Out on the Pampas

By G. A. HENTY

CHAPTER XV.

Ethel, when carried into captivity, had cried at first until she could cry no more, and had now nerved herself for the worst. She had heard that the Indians have neither mercy nor pity for anyone who may exhibit fear of death; she knew that no entreaties or tears would move them in the slightest, but that courage and firmness would at any rate command their respect and admiration. She had therefore schooled herself to show no emotion.

Nevertheless, as, after four days, the troop drew up in front of the council hut and alighted, the women pressed round to heap abuse upon the prisoner; but one of the Indians stepped up to her and waved them back, and, saying "She is the child of a great chief," took her by the arm and handed her over to the care of the wife of one of the principal chiefs. The selection was a good one, for the woman, who was young, was known in the tribe as the Fawn, for her gentle disposition. She at once led the captive away to her lodge, where she bade her sit down, offered her food and spoke kindly to her in her low, soft, Indian tongue. Ethel could not understand her, but the kindly tones moved her more than the threats of the crowd outside had done, and she broke down in a torrent of tears.

The next morning an incident occurred which, although she knew it not at the time, entirely altered her destination and prospects.

She was sitting upon the ground, when a man, who by his bearing appeared to be the principal chief present, passed in earnest talk with another chief. In the latter she recognized at once one of the wounded Indian prisoners who had remained at her father's home for a full week.

"Tawaina," she said, leaping to her feet.

He paid no attention to her call, and she repeated it in a louder tone.

The principal chief stopped; Tawaina did the same. Then he walked slowly toward the captive.

"Save me, Tawaina," she said, "and send me back again home."

Tawaina shook his head.

"Not can," he said. "Tawaina friend. Help some time—not now." And he turned away again.

"Does Tawaina know the White Bird?" the chief asked him, "that she sings his name?"

Tawaina paused and said:

"Tawaina knows her. Her father is the great white brave."

The Indian chief gave a bound of astonishment and pleasure.

"The white brave with the shooting flames?"

Tawaina nodded. His meeting with Ethel had been apparently accidental, but was in reality intentional. Her actual captor was one of the chiefs, although not the principal one, of the Pampas Indians; and in the division of the spoil, preparations for which were going on, there was no doubt that she would be assigned to that tribe. He therefore went direct to the chief of the Pampas Indians and asked that the white girl might fall to his tribe. The chief hesitated.

"She is our captive," he said. "The people will like to see her."

The delight of the Indians, when they found that they had the daughter of their twice victorious enemy in their hands, was unbounded. Vengeance is to the Indians even more precious than plunder. The news flew from mouth to mouth, and triumphant whoops resounded throughout the camp; and Ethel inside her tent felt her blood run cold at the savage exultation which they conveyed.

She was greatly troubled by the fire, for she saw that it must efface all signs of the trail, and render the task of her friends long and difficult, and she felt greatly depressed at what she looked upon as a certain postponement of her rescue. She lay thinking over all this for a long time, until the camp had subsided into perfect quiet. Then the skins were slightly lifted near her head, and she heard a voice whisper:

"Me, Tawaina—friend. Great chief come to look for girl. Two trails—eyes blinded. Tawaina make sign—point way. Give piece dress, that great chief may believe."

Ethel at once understood. She cautiously tore off a narrow strip from the bottom of her dress, and put it under the skin to the speaker.

"Good," he said. "Tawaina friend. Ethel hope."

Greatly relieved by knowing that a clew would be now given to her friends, and overpowered by fatigue, Ethel was very shortly fast asleep.

The next morning she was awake early, and had it not been for the terrible situation in which she was placed she would have been amused by the busy stir in the village, and by the little copper-colored urchins at play, or going out with the women to collect wood or fetch water. There was nothing to prevent Ethel from going out among them, but the looks of scowling hatred which they cast at her made her draw back again into the hut, after a long, anxious look around.

