

THE BROKEN BRIDGE.

In 1875, the westward tide of emigration carried me as far toward the setting sun as the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, and then, after a varied experience in the woods and mining camps of that region, I drifted into the great logging country of the Northwest. The wild, exciting adventures on the pathless prairie, the rough, eager, half-expectant work in the gold mines, the dangerous experiences with Indians and the shifting from place to place to encounter death in a hundred forms had engendered in me a restless spirit, which looked upon change and excitement as essential features of happiness. Innumerable hardships could not quell the feeling of freedom and independence which made me spurn with contempt any permanent occupation in one locality. Nothing short of a fortune could have induced me to be content with one kind of life for any great length of time, and, failing in this, I doggedly, but happily, pursued the every-varying life of the adventurous fortune-seeker.

Rumors of various kinds concerning mines of wealth were influential in directing my steps northward. I accepted this direction of fate on the principle that it was the line of least resistance, and I shortly found myself travelling through unexplored regions of mountains, woods and prairies. But I soon regretted my change of location, for even my hard, rugged, muscular strength was insufficient to defy the cold of a severe winter in that region when separated from all civilization by miles of rough, barren country. My foolishness became so apparent to me, that for once in my life I was willing to exchange my wild, bleak surroundings for a quiet home, with its even, less routine of work. It was in the middle of winter, and the severity of the weather seemed sufficient to freeze the barren pines and oaks down to the farthest reach of their tap-roots.

I had been wandering about for days, eagerly seeking for some sign of a village or habitation, but the varied monotony of jagged rocks, fantastically shaped mountain peaks lined against the distant sky, and leagues of forests of spruce and pine, shut me in on every side, and defied all of my efforts to peer beyond the limits of my gigantic prison. A gathering snow-storm made me tremble with fear, and I hurried on, aimlessly and blindly. The rapid fall of the mercury increased my apprehensions, and I shivered partly from the cold and partly from the thought of an approaching blizzard. I was not in a condition to weather a rough storm, and the falling snow made me so anxious about my fate, that I searched around for some place of shelter among the rocks.

The topography of the country was unfamiliar to me, and I might have been within a mile of a large city and yet not have known aught of it. It was not such a great surprise to me, then, when I accidentally stumbled over the snow-covered track of a railroad, which wound like a huge serpent through the woods and mountains. I hailed the track as my deliverer, and with renewed energy I walked rapidly over the road bed, with the confident feeling that I would soon discover a station. In half an hour I found myself on the brink of a dizzy precipice. A huge chasm was spanned by a weak suspension bridge, which, with the additional weight of the snow and heavy blasts of wind, was trembling and creaking in its dismal loneliness, as if ready to part any moment. I started to crawl across it, but before I reached the middle of the bridge I gave a shriek of horror. Two of the heavy cables had parted, and the whole structure was supported by the remaining two, which threatened to yield to the additional strain. Trembling with fear and nervousness, I hurried back to a place of safety.

The blizzard was now filling the air with snow and ice, and making it difficult to follow the road-bed. Several times I lost the track, and found myself wandering far from the trail. The intense cold paralyzed my limbs, and queer sensations darted through my head and body. I realized that I was gradually succumbing to the intense cold, and when I saw a flash of light regularly appearing and disappearing before my eyes, I uttered a prayer for help. The light was the sure indication that my mind was wandering, and I watched it with a peculiar sort of fascination. It grew larger and more brilliant, and I stopped to gaze at it. One moment the showers of snow clouded it from my view; then it stood out clear and bright. A deep rumbling noise sounded above the shriek of the storm, and then I realized for the first time that the light was a real one, and that it came from an approaching engine.

"Horror!" I gasped, partly from the fear of being run over, and partly from the terrible thought that the train was rushing on to a horrible fate. It was the unerring prompting of instinct which made me tear off my under-jacket in an instant, strike a match, and hold the flaming torch over my head. I gave one wild flare, and then the snow extinguished the flame. The next moment, I felt myself picked up and hurled twenty feet into the air along with a cloud of snow.

I remained quiet for a moment, blinded and dumbfounded. As my wits returned to me, I concluded that the heavy snowplow of the engine had landed me on my soft bed. The desire to remain there and go to sleep stole over my senses, and I had difficulty in combating the feeling. When I finally struggled to my feet and wiped the snow out of my eyes and ears, I saw a long line of lights a short distance away. I knew that my effort had not been in vain. I had saved the train from destruction.

