A CLOSE CALL.

The firm of which I was the junior partner bought large quantities of wool. usually made the purchases, and at times was obliged to travel far into the Sierra Nevadas, taking with me several thousand dollars upon each trip. To carry this sum I used a pair of saddle holsters with a receptacle for the money and a place for a hotels I was obliged to carry the money to the table with me, and keep it in my room at nights; for few of the stopping places had any secure safes or vaults. Paper money was not generally accepted by the owners of wool, so the greater part of the money was in gold. Two attempts had been made to rob me, and I had become wary and suspicious; yet the profits we made were so good that I was unwilling to give up the trips.

One day we received a telegram that read: "Secure all the wool you can; it is sure to advance in price."

"That means a hard trip for me," I said, glancing at the yellow slip, "but the sooner I am off the more wool I can get." The telegram reached us at five in the afternoon. At nine the next morning I was on the road, and had nearly four

thousand dollars in gold coin. For the first three days I gradually ascended the mountains, and by midday of the fourth had reached the summit. This did not mean a rapid descent upon the opposite slope, but a journey for several days over ridges rising from this central plateau, Some of these were densely wooded with pine, spruce, and fir, while others were more open, and contained fine pastures for flocks and herds.

I was desirous of reaching one man, who kept his sheep during the summer upon a high and rugged range some miles from my usual route. I halted for dinner at a small public house, lately built to accommodate teamsters engaged in hauling lumber from a new sawmill. The surroundings were not inviting, but I was accustomed to the poorest accommodations while upon these mountain trips. While a half-breed Indian was caring for my horse, I enquired of the landlord it he could direct me to Rucker's sheep camp.

"Yes," was the reply, "but it's a hard place to find," at the same time giving me the directions as nearly as possible.

I shook my head as he ended, saying, "I could never find the place in a year's time. Is there no one here acquainted with the route, who can go with me?"

He hesitated a moment and then said, the trail as well as old Rucker himself. I or I will fire." reckon you can get Bill to go."

Bill was promptly interviewed. "You and go," was the brief but satisfactory reply. The required sum was promised, and he at once prepared to accompany me.

The moment dinner was eaten we set off. Instead of being sullen and morose like most halfbreeds, my guide was a talkative and intelligent fellow, and gave me much information about the surrounding

Upon reaching Rucker's camp we found the owner absent, and it took us an hour or more to find him and the sheep he was herding. He detained us longer to tell about the bears and panthers that annoyed his sheep than the time consumed in bargaining for his wool, and making the
necessary arrangements for shipping it to
us. When we got back to the public disappeared in the night. us. When we got back to the public house it was too late to go farther that night, unless I travelled after dark, and to this I objected on account of the gold.

straw bed, adding, "You see the place is robbers, so it was evident my shot had not new, and we have nothing better for our-

I was willing to take the bed, and so turned my horse over to the haltbreed to take care of for the night.

rode up and desired to stop.

"Rooms are pretty scarce, as you can see, but we can feed you as well as not,"

The men, like myself, were not particular | gateway. as to beds, so remained for the night. They were rather talkative, and I overheard them ask the landlord my name and business. My suspicions were easily aroused, and I noticed that they seemed interested in me and the holsters I guarded so closely.

"Mighty keerful of yer holsters, stranger, you must have struck it rich in the diggin's?" I made some evasive reply. During the evening Bill, the haltbreed, came into the bar-room two or three times, and the last time I noticed that he secretly beckoned

As we left the dining-room one of them said:

attracting attention. On reaching the middle of the wide, dusty horseback ?"

