

A RAILWAY ADVENTURE.

The windows of the crowded cafe had been thrown open, and the fresh cool air of the spring night struggled for mastery with the close tobacco-laden atmosphere which filled the large hall.

A glance out into the night showed the deep, blue heaven overhead, and a brilliant moon, whose cold, clear rays sparkled on the fresh foliage of the budding trees, as they swayed gently to and fro in the light breeze. The members of the society to which I at this time belonged had been accustomed for some time to reserve a certain place in the cafe for themselves, where they met every evening to chat over and discuss the events of the passing hour. On the night I am speaking of, our conversation was of a prosaic enough character, as was my natural in a small town, and exhausted myself in expressions about local matters, the theatres, taxes and similar humdrum topics.

Through some chance remark, however, which I can no longer recall, the question sprang up if it were really creditable to a man's hair could suddenly become gray because of a violent shock to the mind. Some of those present were only half inclined to disbelieve this somewhat startling story, while others could not be sufficiently trusting in the remarks they made concerning people who were simple enough to place their credence in such nursery tales.

As the discussion grew warmer and warmer, until every member of our party was engaged either in championing or combating the question in point, a man seated near us slowly, pushing his chair from him, and approached our table. He was a fine fellow, of herculean build, and his intellectual features, which bore an expression of great determination, were rendered very striking by a pair of keen blue eyes; but what made his appearance still more remarkable was the fact that both his hair and beard were as white as snow, although they surrounded a countenance which would not permit one to reckon his age more than 35.

"Excuse me, gentlemen, if I am interrupting your conversation," he remarked, bowing politely to all of us. "You were just discussing a subject that has more than ordinary interest to me. I happen myself to be a living proof that, under certain circumstances, a terrible shock to the mind can produce that self-same physical effect of which you were just speaking, and which the majority of you discredit."

These words naturally excited the curiosity of all present to the highest degree. We quickly made room for our new acquaintance at the table, and, when he had seated himself comfortably, urged him to relate to us the circumstances which had produced such a strange and sudden change in his appearance. The stranger told us this story:

"If any of you gentlemen have interested yourself closely in American affairs, the name of Auburn cannot well be strange to you; it denotes much the same for the United States as Spielberg does for Austria. You must not picture Auburn to yourselves merely as a gloomy and extensive prison—one large solitary building—no. It is rather an entire colony of criminals, a sort of town, or metropolis, for the wretches that the community has thrust out.

"Shut in by immense walls, which rise up from the level plain to a considerable height, are crowded together a large number of

detached buildings—houses that contain the prison cells, warders' dwellings, hospital and workshops, all sullen and forbidding-looking; and here and there dotted about may be seen a small patch of grass, a few trees, and very occasionally, a flowery bed like the last lingering recollections of innocent childhood among the black thoughts of a criminal.

"Certain events, which would have but little interest for you, had led to my journeying from Hamburg, my birthplace, to America, immediately after the completion of my studies, and after a short stay in New York, I accepted the post of prison doctor at Auburn. I was intrusted with the medical supervision over that part of the prison which was set apart for the worst class of criminals—men, or, I should say, human hyenas, whose blood, as Mephistopheles says, had hardly ceased to be a fluid of rare quality.

"Two of these wretches were destined to spend the remainder of their days in the prison, and they, by reason of their great physical strength, as well as by the extraordinary cunning they had evinced in several desperate attempts to regain their freedom, were subjected to even closer supervision than the rest of their companions. I was an object of particular hatred and dislike to those two scoundrels, because I had been instrumental in the discovery of a number of iron implements which they had concealed under their clothes, and again on another occasion because I had refused to receive them in the hospital when they had feigned illness, expecting, doubtless, when they were once in there, that they would find more favorable opportunities for accomplishing their escape. The ruffians were separated, and placed in remote parts of the prison, and were laden with chains, but, in spite of all these precautions, one fine morning the one, and a few days later the other, together with their chains, had disappeared without leaving a trace behind them.

"It must have been almost a fortnight after the flight of these two criminals, which had caused the utmost consternation among the authorities at Auburn, that I ordered my horse one afternoon and started off for a ride to Cayuga Bridge. It was midday when I reached the end of my journey, and I stood still for some time contemplating with silent delight the exquisite scenery which lay stretched out for miles before me. The Cayuga lake, one of those which, together with Lake Erie, compose that vast system of inland seas in the state of New York, lay in all its beauty at my feet. The long, slender streak of silver wound in and out of the rugged black cliffs which hemmed it in, and which rose sheer up out of the lake, facing each other like grim opponents who had for thousands of years bid one another defiance. Far down the lake, which is forty miles long, and at this particular spot about one mile broad, I could discern the enormous trestle bridge, a marvel of American engineering skill, which carries the Auburn division of the New York Central across, passing on its way through the small station of Cayuga Bridge.

