

DEFENDING THE JAIL.

THE SUSPICIONS AND COURAGE OF THE KEEPER'S SON.

He Prevents the Escape of a Noted Convict and His Partner—Firing From Behind a Barricade, the Boy "Fills Them with Birdshot."

In the pioneer days of Minnesota my father was elected sheriff of — county, and in due time our family took up its residence in the county jail. I was the only child, and was at that time about thirteen years old. About a month after we took possession we received a prisoner who was known over a wide circle of country as Black Jim, horse thief, robber, and general desperado. He was a man about 30 years of age, very dark complexion, quick and wiry, and his capture was hailed as a great event. Officers had been after him for over two years, and two of them who had turned up missing were believed to have been shot down by the desperado. He was brought to jail loaded with irons, and up to the time of his examination father employed two extra guards. After he had been remanded to the higher court, Black Jim was so quiet and humble that the extra guards were dismissed, and he was looked after by our regular turnkey, who was a middle-aged man named Andrews.

The jail was built of stone, and was the only stone jail in the State at the time. The prison part was twelve feet wide by the width of the building, making a corridor about 12 by 30. There were no cells in this corridor, but it was a clear space, with bunks for five or six prisoners. It was shut in by iron bars running from top to bottom, and admission was had by a single door. The windows were small and well guarded. There was no fear of Black Jim or any other prisoner getting out if properly looked after.

Two weeks after our prisoner was remanded father was called upon to organize a posse and seek the capture of a gang of horse thieves raiding in a neighborhood twenty miles away. I heard his instructions to Andrews before he left. He said: "Don't take your eye off Black Jim. This afternoon my wife will go on duty, and you can sleep and be ready for night."

"Oh, you needn't be afraid of anything going wrong," replied Andrews. "I'd just like to see Jim hoodwink me, and I can watch for three days and nights, if necessary."

I saw that father didn't like his boasting, but was in a hurry to be off, and he left right away after dinner. Andrews took up his station in an armchair in the corridor and I brought in some wood for the big stove, (it was October), filled up the water pails, and was busy for an hour or two. I happened to be in the corridor when the gate bell rang, and was sent out to answer it. The caller was a keen-looking man about 40 years old, pretty well dressed, and he had a package under his arm. When he had followed me into the jail building he said to Andrews:

"I am Lawyer Thomas of Brockville, and have come to see my client."

Black Jim's examination had taken place at a town eight miles away, and neither Andrews, my mother, nor my self had been present, therefore we did not know any of the lawyers in the case. Father had not said anything about visitors, and when Lawyer Thomas demanded an interview with his client, Andrews did not hesitate to let him into the ward. From the moment I saw Thomas at the gate I took a dislike to him. I set him down as a bad man. I wanted to protest when Andrews let him into the corridor, but I hadn't the assurance. After he was in I made bold to say:

"You ought to have asked mother first."

"Pah! What does your mother know about matters in here?"

"I don't believe he's a lawyer!"

"Of course he is! Why would he say so if he wasn't?"

As soon as the lawyer had entered the corridor he was heartily greeted by Black Jim, and the two retired to the further end and sat down to be out of ear shot of the turnkey. There they talked for a long two hours, and then Thomas came forward and said:

"I discover that I have left some important papers at the hotel, and must go for them. Will it be against the rules if I call again this evening?"

We had no rules about visitors, as this was our first prisoner, and Andrews promptly replied that the lawyer could return and remain until 9 o'clock. I saw some money slipped into his hand, and he was all smiles as he bowed Thomas out. I went and told mother, and added that I believed he was some friend of Black Jim's, instead of being his lawyer, but she replied that Andrews was a faithful man, and was probably satisfied that everything was all right. Black Jim went to his bunk, and I took advantage of this fact to remove the sash from the rear window of the corridor over the bench the pair had occupied during their confab. This done, I went up to the hotel, our village had only one, and I went direct to the stable to see if Thomas had come in a buggy. Nothing of the sort had arrived. Then I discovered that no stranger was stopping at the hotel. I made inquiries of several citizens, and no one had seen a man of Thomas's description. Then I asked who had been Black Jim's lawyer at the examination, and was told that his name was McCormack.