That terrible night of the blizzard near the bridge cured me for a time of my restless desire to roam about the country. As a reward for my work in saving the train from destruction, I was appointed station-agent at Aubrey. The superintendent of the road and his daughter Eva happened to be on the train that dark night, and I was requested to name my reward. I looked at the man, and then at Eva's beautiful, soul-pitying, admiring eyes. My request was modest. I asked to be appointed agent at Aubrey, where the superintendent lived, until I got tired of the position. "Why, man, you're too modest!" exclaimed the kind-hearted superintendent. "Ask for something more worthy of the act. Is it money—or what?"

"No," I replied. "I don't ask for money. Give me the request I make now, and at the end of a year I may ask for something more. For the present I am satisfied."

"Ah! Ha! I see; you want promotion, then. You want to begin at the bottom of the ladder and work up, eh? Well, you'll have a chance. I agree to the contract."

My newly made friend slapped me quietly on the shoulder, and I smiled approvingly, but made no comment.

I had no doubt of my ability to work up in the railroad company's services if I could cure myself of my restless habits. I had a fair knowledge of telegraphy, a good business head, and many other desirable qualities, but, above all, the friendship of Superintendent Auburn, whose money and influence made him a power in that region. During the first few months of my quiet life at the station-house I felt no desire to return to my former eventful existence, and I took up the monotonous routine of work daily with a self-satisfied spirit. I knew not in my own mind whether the peril of that dark night was the cause of my change of spirits, or whether it was the unconscious desire to be near Eva Auburn, whose clear, beautiful eyes had decided me in my choice.

As agent at Aubrey I saw her but little, however, as my duties kept me at the depot night and day. Occasionally she would drive down to meet her father, or to send some message to a friend. During these brief interviews I was enabled to study her carefully, and to fan into flame a passion that had been awakened from its latent condition on the first night of our meeting. She was like a wild prairie flower, lost among the great mountain peaks of a wild country, and I pictured her in the quiet drawing-room of some eastern city, resplendent with jewels and lace. Her delicate complexion, willowy form, clear, regular features, and large, innocent eyes, were all designed by Nature for captivating and entrancing the human heart. She came before me like a vision of beauty, and by a subtle, uncontrollable influence bound me to her. I was looked upon as a hero for my work at the bridge, and no words of protestation on my part could convince my new friends that the brave act was unpremeditated, and done under the inspiration of the moment without a proper realization of the danger imminent. I modestly, but vainly, disclaimed all credit of having performed any act worthy of being called heroic.

The delicious sensation of being regarded as a hero by all of your townsmen is not at all repugnant, however, and I soon ceased to attempt to correct wrong impressions in this respect. My roving life had taught me the philosophy of adapting myself to my environments, and I graciously yielded a point in my friend's favor. I looked complacently upon myself as a hero by circumstance. Superintendent Auburn was one of the most enthusiastic of story-tellers, and he took special delight in relating the story of the train that was saved from destruction through my instrumentalities.

In this way I became greatly interested in the bridge, and, since my first impressions of it were so horrible, I could not gaze upon it in broad daylight without experiencing a mingled feeling of fear and fascination. Gradually I became impressed with the belief that the bridge was designed to play a still more important part in my life, and I never passed it without stopping to gaze long and earnestly at the frail structure. My efforts to dismiss such thoughts from my mind as relics of superstition were of no avail, and the belief became painfully oppressive. In my dreams I frequently saw visions of the bridge, and once I saw myself struggling across its stranded cables ready to plunge into the yawning abyss below. Just as a hand was stretched out to save me I awoke with a violent start, but not until I recognized the white hand of Eva.

Shortly after this strange dream a large sum of the railroad company's money was left in my possession through Superintendent Auburn, who had more confidence in my power of protecting it than he had in his own.

"I don't like to keep it in my house over night," he explained nervously. "I'm getting old and a little timid, you know, and such things worry me. You don't mind keeping it in the office and watching it carefully until the express comes in tomorrow, do you? I'll ship it on to headquarters then."