I nodded in reply. He continued: "One a bad man; he rob

stage and go to prison. Now he came

"A stage robber?" I echoed. "Yes," was the answer; "five years ago he rob the stage, and sent to prison. Maybe he think no one know him. I remember. I tell you and tell the boss-so

Ju look out for him.' I thanked the fellow and rewarded him in a substantial manner, for the warning

was of value to me watched the two strangers with consid- himself from my leg, and as his body was erable attention. There was nothing of between me and the two assassins, I crawlthe ruffian about either, and I would have ed on my hands and knees to a low rock thought nothing more about them than within a tew feet of me. "We will see any of the teamsters that stopped at the whether you get that gold or not." I muthotel for the night, had it not been for tered to myself, as I rubbed my leg, bruis-

the halfbreed's caution. my bed against the door when I retired row crevice examined the situation. for the night, and securely fastened the

only window. I was awakened by a movement of the I ran to the further end of the ledge, hoping bed. It appeared as though some one was to get a shot at him. I was disappointed, slowly opening the door and causing the for he was still hidden from sight, I saw

bed to move across the floor. Whooping cough, croup, sore throat, sudden colds, and the lung troubles peculiar to children, are

RAIN-PROOF CLOAKS.

pair of pistols. The latter were necessary; for much of my way lay amid the the wild and rugged mountains far from the main highways. When I halted at the wayside thereby giving free ventilation, and making it much more healthy to wear an

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I reached under the pillow, firmly grasped one of my pistols, and awaited develop-ments. Inch by inch I could feel the bed move slowly over the floor. My senses were stimulated by the excitement of the moment, and I could hear the breathing of the would-be robber. The door was now sufficiently open to admit the thief. Think-knife. ing to capture him, I sat up in bed waiting for his approach.

It was too dark to distinguish his form, but I could tell his position from his deep breathing, as he slowly and cautiously approached the head of the bed. At that "There is Bill, the halfbreed; he knows instant I raised my pistol and cried, "Stop,

Quick as a flash he sprang for the door, and I fired at the same instant. He gave pay me two dollars and I take my horse a cry of pain, but continued his flight. I jumped from my bed, rushed to the door, and shot again at the retreating figure. The ball evidently missed him, for it did not stop his mad race, and the next moment we heard the swift galloping of a couple of horses.

The house was in an instant uproar. Men came rushing from their rooms, each one crying aloud as to the cause of the shooting. The explanation was brief, but it took an hour or more to quell the excitement, and I am certain but few slept during the remainder of the night.

It was plain that the two strangers had

When day gave us light, spots of blood were visible upon the hall floor and on the stairs, but a search for some distance The landlord said he could give me a along the road revealed nothing of the

been a serious one. Trusting that I had seen the last of my assailants, I mounted my horse after breakfast and pursued my journey. My route lay for some miles through a picturesque Just before supper two more travellers scenic region. Volcanic rocks rose abruptly from the hillsides, assuming the forms of temples and towers. Here I fancied I could trace a ruined fortress, Monthly. and there a moss-covered arch or massive

Absorbed in detecting these fancied resemblances to those most noted creations of man, I had ridden for a mile or more without seeing or hearing anything to break the silence of my lonely ride, when a loud report rang out, my horse plunged violently, and a second later fell to the ground, carrying me with him.

"We have him," shouted a voice that I recognized as belonging to the man who had asked me about the holsters the night

I lay upon my side with my right leg me to go out doors. Waiting till he left under the animal. The two men, each the room, I managed to follow him without with a gun in his hand, ran toward me from behind a neighboring rock. My situation was most critical. I was pinned to the and he stopped, approached me closely, earth and unable to move. Luckily my and said: "You see two men come on hands were free and I could reach one of earth and unable to move. Luckily my the pistols in my holsters. Determined to sell my life as dearly as possible, I jerked the revolver loose, raised myself slightly, and fired at the robber nearest to me.

The ball struck him in the hand and caused him to drop his gun. With an oath he sprang back and the two sought shelter

I was still in imminent danger, for they could make a detour and approach me in such a manner that I should be at their mercy. Their advance and my shot took but a fraction of a moment, so that both On returning to the bar-room, I now were over ere the death struggle of my animal ended. In these he partially raised ed from the fall.

As the host lighted me to my room he The rock behind which I had sought sheltold me what the Indian had said to him, ter extended several rods rising in places and warned me to be on my guard. De- ten or twelve feet above the ground. I termined to be on the safe side, I pulled climbed up a few feet, and through a nar-

I saw the glimmer of a gun barrel behind a low rock, and was thus enabled to locate I slept soundly till past midnight, when at least one of my enemies. Stooping down, that by crawling up the hill a short distance

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I could gain the protection of a second rock. This I instantly did. yet every moment fearing they would make a dash for the gold.

which was still upon my horse.