It was relief at least to have halted, great as her danger undoubtedly was. She felt certain now that hour by hour her father must be approaching. He might even now be within a few miles. Had it not been for the fire, she was certain that he would already have been up, but she could not tell how long he might have been before he recovered the trail.

Toward the middle of the day two or three Indians might have been seen going through the village, summoning those whose position and rank entitled them to a place at the council.

Soon they were seen approaching and taking their seats gravely on the ground in front of the hut of the principal chief. The women, the youths and such men as had not as yet by their feats in battle distinguished themselves sufficiently to be summoned to the council, assembled at a short distance off. The council sat in the form of a circle, the inner ring being formed of the elder and leading men of the tribe, while the warriors sat round them.

Struck by the hush which had suddenly succeeded to the noise of the village, Ethel again went to the door. She was greatly struck by the scene, and was looking wonderingly at it, when she felt a touch on her shoulder, and on looking round saw the Fawn gazed pityingly at her, and at the same time signing to her to come in.

The truth at once flashed across Ethel's mind. The council had met to decide her fate, and she did not doubt for a moment what that decision would be. She felt that all hope was over, and retiring into the hut passed the time in prayer and in preparation for the fearful ordeal which was at hand.

After the council had met there was a pause of expectation, and the Stag then rose.

"My brothers, my heart is very glad. The Great Spirit has ceased to frown upon his children. Twice we went out, and twice returned empty handed, while many of our lodges were empty. The guns which shoot without loading were too strong for us, and we returned sorrowful. Last year we did not go out; the hearts of our braves were heavy. This year we said perhaps the Great Spirit will no longer be angry with his children, and we went out. This time we have not returned empty handed. The lowing of cattle is in my ear, and I see many sheep. The white men have felt the strength of our arms; and of the young men who went out with me there is not one missing. Best of all, we have brought back a captive, the daughter of the white chief of the flying guns which load themselves. Let me hand her over to our women; they will know how to make her cry; and we will send her head to the white chief, to show that his guns cannot reach to the Indian country. Have I spoken well?"

A murmur of assent followed the chief's speech; and supposing that no more would be said upon the matter, the Stag was about to declare the council closed, when an Indian sitting in the inner circle rose.

"My brothers, I will tell you a story. The birds once went out to attack the nest of an eagle, but the eagle was too strong for them; and when all had gone he went out from his nest with his children, the young eagles, and he found the raven and two other birds hurt and unable to fly, and instead of killing them, as they might have done, the eagles took them up to their nest and nursed them and tended them until they were able to fly, and then sent them home to their other birds. So was it with Tawaina and his two friends." And the speaker indicated with his arm two Indians sitting at the outer edge of the circle. "Tawaina fell at the fence where so many of us fell, and in the morning the white men took him and gave him water and placed him in shelter and bandaged his wound; and the little White Bird and her sister brought him food and cool drinks every day and looked pitifully at him. But Tawaina said to himself: The white men are only curing Tawaina that when the time comes they may see how an Indian can die. But when he was well they brought horses and put a bow and arrows into our hands and bade us go free. It is only in the battle that the great white chief is terrible. He has a great heart. The enemies he killed he did not triumph over. He laid them in a great grave. He honored them, and planted trees with drooping leaves at their head and at their feet, and put a fence round that the foxes might not touch their bones. Shall the Indian be less generous than the white man? Even those taken in battle they spared and sent home. Shall we kill the White Bird captured in her nest? My brothers will not do so. They will send back the White Bird to the great white chief. Have I spoken well?"

This time a confused murmur ran round the circle. Some of the younger men were struck with this appeal to their generosity, and were in favor of Tawaina's proposition; the elder and more ferocious Indians were altogether opposed to it.

Speaker succeeded speaker, some urging one side of the question, some the other.