I returned home to give mother these facts, and while they aroused considerable anxiety, she could not fully credit my assertions that the so-called Thomas was there to help Black Jim get away. She cautioned Andrews without telling him what I had discovered, but he assured her that he knew Thomas to be a lawyer, and that there wasn't the slightest foundation for suspicion or anxiety. This silenced me and reassured mother, but I was by no means convinced.

Darkness came about 5 o'clock, and at half-past 5 I let Thomas in again. He had a pretty large bundle under his arm, and I noticed that his boots were muddy. He handed Andrews some cigars, got off a joke or two, and was admitted to the corridor. The two had no sooner started for the further end than I started for the window. Carefully lifting out the loose sash I found that I could plainly hear their conversation. The first words I caught were from Thomas, who was saying:

"—at least a mile, I guess. It's due west of here, with an old log house in a clearing. The horses are two good ones."

"What's the weather outside," asked Jim.

"Going to be dark."

"Well, it will be as easy as rolling off a log."

"Anything in the house worth taking?"

"Can't tell till we have a look. I wonder where the devil this cold air comes from."

I drew back, softly replaced the sash, and then entered the corridor to tell Andrews. He sat in his chair, half asleep, and it occurred to me that if I called him off his post the fellows would suspect something. I entered the dwelling part and related the particulars to mother. I remember how white her face grew as she listened to me. She was for at once sending me out for some of the neighbors, but when we came to reflect we remembered that father had taken twenty of the best men in his posse, and we could think of no one who would be likely to accept our call. Andrews was at his post, and he could not be called away or conferred with. We had as arms a double-barrelled shotgun, a revolver, and a rifle. The turnkey had the revolver, or was supposed to have it, but in looking around the corridor I found it hanging on a nail behind the door leading into the dwelling part. It was loaded, and I myself loaded the other arms, taking them into the dwelling part to do so. The keys to the front and back doors were in the locks. I removed them without Andrews's knowledge.

Now, to understand what took place, you must have the lay of the jail. It was only one story high. There was a door at either end of the corridor. Midway there was a door and a passageway to the dwelling part, which was composed of three rooms. There were two windows in the corridor, both strongly defended, and the doors were very massive. The door into the dwelling part was only an ordinary light door. When 9 o'clock came I stood in this doorway, with mother looking over my shoulder, and we had all the weapons on the kitchen table. I had the front door key in my hand, ready to let Thomas out in case nothing happened. He and Jim came to the iron door and shook hands, and Jim said:

"Well, I shall depend on you to get those witnesses."

"Oh, of course, of course," was the reply. "I may drop in some day next week with some good news."

"I hope so."

"Well, keep up your courage. Good-by."

"Good-by."

Andrews turned the key and let Thomas out into the corridor. None of them had seen us, because we were further down. Andrews had swung the door about half shut when Thomas turned on him and struck him with his fist behind the ear. The turnkey fell in a heap, and then Thomas drew a revolver and struck him twice with the butt of it. By this time Black Jim was out in the corridor, and I saw a revolver in his hand. Mother screamed out as Thomas struck the turnkey a second time, and both villains made a dash for us. I shut the door in their faces, however, and it was bolted as they came against it. We ran through to the kitchen, and in five minutes we had the passage barricaded with the table, a cupboard, and several chairs. If they broke down the door we were to make our fight here.

After a few kicks on the door the fellows left it possibly intending to go out. They found the keys gone, however, and likewise discovered that getting out of the corridor was not getting out of jail. It seemed that Thomas had brought nothing with him but clothing and firearms, having planned to dispose of the turnkey just as he did. They could find nothing but a stick of wood to work at the doors or windows with, and they made no progress towards liberty. They were working for half an hour before they realized that the way to liberty was through the dwelling part. They no doubt supposed mother and I had fled, for they began at the door without calling to us. They kicked the panels out and reached through and unbolted it. I wanted to fire, but mother restrained me, hoping it would be unnecessary. As the door swung open I shouted to them, and they could not help seeing the barricade. They drew back, and Black Jim said:

WORK OF THE SCHOOLS.

