

## JERGUSON'S LAST FIGHT.

A cowboy fight is good fun. It is virile and exciting. It is full of action and is not dulled by the tiresome diplomacy of civilized warfare. A few drinks of red liquor, a few "cracks" or "bluffs" or "sassings," and the guns are barking away in a killing bee.

Ubet is a bit of a town in Fergus county, Mon. It is in the heart of the Great Northern cattle range. On its eastward side is a flat, treeless, cheerless, plain of bunch grass, broken at times by long strips of burning alkali and sand. To the west and south are the dim, blue-tinted tops of the Rockies extending like a mighty belt and lost in the horizon to the north. The mountain eagle drifts a hundred miles before his flight brings him from his lofty home to the square where Ubet's magnates gather of a summer afternoon to discuss the comparative values of the herds.

Ubet was drowsing in a sultry heat in the summer of 1892, when a Salisbury coach drew up before the only hotel and half a dozen passengers climbed from their garments. The big-bodied, red-shirted landlord stood by with hearty "howdy." The boys in the street ceased shooting at a mark and crowded about the leaders. The bartender came forth in his top boots and white sombrero to gossip with the driver about the new strike in the Cumberland and the picking up of times in Yellowstone Gulch.

"I hear Ed Jackson hit a hard game again a hurdy house dance at Lewiston," he said.

"I reckon," said the driver.

"Two shots in the lung and one in the leg, I hear a fellow from Yellowstone say."

"One in the lung and one in the leg, but the Cumberland's surgeon says Ed'll pull through with good nursing."

"Got kind of reckless, I reckon."

"Drunk, I hear say. Stranger, have suthin' to wear the alkali outen yer throat? Come ahead, Charley."

The stranger, his host, and Charley were soon exchanging "how's" over a pine board bar resting on cottonwood logs. Behind was a long, narrow shelf covered with rude but significant bits of bric-a-brac.

There was the gun with which Big Andy Gallagher held up the Livingston stage three times in one week, and for a companion piece was a strand from the rope which subsequently choked the life out of Big Andy on the cottonwood tree by the Triangle ranch.

Then there was a bit of dull yellow quartz, the first "float" found by one of the Hanley boys in their long search for the Cumberland lode, and on the walls were various posters announcing the merits of local breeding horses.

"Bout time I packed another barrel of that 'Three Star,' Charley," said the driver.

"Next week, I reckon," replied Charley. "The boys from the T. E. outfit was up las' Monday week an' pretty nigh cleaned us out. Said they reckoned they'd be up agin' to day."

"That so? I met ol' man Jerguson and his boy Aleck at the Cla'water ford an' they reckoned they'd be up with the other boys of the Triangle. Said they was lookin' for a few shots at two rustlers in the T. E. that picked up fifty head of Triangle cattle las' spring. Fight to-day, maybe. Will want the two boys shod, Charley."

"Stay around an' maybe you'll see some fun," said Charley, the bartender, to the stranger. "I wouldn't give a hurrah in hell for them two rustlers if ol' man Jerguson gets drunk. He's an old hellion when he's drunk."

The stranger walked about the square and past the long, uneven row of log houses with false frame fronts. Within the stores the red-shirted clerks were sleeping on the counters or talking sheep and steers, mavericks and markets. On the walks the village loafers were whittling down the edges of dry goods boxes. In the gambling houses the dealers were drowsing in their chairs and the lookouts were napping on the billiard tables. Small boys were lying in a bit of bunch grass shaded from the sun by a cottonwood tree. There was not a sound to jar the heated air save the clang of the anvils in the blacksmith's shop where the driver's two boys were being shod.

Away in the east there is seen a dim and mistlike puff of alkali dust. It turns and twists and wriggles in the hot air, and scatters upward and away into whirling clouds. It moves to the west in a flying line, and from its center comes a half dozen galloping horses with as many riders, slowly uncovered from their smoky disguises. It comes nearer and nearer, until it reaches the ranch that marks the limitations of Ubet, and then the air is pierced by a shrill, wild yell, the cowboy's signal:

"Oh-he-ee-yo-o-o-whoop!"