At last the Stag again rose. "My brothers," he said, "my ears have heard strange words and my spirit is troubled. Tawaina has told us of the ways of the whites after a battle; but the Indians' ways are not as the whites' ways, and the Stag is too old to learn new fashions. He looks round, he sees many lodges empty, he sees many women who have no husbands to hunt game, he hears the voices of children who cry for meat. He remembers his brothers who fell before the flying fire and the guns which loaded themselves, and his eyes are full of blood. The great white chief has made many wigwams desolate; let there be mourning in the house of the white chief. Have I spoken well?"

The acclamations which followed this speech were so loud and general that the party of Tawaina was silenced and the council at once broke up. A cry of exultation broke from the women when they heard the decision. An hour later Ethel knew that she was condemned to die.

CHAPTER XVI.

In spite of their utmost efforts Mr. Hardy's party had made slower progress than they had anticipated. Many of the horses had broken down under fatigue; and as they had no spare horses to replace them as the Indians had in like case done from those they had driven off from Mr. Mercer, they were forced to travel far more slowly than at first. They gained upon the Indians, however, as they could tell by the position of the camping ground for the night.

At 3 o'clock on the afternoon of the last day they passed the place their enemy had left that morning; but although they kept on until long after sunset, many of them having led their horses all day, they were still more than thirty miles away from the mountains among which they knew that the Indian village was situated.

None of the gauchos had ever been there, but they knew its situation and general features by report. They had no difficulty in following the trail since they had struck it. That was a night of terrible anxiety to all. Many of the party were already exhausted by their long day under a burning sun. It was altogether impossible to reach the village that night.

Before daybreak they were on again on the march all on foot and leading their horses, in order to spare them as much as possible should they be required at night. Speed was now no object. It was, they knew, hopeless to attack in broad daylight, as the Indians would be more than a match for them, and Ethel's life would be inevitably sacrificed. They walked, therefore, until within six or seven miles of the gorge, nearer than which they dared not go, lest they might be seen by any straggling Indian.

As evening fell they were all in the saddle, and were pleased to find that the horses were decidedly fresher for their rest. They did not draw rein until the ground became stony, and they knew that they must be at the mouth of the gorge. Then they dismounted and picketed the horses. Two of the gauchos were stationed with them as guards, and the rest went stealthily forward—the rockets being intrusted to the care of Terence.

It was still only 8 o'clock—dangerously early for a surprise; but the whole party were quite agreed to risk everything, as no one could say in what position Ethel might be placed, and what difference an hour might make. Their plan was to steal quietly up to the first hut they found, to gag its inmates and compel one of them, under threat of instant death, to guide them to the hut in which Ethel was placed.

Suddenly Mr. Hardy was startled by a dark figure rising from a rock against which he had almost stumbled, with the words: "White man good. Tawaina friend. Come to take him to child."

Then followed a few hurried questions, and no words can express the delight and gratitude of Mr. Hardy and his sons, and the intense satisfaction of the others on finding that Ethel was alive and for the present free from danger.

Her kindness to Tawaina while he lay wounded at her home had brought to her aid a friend among enemies.

It was agreed now to wait for two hours to give time for the Indians to retire to rest; and while they waited Tawaina told them all that had happened up to the arrival at the village, passing over the last day's proceedings by saying briefly that Ethel had run a great risk of being put to death, but that a delay had been obtained by her friends. Having told his story, he said: "Tawaina friend to great white chief. Gave signal with arrow; saved little White Bird today. But Tawaina Indian—not like see Indian killed. White chief promise not kill Indian women and children?"

Mr. Hardy assured the Indian that they had no thought of killing women and children.

"If can take little White Bird without waking village, not kill men?" Tawaina asked again.

"We do not want to wake the village if we can help it, Tawaina; but I do not see any chance of escaping without a fight. Our horses are all dead beat, and the Indians will easily overtake us even if we get a night's start."

"Musta't go out on plain," Tawaina said, earnestly. "If go out on plain, all killed. Indian two hundred and fifty bravese—eat up white men on plain."