I disliked the idea of having such a treasure left in my possession even for one night, but I could do nothing more than express my willingness to be responsible for the money. Eva Auburn was present at the interview, and, noting my hesitation, she said:

"But, papa, suppose robbers should come here to look for it. It would be dangerous for Mr. Joyson to meet them alone."

"Robbers! Who said anything about robbers?" her father asked, with a little nervous laugh. "There is no danger, for nobody knows that the money is here; and besides"—waving his hand toward me—"Mr. Joyson is brave and strong enough to protect it. You forget, Eva, what he did for us once."

I smiled approvingly at this convincing argument, but Eva was still unsatisfied.

"No, papa, I don't forget that act; but isn't that all the more reason why we shouldn't put danger in his way?"

The superintendent looked perplexed, and he turned an inquiring gaze toward me to help him out of his difficulty.

"There is no danger in keeping the money here," I answered quickly. "No one would ever think of looking for it here; and besides, I'm ready to meet any one that comes to rob us of it. It will be safe in my possession."

My voice was convincing, and though Eva's troubled expression was not removed from her eyes and face, the matter was definitely decided. I kept the money, while the superintendent and his fair daughter drove back home.

It was a cold, stormy afternoon, and the rain fell in torrents. Nobody entered the depot after twelve o'clock, and I passed the dreary hours in alternately working, reading and watching the storm outside. As night approached, the storm increased rather than abated, and I prepared myself for a long, dreary evening.

I relieved the monotony of the night by communicating with my fellow-telegrapher at the other station; but this, also, became monotonous, and I closed the instrument. I gave little thought to the money and only occasionally glanced toward the package. After the first dread of keeping such a treasure in my possession had passed away I laughed at my groundless fear and banished all further thoughts of anxiety about it at the time.

The howling of the wind outside soon lost all interest to me. I set the signal-lantern in its place, closed the heavy outside shutters and prepared myself for a comfortable sleep. Early in the evening there had been some reports of bad wash-outs along the line, but they were all so far away that I did not give them much thought. I did not lie down, but made myself comfortable in my chair.

I had not been in this position long before the instrument began to tick violently. Somebody was trying to send a message over the wire, and I listened intently to catch the words. It ticked out slowly but surely these words:

"Do not leave your office tonight. Danger awaits you outside."

I remained quiet a full minute trying to comprehend the meaning of this mysterious message. There was no line of wires connected with the superintendent's house, and I could not understand how Eva could reach me with such a message. I remained stupefied for some time, trying to think and solve the mystery. Then suddenly the instrument began to tick and rattle again, this time more loudly than before. I jumped to my feet to respond, and, the start awakening me, I found that I had been dreaming.

I rubbed my eyes and recalled the words of the telegram very vividly. "Strange—very strange," I muttered, looking around the room to see if everything was all right.

The instrument was now ticking violently, and this time there could be no doubt about its genuineness. I stepped up to it, half expecting to hear my dream-message repeated. The wires did not seem to work well at first, but after a little impatient manipulation I succeeded in describing this message:

"Bridge No. 10 has given way. For God's sake signal midnight express. Answer. A. F. T."

I leaped back with the cold sweat standing in beads upon my forehead, and rushed for the door. The midnight train was due in three minutes, and as she never stopped at Aubrey she would rush past in a moment and plunge into the fearful abyss. I reached the door and the thought of my dream-message from Eva made me hesitate.

"Do not leave your office tonight. Danger awaits you outside," I muttered. I stood irresolute for an instant, and then whispered aloud:

"Superstition!" But the dream was not entirely devoid of effect. I seized my heavy revolver from the desk, and then picking up my oilcloth coat I rushed out to signal the train.

I hurried blindly along the track to the signal tower, and set the danger light in an instant. It was at this moment that Eva's warning message and the thought of the unprotected money left in my possession occurred to me again with such force that I had a dread foreboding of some mistake. I ran rapidly back to the office and peered into the window. My blood boiled with indignation as I saw a masked man lift the valuable package from the floor and make an effort to reach the door. The whole ruse flashed over my mind instantly. While one of the burglars called me out of the office by a telegram from the next station, his partner entered the office and secured the money.

I was armed with my revolver, but in my anger I dropped this weapon and threw myself bodily on the burglar. He was no match for me in strength, and I soon overpowered him. I had just succeeded in binding him when the midnight express rumbled in at the depot and came to a standstill.