They evidently did not realize that I had moved from the rock near the dead animal, and were afraid to venture. Reaching the second ledge I found to my annoyance that Free from odor and porous, I could not yet see the hidden robbers; but by pulling myself along behind a fallen tree was at least within sight of them. They were crouching on the ground behind alow ledge, each peering around the end of it, intently watching the spot where they had seen me disappear. Though it seemed an age, it had really only been a couple of minutes since their first shot was fired at me, and they were evidently waiting till they could tell whether I was injured

> I now raised my pistol, took careful aim and fired. The ball struck the man who was holding the gun, killing him instantly. The other, with a cry of rage, seized the rifle and fired three shots at me in quick

> The bullets whistled near me, and one of them struck the log behind which I lay. This was so small that I dared not raise my head to get a return shot. I therefore turned around, still keeping flat on the ground, and crawled back some distance.

The tree in falling had struck an old log upon the ground and broken in two. Where the two crossed each other was a space under the broken tree through which I could see my adversary.

I rapidly cleared the earth away till I

could get a shot at him. He had run up some rods nearer, and now stood partially We have all three makes in behind a small rock intently watching the black and colors; 52in. to 62in. I reached the pistol beneath the log he moved quickly, but I fired, and knocked the gun from his hands.

I instantly sprang up, crying, "Another move and I will kill you."

He turned and attempted to gain the protection of the nearest ledge; as he whirled around, I fired again and he fell. I rushed upon him, but he was on his feet at once and caught the rifle. I fired once more, breaking his wounded arm and causing him to let tall the gun. "I exclaimed, "Stop, before I kill you."

Instead of complying he answered fiercely I will cut your heart out," and sprang toward me with a bowie knife in his right hand. By this time he was within reach and made a savage thrust at me with the

I sprang aside in time to avoid the blow and once more pulled the trigger. No shot replied—the pistol was empty.

My only chance was at close quarters, and catching my revolver by the muzzle, I struck him a blow on the head, at the same time receiving a slight cut in the shoulder. move I sprang upon him, kicked the knite from his hand, and caught up the rifle he had dropped in the fight.

He cried, "Hold,—I give up; don't

"Lie still then," I said, "and don't move." I now ran to my dead animal, pulled the holsters from the saddle, pushed the empty revolver into them and took out the loaded

one. Then I said, "Get up, now."

He was a pitiable looking object, and weak from the loss of blood. He had been twice wounded, once in the hand and again in the arm, while my blow on his head cut an ugly gash, from which the blood trickled down over his face. I took my handkerchief and made a bandage for his arm, and by twisting it tightly with a

stick, managed to stop the blood.

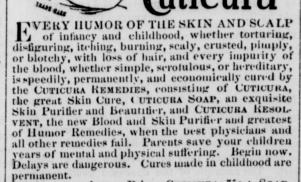
I now bade the fellow go ahead, and taking my holsters in one hand and the loaded pistold in the other, I obliged him to walk in front of me back to the inn where we had stopped the night before.

Of the excitement there caused by our appearance I need not speak. The nearest justice of the peace was sent for, a coroner's STUDIO BUILDING: 74 GERMAIN ST. jury impanneled, and the statement of myself and the wounded robber taken down. I was exonerated from all blame, the body of the man I killed was buried, and in the The aim of the school is to give pupils a course of a few weeks his wounded companion was sentenced to a long term in rison -S. S. Boynton, in Overland

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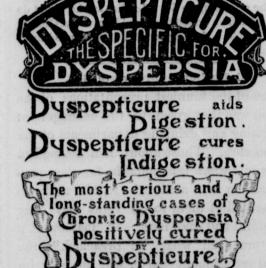
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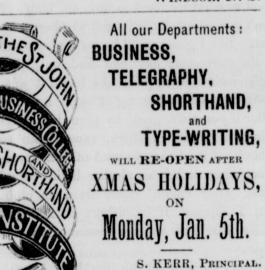
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