The Flute of Pan." Mrs. Craigie was also the author of several plays, the most successful being "The Ambassador." She likewise wrote many brilliant essays for different periodicals.

Mrs. Craigie was a woman of most engaging personality. She was handsome, slight in physique and always impressed the visitor as a woman of great mentality. Her literary style was distinctly masculine. She was a frequent visitor to this country and always took a deep interest in affairs pertaining to her native land. Her home in London was a center for the literary lights of the day and she was a leading spirit among them.

## ACTIVE AT 100.

**Rev. William Howe, One of New England's Oldest Clergymen.**

One of the oldest active clergymen in the United States is Rev. William Howe, of Boston, who recently rounded out his one hundredth year. Born in Worcester, he early determined on entering the ministry, and chiefly through his own efforts he secured his education. After his theological course he entered the Baptist ministry and



REV. WM. HOWE.

for nearly three-quarters of a century has been actively at work. He founded in Boston the Union Baptist Church, now Tremont Temple Church, one of the most noted of that persuasion in New England. He also founded in Cambridge the Broadway Baptist Church. Dr. Howe has been a forcible and convincing speaker, and even now, in spite of the handicap of advanced years, he gives evidence of his early ability as an orator, for he still preaches on occasions.

It is the easiest thing in the world to puncture a pneumatic know-all.

—Chicago Tribune.

## THE OLD COMANCHE.

All day long wagon after wagon had been rumbling up from all parts of Comanche County, in Oklahoma, to a gospel rendezvous on Cache Creek. The camp was teeming with modern Indian life. The smoke was rising from fifty little camp fires; the innumerable dogs were fighting; the squaws were chattering as they prepared the evening meal; the men were attending to the horses; the children were racing and laughing. An old Texan was talking to the missionary, who was intensely interested in the story.

"I've seen the time when we gave the Comanches bullets instead of Bibles," he said. "It was in the war of the early seventies. I was one of the Texan rangers, and we fought the Comanches to the finish. We fought them out of Texas, and then the troops did them up at McClellan's Creek, in the Territory. Comanches could fight in those days. I saw some brave Indians die, one old chief in particular. I always feel sorry when I think of it.

"We Texans were fighting our own war with the Comanches. The troops were in the Territory, chasing the 'Staked Plains' band of Comanches; but we stayed in Texas, and fought Comanches and Kiowas wherever we found them. Well, one day we found them too thick. About twenty of us got cut off, and had to take to the buttes to save our horses. We kept the redskins off until we reached the butte, and leaving our horses there, we rushed back a long gun-range from them, and then lay down in the tall grass and kept the Indians off with our rifles until help came. This saved our horses, and fortunately we lost only two men.

"The Comanches would ride within range and fire upon us, but we could shoot from a perfect rest; and we emptied many saddles.

"One Comanche had white hair, and when he would whirl his horse round and come riding low, with his gun ready to shoot, the rangers would call to each other, 'Look out for old granddaddy! He shoots close!' There was something unnatural about the old Indian's riding, and Jack Jefferson, who was shooting next to me, said, with a laugh, 'The old buck is so stiff that he can't ride slick.'

"One time the old man came on a little too far. Jack pulled up his gun. We saw the Indian's horse rise and plunge, and we knew that Jack hadn't missed.

"'He's coming on!' cried Jack. And sure enough, he was running straight for us, low and swift, over the long grass, the old man tugging in vain at the rein, and trying to turn his maddened pony.

"A dozen rifles were raised to stop him, but Jack, all wild with fight and fun, yelled, 'Don't shoot! He's coming in! He's my meat!'

"The old Comanche came on, while the other Indians in the distance were shooting and yelling like demons. But he made no attempt to fire. He sat straight up on his horse, and as he came close we heard him singing.

"One hand was clutching his empty rifle. His eyes were fixed straight ahead. He was riding to his finish, singing the death chant of the Comanche warrior. It was a skeery sight. Jack raised his gun, but just couldn't shoot, and nobody else wanted to. The crazy pony passed almost over our heads. Then all of a sudden he straightened up in the air and came down head first on the ground—Indian under, as the horse's feet rose up in the somersault.

"'Why didn't the old fool slide off?' yelled Jack, as we both crouched with our rifles ready in case the Indian should rise again. But no Indian showed up, and the horse lay perfectly still.

"After a bit the Comanches drew off out of range, and Jack and I walked over to where the dead horse lay. 'Shot the pony through the head!' said Jack, and as we came up and saw the limp and lifeless body of the old Comanche, Jack turned to me with a strange choke in his voice. 'Partner, he's broke his neck, and he was tied onter his horse.'"

That night, after the preaching service, the missionary, with a dozen of the leading men of the Comanche tribe, some old men, with war records, sat round the fire. Through the interpreter the missionary told them the tale of the white-haired Comanche. Their eyes glistened, and a deep guttural "Ha-ah!" followed each sentence.

When the story was done, there was a long, solemn silence, and the interpreter, turning to the missionary, said, "They say it's so."

**The Retort Humorous.**

"You don't seem to understand," blustered the man who was trying to make his point with a university professor. "I tell you, sir, I ought to know. I'm an alumni of this institution myself." "Are you? That's nothing singular," was the witty rejoinder, uttered so quietly that the blustering man never knew what had happened.

On another occasion the same professor, having ordered from a music publishing house a copy of a "Valse Impromptu" by a certain French composer, received an "Impromptu Waltz" by another man. The publishers, when called to account for their mistake, replied rather insolently that they had been in the music publishing business a long time, and had yet to discover the difference between a "Valse Impromptu" and an "Impromptu Waltz." Would Dr. Smith kindly state to them that difference?

"Gentlemen," wrote the genial professor, in answer, "I have not, like yourselves, been in the music publishing business, and am therefore not fully qualified to inform you, but since, in your extremity, you have appealed to me, I would venture to suggest that the difference between a 'Valse Impromptu' and an 'Impromptu Waltz' may be similar to the difference between a blind Venetian and a Venetian blind.

"Yours very truly," and so forth.

We will wager that you can't pass a house with crape on the door without a picture of how the parlor looks flashing across your brain.