EVERY COUNTY BUT ONE WELL REPRESENTED.

The Chairman of the Committee, Mr. H. J. Thorne—The Larger School Districts Send the Larger Exhibits—Some of the Work Bound.

There is no department of the exhibition that will attract more attention from all classes of people than that devoted to education. All remember the interest excited some time ago by the exhibit in St. John of the school work which was afterward taken to the great London exhibition, and which



CHAIRMAN H. J. THORNE.

caused so much favorable comment there from educationists from all parts of the world. Education is a subject which lies very closely to the hearts of the people of this province, and since the inception of our free common school system there is nothing in which advancement has been more rapid or substantial. In an exhibition of this kind it is of course to be expected that manual work will be the most prominent feature, but as this embodies the results obtained from many departments of knowledge, it is more complete and exhaustive than at first sight might be supposed. There is a great demand being made upon our schools for technical training, and the demand has been intensified by the attention which has been drawn to this subject by means of the great exhibitions which have been held during the last twenty-

five years. As far as provision has been made for that class of work in New Brunswick it will be found that the utmost attention possible has been given to the subject, and the results surprising, even to the most sanguine. There are exhibits from every section of the province of the work of the schools. The towns have participated to a greater extent than country districts, but this is only natural on account of the greater facilities afforded them for doing that class of work. One noticeable feature in this exhibition is that the matter has been neatly and uniformly bound. This has been done for

country districts and the smaller graded schools by the Board of Education, while the larger schools defray their own expenses for binding.

As might be expected, the schools of the city of St. John, will present the largest and most varied exhibit, but in proportion to their facilities other localities are in no wise behind, and the display, as a whole, will indicate by comparison the great progress that is each year being made by our public schools.

Mr. H. J. Thorne has been a hard worker for the advancement of the exhibition. He presides over the committee in charge of the educational exhibit. As chairman of the St. John board of school trustees, he is thoroughly interested in educational matters, and the choice of the association was a good one.

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Foals of 1888, Purse, \$100
3 Minute Class, " 150
2.37 Class, " 200
Second Day.
2.45 Class, Purse, \$150
Free for all Class, " 300
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Second Day.
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Free for all Class, " 300
Reserved for Specials, " 150

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Foals of 1887 or younger, \$100
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Entries close on the 15th Sept. for the first two days, and on the 22nd Sept. for the last two days. Address all communications to
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GENERAL REMARKS.

THE Three Tracks herein mentioned, are conveniently situated for horsemen who may desire to attend these races.

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Horses starting in the circuit will be eligible in the same class throughout the circuit.

Entrance fee will be Ten per cent. of the purses, payable, Five per cent. with nomination and Five per cent. the evening before the races.

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Arrangements will be made to have United States horses admitted in bond to attend races.

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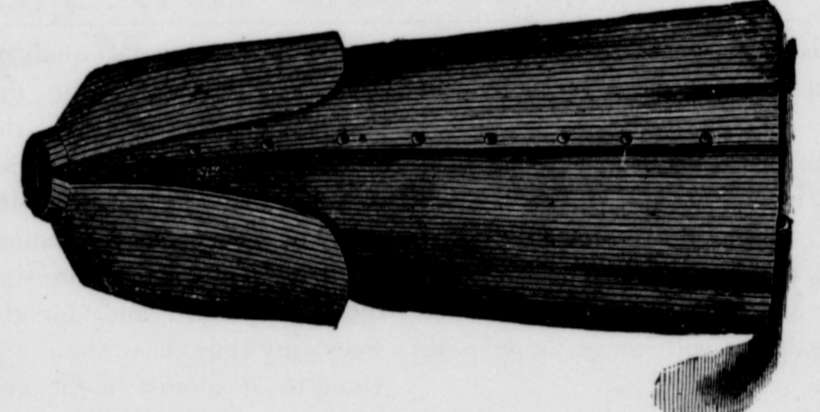
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