It echoes through and quickens the drowsy life of Ubet like an electric shock. The village boys crawl from under the grateful shade of the cottonwood and gather in the square. The faro dealers call to the lookouts and begins to shuffle the well-worn deck. The loafers shut their jackknives and leave the dry goods boxes. The bartender shades his sombrero, looks down the street, and yells to the old man. The dogs wake up from their noonday sleep to do battle with the newcomers.

In a moment more the flying line of cowboys is before the hotel, a cursing, howling crew, with old man Jerguson at the front, his white hair blowing in the soft wind beneath a great, dirt-covered felt hat. At one side is his boy Aleck, a stalwart, bearded young fellow, and to the left is another boy, Henry, small, wiry, and so young that his place would seem to be in the nursery. There are also half a dozen boys of the plains, all wearing red flannel shirts girded by long rows of 45 Colts.

"Oh-he-ee-yo-o-o-whoop!"

And the saloons and stores are depopulated while the natives gather in a semi-circle about the dust-covered group.

"Hello, Charley. Take the horses in the shed, Charley, an' rattle back directly an' give the boys some of red eye," shouts the old man, ol' man. The T. E. boys are comin' up-to-day," Charley replies.

"Whoop-ee! Boys, hear that! Hear what Charley says. The T. E. is comin'! I done said they might. Boys, we'll get them rustlers that took fifty head outen our bunch. Sure. An' if the rustlers interferes we'll get them, too. Yo' hear?"

"Yo' bet," in chorus.

"An' Charley's right, boys. Go slow on the red-eye till we make 'em lay down, an' then—my God, but we'll have a jubilation. Yo' there. Aleck, stay in

the square. For sure don't miss seen the T. E. comin'. Yo' Henry watch the horses. We may need 'em quick; but feed 'em up fast. An' yo', boys, keep your hands on your guns an' keep in sight. No foolin' to-day. Short-handed on the ranch. Make every shot bring a man. Whoop-ee! I done said we might meet 'em. Stay in the square, Aleck, while we uns drink, an' Charley, 'll bring your drink out. Come ahead, boys, an' lick'er up; but go slow."

The square is cleared for action, like the deck of a cruiser. The villagers stand about within saloons or in front of stores, waiting for the first signs of battle. Old man Jerguson has forgotten his warning and stands against the hotel bar boasting about the men he is to going kill and keeping Charley on the run for the brown bottle with the glass ball stopper that holds the "red eye."

The sun drops away over the snowy tops of the Belt range. Aleck alone stands watch in the square, his eyes turning in all directions and his gun cocked ready for action. His vigil is not alone.

Over in the village hurdy house a window is raised so quietly that the sound does not attract the gossippers beneath. The appearance of a rifle barrel escapes notice in the changing light, and the form behind is out of sight save for a head and a pair of bright eyes getting range on the boy. The youngest rests his gun on the ground, turns to the hotel, and calls:

"Charley, bring out that—"

His voice is stopped. The gun from the window is sighted. Blim! blim! a stream of fire shoots out, and the boy, struck in the head by both bullets, falls face to the ground, dead.

In a flash the barroom is emptied, and out onto the square comes the old man, staggering from the liquor he has drunk, and at his heels are a half dozen cowboys of his tribe, all with guns drawn and looking vainly for the enemy. The other boy cries:

"Pa, watch out! The T. E. has been here all day!"

Hardly has he spoken before the hurdy house window is again raised, two guns are swung out, and blim! blim! blim! away they go right into the little cluster of men. Two cowboys fall and the others are stampeded. The old man shouts:

"Scatter boys till we locate 'em, an' then get together! My God! boys, don't forget that they murdered our Aleck!" And his voice drops away into a fierce wail for revenge.

The old man runs to the hotel as another form sneaks from around a saloon, raises a shotgun to fire, and then dashes quickly across the street to the end of the shed. Charley, the bartender, has seen him. He calls to the old man, who steps from a window to the roof of the shed and crawls along as silently as a snake in the grass. The old man leans over the roof and sees his enemy peeping from the side waiting for him to come out. He lays his rifle on the roof and draws his revolver. Gloating for a moment over his man, he fires three shots down through the man's head, jumps lightly to the ground and finds him dead.