"I am afraid that is true enough, Tawaina, though we shall prove very tough morsels. Still we should fight at a fearful disadvantage in the open. But what are we to do?"

"Come back to mouth of canyon—hold that; can keep Indians off as long as like. Indians have to make peace."

"Capital!" Mr. Hardy said, delightedly; for he had reviewed the position with great apprehension, as he had not seen how it would be possible to make good their retreat on their tired horses in the teeth of the Indians. "The very thing! As you say, we can hold the gorge for a month, if necessary, and sooner or later they will be sick of it and agree to let us retreat in quiet. Besides, a week's rest would set our horses up again, and then we could make our retreat in spite of them."

"One more thing," Tawaina said. "When great chief go, little White Bird safe, Tawaina go away—not fight one way, not fight other way. When meet again, white chief not talk about to-night. Not great Indian know Tawaina white chief's friend."

"You can rely upon all, Tawaina. They shall never learn from us of your share in this affair. And now I think it is time for us to be moving forward. It will be past 10 o'clock before we are there."

(To be continued.)

Have you so much leisure from your own business that you can take care of that of other people that does not belong to you.—Terence.

A Bad Stomach

Lessens the usefulness and mars the happiness of life.

It's a weak stomach, a stomach that can not properly perform its functions.

Among its symptoms are distress after eating, nausea between meals, heartburn, belching, vomiting, flatulency and nervous headache.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Cures a bad stomach, indigestion and dyspepsia, and the cure is permanent.

Accept no substitute.

Exchange of Compliments.

She—And what did father say when you asked him?

He—He said he didn't want any fool in the family.

She—And he really doesn't know you at all!

He—Except that I want to marry you.—Boston Transcript.

A Domestic Mystery.

Hubby (walking the floor at 2 a. m.)—I'd just like to know why this baby persists in staying awake every night?

Wifey—Really, I can't imagine. I never have any trouble in keeping him awake in the daytime.—New York Weekly.

The Country Editor.

A great British statesman has declared that all reform movements begin in Lancashire and end in London. It may likewise be affirmed that the policies of this nation are primarily shaped in the comparative seclusion of the rural sanctum, the directors of the metropolitan press being for the most part middlemen in ideas, as city merchants are in commodities.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A Wonderful Actor.

Winks—Talk about stage realism! You should see Strident in "Love and Woe."

Jinks—He can't hold a candle to my friend, Mouther. Why, sir, he played the heavy villain in "Woman's Wrongs" so realistically that his wife sued for a divorce the next week."—N. Y. Weekly.

Children's Favorite Dead.

Miss Elizabeth W. Martin, whose stories for children were widely known, is dead. She was a cousin of Samuel L. Cemens and Col. Henry Watterson.

Enough to Kill Him.

Hobo Charley—Soy, loidy, if dat dawg bites me he dies, see?"

Lady—I believe you; I don't see how he could recover.—Baltimore American.

Well Described.

"What is a trust?" asked the teacher.

"A trust," replied the newspaper man's boy, "is a subject for an editorial when there is nothing else to be discussed."—Chicago Post.

Poor Child.

"I hear Jack Kandor was here to see the baby," said Mr. Hoamley.

"Yes," his wife replied.

"I suppose the first thing he said was: 'He looks just like his father.'"

"No, the first thing he said was 'Good Heavens!' Then he said that."

IS 103 YEARS OLD AND NOT READY TO DIE YET.

In the city of Cleveland lives George Robinson. He is 103 years old, has used whisky and tobacco all his life, and for the last seventy-five years has been minus one leg. He has lived in three centuries, and is one of the oldest Odd Fellows, having joined the old Druid branch before the present order was formed. He reads without glasses and is as hale and chipper as an English sparrow. He is also something of a humorist, as may be inferred from the following:

GEORGE ROBINSON.

"Yes, I am in possession of all my faculties except my right leg. Lost that in my young days up in York State—got hurt in jumping contest. No chloroform those days—just whistled and hummed a tune while the doctor sawed her off. When I was 28 I got this very wooden one, so you can figure out for yourself it's seventy-five years old.