"What's up?" inquired the conductor, who hurried into the office to learn the meaning of the danger signal.

As soon as I could get my breath again I explained everything as intelligently as possible, leaving out the part referring to the dream-message.

"Well, you've got your man, and he's a tough-looking one, too," he said. "The bridge is all right, then?"

"Yes—that is, I suppose so," I replied; "but it has been a fearful storm, and it might be injured. It's a weak affair anyway."

"Yes! I'll send a man ahead and let him examine it."

A couple of trainmen started off on this errand, and in half an hour they returned with the news that the bridge was too weak to hold a single car, and that before morning it would probably be down. I had, by a conjunction of circumstances, saved the second train from plunging over the precipice.

When Superintendent Auburn came down the next morning to get the money, he was astonished to see the midnight express waiting there; but when he listened to the strange tale of my adventure he could hardly believe his senses. He took my hands and pressed them silently.

Eva looked at me with her large eyes as I modestly told my story, and when I finished, she added:

"I was thinking of you all last night, and could not sleep. I was afraid something would happen to you, and once I got up and looked toward the depot. I wondered if you were safe, and I felt just like coming to you to tell you to lock the doors and not go out. Then I went to bed again and fell into a troubled sleep."

Up to this time I had told no one of my dream-message, but I now made a clean breast of everything to Eva and her father.

"Strange, very strange," ejaculated the superintendent. "It is almost incomprehensible. If we had only caught the thief at the other station, everything would be fine."

"Yes," I assented, "but we can't have everything."

"No, no, we can't," he exclaimed. "I'm satisfied. You have done us a great favor, Mr. Joyson, and you must be rewarded for it. You remember the promise I made to you some time ago? Well, I'm ready to redeem that now, and to add more to it. What shall it be? You shall have anything in my power to grant."

I was not so modest this time in my request, but as I put a conditional clause to it, he readily assented.

All uncertainties of this condition were removed when Eva Auburn consented to

be my wife, for I had requested from her father her hand in marriage as a reward for my services, on condition that she loved me.

It may be of interest to add, that the first night I met Eva I had a vague idea that she would some day be my wife, and, possessed with this feeling, I had requested a year's time in which to name the full reward I expected for my services. Circumstances helped me, and the second averted disaster at the bridge, and my work in saving the train and money emboldened me to make my daring request.

STORIES OF ANIMALS.

The Adventures of Trainers and the Curiosity of Yachtsmen.

The author of the "Recollections of a Lion-Tamer" relates how, after being for some years employed as an animal trainer, he and his wife had, by great economy, saved enough to buy a modest menagerie, and received their stock of crocodiles, serpents and monkeys at an inn near Lyons, France. One evening several alligators came, and were placed in a store room which opened from the courtyard. He continues: "Maria and I, with several persons to hold lamps, set to work to unpack them. You can imagine how agreeable that unpacking was. The alligator is wholly lacking in grace and gentleness. Each of his jaws is ornamented with seventy-five teeth, his body is covered with armour that defies attack, and his tail is an invincible weapon that can overthrow, cripple, or destroy an adversary. Our alligators had had a long voyage. Never of an amiable disposition, alligators are in particularly bad humor after a journey, and become the most ferocious of creatures if they escape. Ours escaped! What confusion there was! Every one rushed to the door, the lights went out, my wife and I were left in the darkness, face to face with this horrible invisible danger. We had climbed on a table. At one blow from the tail of one of the saurians the legs gave way. Terrified, we rushed from one side of the room to the other, hunting for the door. The frightful grumbling of the angry beasts mingled with the sound of their tails and jaws striking against the furniture, the flag stones, and the walls. At last I found the door. We were free; but that was not the end of the matter. Not to be injured by a stroke of the tail of one of the alligators was one point, and not to be ruined was another, for these delightful companions had cost us our little fortune. I went back carrying a torch. I threw myself resolutely into that melee, and finally succeeded in getting the saurians into safe quarters."

Cooper the lion-tamer's most serious mishap occurred at Brussels, while Myer's circus was performing there. It was winter, and Cooper's lions were dying fast from the effects of the severe weather. On the day of the accident two new lions, perfectly wild, had arrived from Hamburg.

