

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.

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.

Ubet was destroyed in a satanic night in the summer of 1892, when a Salisbury coach drew up before the only hotel and half a dozen passengers climbed from the hurricane deck and shook the white, stinging dust of the alkali plains from their garments.

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

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

"Got kind o' reckless, I reckon."

"Drunk, I hear say. Stranger, yer suthin' to wash 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.

"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 of man Jerguson and his boy Aleck at the Claretwater ford an' they reckoned they'd be up with the other boys of the Triangle.

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"Give us another drink, Charley, and then we'll go out and get old 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?"

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the square. For sure don't miss the T. E. comin'. Yo' Henry watch the horses. We may need 'em quick; but fear 'em up fast. An' yo', boys, keep your hands on your guns an' keep 'em sight. No foolin' to-day. Short hands on the ranch. Make every shot bring a man. Whoop-ee-ee! I done said I 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 zo slow!

The square is cleared for action. 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 for gotten his warning and stands against the hotel bar boasting about the men he is to go and kill and keep 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 Bell 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 gazing range on the boy.

"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 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 darts 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.

From the roof he sees his enemy leaping 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 the barroom, the last one backing in to guard from an attack.

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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 drew two more away, and you got the rest." "I said we'd get 'em. I done said we'd get them rusters 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 ramm'd 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, I'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.

It was put to work upon a gang of counterfeiters, however, who beat the government at its own game. The treasury department received notice of a counterfeit 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 counterfeits of different banks. Reports came to Washington from New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis and other places of the making of counterfeits, 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 know 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 man at work in that department was examined with a search light. 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 respectable 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 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 'blown 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 bro-

ker who had seen him, and he said Little Jack was the man, without doubt. This cleared up something, as it was learned from the south, the names of some of the gang that Little Jack trained with, and that he had been in the counterfeit business during the war. But who was Little Jack and his partners? A large reward was offered for the capture of the gang, and a description of some of the which had been bought was sent to all the financial centers of the country and Europe with a description of Little Jack. We got word from London that a man answering his description had disposed of a lot of bonds in that city and was communicated with Scotland Yard.

"We worked steadily on the case here a week, and found out a lot of information about the gang. We were reasonably certain that Ed Forbes was at the head of it, but did not have a positive proof or the man. While racking our brains to clear up the business, a telegram was received from Scotland Yard to the effect that a man who answered the description of Little Jack had taken passage on the Cunard steamer Scotia, and was apparently alone. The Cunard pier then was in Jersey City, and I was there when the steamer arrived with several other operators. I picked up Little Jack in spite of his full beard and English make-up. I did not recognize any of the other passengers as crooks, but those who looked the least bit crooked were followed by an operator to their hotel, and left under surveillance until their identity was cleared up.

"I went after Little Jack. He had charge of some barrels of wine consigned to J. M. Kearns, Flatbush, L. I. The gauger, in examining the wine, found that there was some foreign brand in one of the barrels, and I had the barrel opened, with the consent of the collector. I found an hermetically sealed box fastened to the bottom of the barrel, and on opening it, discovered a dozen perfect counterfeit plates of bank notes. The plates were returned to the boy and the barrel was shipped to Flatbush. I went with it, and found that Mr. Kearns lived at the Eureka Club. When I delivered the wine, I saw Little Jack and Ed Forbes in the house, and concluded that the gang had returned to this country to begin operations again with a new set of plates.

"I raided the place in the evening and captured Ned Ormsby, Ed Forbes, Little Jack Vaughn, Sam Stetson and Curley Peters.

When Baby was sick, we gave her Castoria. When she was a Child, she cried for Castoria. When she became Miss, she clung to Castoria. When she had Children, she gave them Castoria.

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