"I remember the war of 1812—was a boy 12 years old. My brother and I stood on the docks in New York the night the Constitution ran the blockade, and saw the rockets go up.

"When I was 65 I wanted to live to my seventieth birthday, and so on, five years at a time until I was 90. Then I went by twos until I was 100. Now I am going by ones. I want to live till my next birthday. After that—well, I don't know."

LOWEST RATES

To Chicago, Dubuque and the East; to Des Moines, Kansas City and the Southeast, via Chicago Great Western railway. Electric lighted trains. Unequalled service. Write to J. P. Elmer, G. P. A., Chicago, for information.

Antwerp Strongly Fortified.

Few people are aware of the enormous military strength of Antwerp. Since 1860 $15,000,000 has been spent on fortifications.

Lost Prestige.

"They used to move in the best circles."

"Yes, but they've moved into a less fashionable square."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Pipe Cob Corb.

Some of the farmers in Lafayette county, Missouri, are making a specialty of growing pipe cob corn. They say it yields them as much of the grain as any other kind and the cobs bring them in revenue besides.

Australian Churches.

One of the features that attract most attention in traveling through the Australian colonies is the number of churches which are everywhere to be seen. Every little township or village has three or four edifices devoted to worship.

DISAGREEABLE REFLECTIONS

The mirror never flatters; it tells the truth, no matter how much it may hurt the pride or how humiliating and disagreeable the reflections. A red, rough skin is fatal to beauty, and blackheads, blotches and pimples are ruinous to the complexion, and no wonder such desperate efforts are made to hide these blemishes, and cover over the defects, and some never stop to consider the danger in skin foods, face lotions, soaps, salves and powders, but apply them vigorously and often without regard to consequences, and many complexions are ruined by the chemicals and poisons contained in these cosmetics.

Skin diseases are due to internal causes, to humors and poisons in the blood, and to attempt a cure by external treatment is an endless, hopeless task. Some simple wash or ointment is often beneficial when the skin is much inflamed or itches, but you can't depend upon local remedies for permanent relief, for the blood is continually throwing off impurities which irritate and clog the glands and pores of the skin, and as long as the blood remains unhealthy, just so long will the eruptions last. To effectually and permanently cure skin troubles the blood must be purified and the system thoroughly cleansed and built up, and S. S. S., the well known blood purifier and tonic, is acknowledged superior to all other remedies for this purpose. It is the only guaranteed strictly vegetable blood remedy. It never deranges the system or impairs the digestion like Potash and Arsenic and drugs of this character, but aids in the digestion and assimilation of food and improves the appetite. Being a blood purifier and tonic combined, the humors and poisons are counteracted and the blood made rich and pure, and at the same time the general health and system is rapidly built up and good health is established, and this, after all, is the secret of a smooth, soft skin and beautiful complexion.

Cartersville, Ga., R. R. No. 2.
I suffered for a number of years with a severe Nettle-rash.
About twelve years ago I started using S. S. S., and after taking three bottles I felt myself cured and have since taken a bottle occasionally, and had little or no trouble along that line. My general health has been better since. I recommend S. S. S. as a good blood medicine and all round tonic. Yours truly,
Mrs. M. I. PITTARD.

Some two years ago I suffered a great deal, caused on account of bad blood. Small rash or pimples broke out over my body and kept getting worse day by day for over a year. Seeing S. S. S. advertised in the papers and having heard also it had cured several people in this city, concluded to give it a fair trial. After using the medicine for some time, taking in all six bottles, I was entirely cured.
EDWARD C. LONG,
1020 Clay Street, Paducah, Ky.

SSS

If you have any skin trouble send for our free book, "The Skin and Its Diseases." No charge for medical advice. Write us about your case.

THE SWIFT SPECIFIC CO., ATLANTA, GA.