An hour drags by without a shot. Men with drawn revolvers are peeping from the corners of buildings and watching for pitfalls. The villagers from windows are awaiting the next play. The old cottonwood tree is a favorite gathering place, for it is in the open and just beyond range of shots across the square. Between the fighters it is a game of hide and seek and shoot anyway to kill. Old man Jerguson has returned to the hotel, and is in hiding while awaiting developments.

It is Charley, the bartender, who saves the day for the triangle. While he stands on the steps a whispered voice almost under his feet asks:

"Any of the Triangle inside?"

"Not a soul," he answers.

"Can we sneak in and get a drink?"

"Of course."

Three men crawl from the darkness beneath the steps and one by one sneak in to guard from an attack.

"I want to get that old man and then I am ready to go back to the ranch," said one, pulling down the window shades.

Charley calls them over to one side of the room and they do not see that the door to the hall is opened cautiously and that a man crawls through on his hands and knees and drops behind the bar.

"Give us another drink, Charley, and then we'll go out and get ol' Jerguson's scalp and take along that other boy for bear bait. I say, but wasn't that a pretty long-range shot I made from the hurdy house window?"

The bartender drops a pork on the floor and whispers to the old man while picking it up. Then he takes a deck of cards and offers to show a new trick that he learned from a commercial traveller. The three men lean forward, one resting his gun on the bar. It is a fatal move.

"Whoop-ee!" and before the smartest boy could say Jack Robinson old man Jerguson is up with a gun in each hand pouring shot across the counter, square in the faces of the rustlers. Two drop back dead. The third jumps to the rear of the room unharmed, and the rustler begins a deadly duel. The rustler's first move is to shoot out the lights, for he knows that Charley is in the play against him. Each fighter drops on the floor and all is quiet. The old man reaches forward until he moves a chair and the noise betrays his position. Two shots are fired in quick succession at him. He gives a fierce grunt as he feels a sting in his side. The rustler changes his position and the old man's answering shots are buried in the wall. But two more shots are left in his gun. The bartender is afraid to move because if the rustler conquers he will have to answer for his treachery. One more shot comes in the direction of the old man and misses. He is weak from loss of blood, and has dropped over on his side. He does not reply, and the rustler, sure of his victim, crawls slowly forward, with a knife between his teeth and a gun in each hand.

A light flashes at one corner of the window left uncovered by the curtain. It falls on the rustler's face, and before he can rise a bullet crashes through the window, striking him square in the forehead. The knife falls from his teeth, the guns drop from his hands, and he is back dead.

"Come right in. It's all right!" yells Charley, and young Henry Jerguson enters at the head of a bunch of four cowboys.

"For God's sake hurry! I am afraid the old man is a goner," cries Charley, and he rushes into the hallway and returns with a tallow candle.

They pick the old man up and lay him

on a billiard table. One of the boys pours a little of the red eye down his throat and the other starts for a doctor. The old man opens his eyes.

"Henry, is that you?" he asks weakly.

"Yes, pa. Are you hit hard?"

"I am done gone in a minute, boy. What luck?"

"We got one, pa, and druv two more away, and you got the rest."

"I said we'd get 'em. I done said we'd get them rustlers that took our—"

And then some one took the old man after a time the stranger, who had been watching the fight from a safe distance, wandered up to the hotel and found Charley sitting on the steps.

"They have gone home," said Charley; "that is, all of them that ain't at the undertaker's. It is pretty tough on Henry with the old man and Aleck both gone. Come in stranger, and have a drink."

They drank while Charley described the fight in the barroom. Then they stepped outside into the cool, soft air of the night. Charley rammed his hands into his pockets and looked upward at the stars glistening over the snowy peaks of the Belts. Finally he stretched out his arms over his head and yawned.

"Stranger, it's been a hell of a day in Ubet—a hell of a day. Let's turn in."

**CAPTURE OF THE FORBES GANG.**

"It is a very difficult thing," said Detective Arnold, "to get rid of a large amount of counterfeit money in this country without detection, because of the safeguards which are thrown around the genuine bank notes. The plan of protecting money has received the greatest attention from the treasury officials, and marks and characters have been put upon the bills which it is intended shall escape the counterfeiters' notice. It would not be policy to tell what any of these marks are, but it will not be giving anything away to say that defects are put into bills sometimes in order to testify to their genuineness. This is done on the supposition that if a counterfeit goes to work on a bill and discovers what may seem to be a slight defect he will correct it, and by doing so will furnish evidence of his crooked work."