"My business in this village was soon finished, and toward evening I started home again. Do you know how delightful a ride on a summer's evening is? Cayuga Bridge is surrounded by extensive oak forests, through which the greater part of my journey lay. The gnarled and massive trunks cast long shadows, and the foliage rustled so

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gently in the soft evening breeze that one seemed rather to feel than to hear it. As I rode between these giants of the forest, recollections of my distant home crept into my heart, and sunk in my thoughts, I let the reins fall on my horse's neck which trotted steadily forward. I admired the marvelous variety of color that the rays of the setting sun produced as they shone through the mass of dark green leaves and seemed to kindle their edges into flame.

"Suddenly I was startled out of my reverie by a slight noise which appeared to come from the undergrowth on either side of the road. Turning sharply round I grasped my revolver but in the same moment I received a stunning blow upon the back of my head which knocked me senseless from my saddle. Once more I recollect opening my eyes and thinking I could see indistinctly one of the escaped criminals bending over me, and then all became a blank.

"It must have been late in the night when consciousness again returned to me. Slowly opening my eyes, I saw far above me the dark blue vault of the sky, and the full moon shining brightly. A dull, painful sensation at the back of my head prompted me to place my hand there, and I then discovered that I was bound hand and foot. Gradually I collected my thoughts. I remembered the murderous attack in the forest, and a fearful foreboding flashed through my mind which almost caused my heart to stand still. I felt that I was laid across two sharp parallel projections, which cut into my shoulders and the back of my legs, causing me intense pain, and far below me I could hear the gentle splashing of water.

"Heavens!" there could no longer be any doubt! I was lying stretched across Cayuga bridge, bound, incapable of moving an inch, with the hideous and absolutely certain prospect of being cut literally to pieces by the next train that passed. For the second time that night I almost swooned as I realized my situation; but by a powerful effort of will, I recovered myself and tugged desperately at the ropes that bound me until they cut almost into my muscles. I shrieked, and wept finally like a child. I made mad endeavors to roll myself into another position, and then recollected that a careless movement might precipitate me into the flood below—bound hand and foot, to sink like a stone!

A shudder ran through my frame, and I lay motionless again, but not for long, for the light of the great—almost fearfully bright—moon overhead, the ripple of the water deep below me, the breeze that came in light puffs and then died away again, giving place to a deathlike stillness, occasionally broken by the scream of some distant night bird—all was unbearable and caused me the anguish of death. And then the rails! the rails! My thoughts were torturing me, and yet I could not escape them. The wooden beams of the bridge vibrated perceptibly from the movement of the water below, and I thought that I could already feel the approach of the train, and my hair bristled with the horror of it. The breeze now blew somewhat stronger, and I imagined that I could hear far away in the distance the puffing and panting of the locomotive, and my heart stood still, to beat with redoubled force the next moment.

"There are certain things, gentlemen, which are absolutely incomprehensible to me; one of these is the fact that I was able to survive that night. One thought stood ever clear in my mind; I must endeavor by some means to shift my position—if possible, to one between the metals—if I did not wish, possibly even in the next moment, to become the victim of the most awful death one could conceive. I strained every muscle, every sinew, till I could strain no more. I wound and twisted myself, and panted until I thought my head must burst, and after superhuman exertions, which appeared to last an eternity, and perhaps lasted but a minute, I found myself in the hollow between the rails.

"Was I saved? I had no time to consider that or to rejoice over the fresh chance of life

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Notice of Sale.

To Alonzo Cronkhite of the parish of Wicklow, in the County of Carleton and Province of New Brunswick, Farmer, and Mary J., his wife, and all others whom it may in anywise concern.

NOTICE is hereby given that under and by virtue of a Power of Sale contained in a certain Indenture of Mortgage, bearing date the fifteenth day of June in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty Two, and recorded in the Carleton County Records in Book Z, Number 2, on pages 132, 133 and 134, and made between the said Alonzo Cronkhite and Mary J., his wife, of the one part; and George Leonard Cronkhite, of the same place, of the other part; there will, for the purpose of satisfying the money secured thereby, default having been made in the payment thereof, be sold at Public Auction in front of the Law Office of Hartley & Carvell in the Town of Woodstock in the County of Carleton and Province of New Brunswick, on Monday, the twenty-third day of January next, at the hour of eleven of the clock in the forenoon, the lands and premises described in the said Indenture of Mortgage as follows:—

"All that farm of land situate and being in the above said Parish of Wicklow, and bounded as follows, to wit:—Beginning at the North Easterly angle of Lot Number Sixteen in the fifth tier, granted to Samuel H. Cronkhite; thence running by the magnet of the year 1832 West, sixty-seven chains along the Northern line of said grant to the Northwesterly angle thereof; thence North fifteen chains; thence East sixty-seven chains; and thence by the magnet of the year 1832 West, sixty-seven chains to the place of beginning, containing one hundred acres more or less, distinguished as the Southern two-thirds of lot number fifteen in the fifth tier; and being the same land granted by the Crown to the aforesaid George Leonard Cronkhite, Esq., by grant dated the 3rd day of April A. D. 1860, and registered in Frederickton the fourth day of said month under number 3538, and by the said Geo. L. Cronkhite and wife, conveyed to the first said Alonzo Cronkhite at the date of these presents."

Together with all and singular the buildings and improvements thereon, and the appurtenances thereto belonging or in anywise appertaining.

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