"I was put to work upon a gang of counterfeiters, however, which beat the government at its own game. The treasury department received notice of a counterfeit bill from Boston of a \$1000 bill on the First National Bank of that city. The bill in question aroused suspicion because the serial number was duplicated. There was nothing else about the bill that would excite suspicion. In the vignette of Lincoln on the bank note an intentional defect had been made in one of the lines in the forehead and it was reproduced in the counterfeit note. There was, however, no doubt about it being a counterfeit, and a warning was sent out calling attention to it. Within two weeks we had plenty of work on our hands, for the banks, in scrutinizing bills after receiving notice, discovered several other counterfeiters of different banks. Reports came to Washington from New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis and other places of the minding of counterfeiters, and it became very evident that the country had been flooded with the bogus money by a very shrewd gang of counterfeiters. A comparison of all the bogus bills indicated that they had all been made by the same hand, for they were just as good as the genuine bills, with the exception of the duplicate serial number and letter."

"The fact that the bogus money had appeared in different parts of the country at about the same time showed that there had been concerted action in getting rid of money in large batches by the gang, but this alone did not give any clue to the operators or their headquarters. So far as we knew they might have been located in any of the five large cities. Secret Service operators were put to work in these cities with the intention of working back from the time the money was put out. In every city where the thieves did business they bought bonds and securities which could be disposed of anywhere, from bankers and brokers who were experts in detecting bogus money. In each city we got a good description of the man who bought the bonds, and it showed that it was a different man in each place. The descriptions were good so far as they went. Naturally the Government Printing Bureau came under suspicion because of the quality of the work, and every stamp in that department was examined with a magnifying light. Well, we wasted a lot of time proving the innocence of Government employees, but the work turned out to be of some value after all."

"While I was working in Washington I came across Richard Osgood, an ex-Secret Service operator, and he told me a yarn which came from his mulatto servant girl. The girl was good-looking, a bit of a flirt, and had picked up a white fellow on Pennsylvania avenue on a Sunday night. She accompanied him to a disreputable house and stayed part of the night. The fellow became confidential, and told the girl that he would soon own a part of the Government Printing Office. He also told her to call him Little Jack. The girl the next day reported to Osgood what she had heard, but Osgood, not being very friendly with the Secret Service people, because he thought he had not received a square deal when he was dismissed, thought over the matter for a day before reporting the story, and when the Secret Service operators went to look for Little Jack, he had 'flown the coop.'"

"This information might mean much or little, for investigation showed that this fellow, under another name, had been in the company of some of the Government engravers, and while they admitted this they said that they did not know him, and he had not made any dishonest proposals to them. But who was Little Jack? This query kept going through my mind day and night for several days, and then the name of Little Jack Vaughn, the New Orleans card sharp, flashed upon my memory. He had been mixed up with several swindles in the South, and I sent to the chief of police in New Orleans, to see if he could get me his picture. 'It might be only a waste of time,' I thought, but I could not tell, and it never does to miss any chances in my business. In about a week I got a picture from New Orleans of Little Jack, and the mulatto girl said it was the same fellow she had seen."

"The next step was more important. The description of the man who had passed the bogus money in Philadelphia referred to him as being under the average size. I took the picture to the brok-

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**I Was Getting Better**  
and the abscess had already begun to discharge less freely. I felt stronger and had a terrible appetite. Previous to this I had given up to die. When I had taken the second bottle I was able to sit up and accordingly I was not taken to the hospital and the final operation was deferred. Now I have taken six bottles and the abscess has entirely healed. I am well and go every where. My friends think it is a miracle to have me restored to them again so healthy and even younger in looks than before my sickness."

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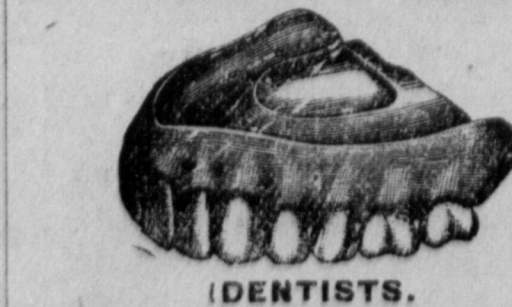
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