Now, it was always one of Cooper's boasts that all his training went on openly before the eyes of the public, and that he could go among untrained animals equally well before the public or in private. So the new beasts were turned in among the others in the evening, and Cooper went into the cage.

The theatre was full to overflowing, and the audience certainly witnessed a sensational performance. Scarcely had the tamer entered, than one of the new lions and one of the old ones began a desperate fight.

Cooper took his whip and started to quell the disturbance. In striking at the old lion, however, he managed to give the new one a smart cut, and the savage beast immediately flew upon him, and planting its claws on his left shoulder, tore down all the flesh from the shoulder and breast. Raising his right arm to drive the lion off, the hand and arm were seized by the brute's teeth, and the bone laid bare from elbow to wrist. The other animals, as of course is their wont, were not slow to take advantage of the position of affairs, and soon the tamer's leg was bitten through, and other injuries inflicted.

It seems scarcely credible that during all this the man never for an instant lost his presence of mind, and with all his fearful injuries continued to whip the brutes into subjection, and actually succeeded in doing so, before making good his exit from the cage.—*Strand Magazine.*

At a sea-side resort some boys caught a ribbon-snake about eighteen inches long, and after playing with it for a while took it into their heads to see if it could swim. They carried it to the pier and threw it into the harbor. The snake set out swimming at once, but instead of coming toward the land, it made for a small yacht lying at anchor.

It could not get up the sides of the boat, but in swimming about it, it came to the cable, up which, to the amazement of the boys, it was seen to make its way by twisting around it.

The shouts of the boys called the attention of the only man on the yacht to the presence of the snake, and after chasing the poor creature with a broom about the deck, he succeeded in throwing it into the water again. The snake, still plucky, swam to another yacht near by, but was driven away with an oar.

It then started for the other side of the harbor, nearly a quarter of a mile distant, and the men in the second yacht had the curiosity to get into a small boat and follow it to see if it reached the shore. It swam steadily, going somewhat more slowly as it went on, but still keeping up its graceful, undulating motion until the shore was gained.

By this time it was somewhat exhausted, but it had strength enough to crawl away among the rocks, and the men who were watching it felt it had a right to live, even had there been any reason—which there wasn't—for killing it in the first place.

I. C. R. Shops, Truro, N. S. K. D. C. Co.—DEAR SIRS:—It affords me pleasure to bear testimony to the prompt and satisfactory effect of your K. D. C. in my own case. I was for thirteen years a sufferer from Dyspepsia and had about lost faith in everything advertised for this complaint and all hope that I could be cured. Hearing of the many cures effected by your remedy I was induced to try it. The effect has been a surprise to me. The first dose helped me and now after using less than one box, I consider myself cured. I feel it my duty to heartily recommend it to others.

Yours truly

M. P. RICHARDSON.



A Crown Jewel

That sparkles with genuine merit—SURPRISE SOAP—a jewel of the first water for washing clothes. SURPRISE has the remarkable power of washing clothes without boiling or scalding or hard rubbing. It washes them clean with-

out the slightest injury to finest fabrics or hands—makes white goods whiter, colored goods brighter—to say nothing of saving of hard work. You see the advantages of using SURPRISE SOAP on wash day. Every one does.

SURPRISE SOAP is economical.

READ the directions on the wrapper.



Keep Cool! NOT too Cool, BUT Just Cool Enough!

There's nothing like keeping the brain cool and clear. It's necessary, to run a business well. You say you're not in business. But you are! You're running a house. Do it in a business-like way. Figure the cost and compare with the income and you can tell how you will come out. You'll find that keeping a cool brain has its advantages in the small matter of housekeeping. Another important thing is, Who does your wash? Do you do it or does UNGAR. The economical housewife lets UNGAR do it.

Make sure you try the economical way—our way. Let us do it. One trial is all that's needed to show you the advantage of our way. Our way is the best way. TRY IT.

BE SURE and send your laundry to UNGAR'S Steam Laundry, St. John (Waterloo street); Telephone 58. Or Halifax: 62 and 64 Granville street. It'll be done right, if done at

UNGAR'S.

TAKE A TRIP INTO CHARLES S. EVERETT'S

When you want anything in his line, and you will be convinced that his prices are the cheapest in the city.

He keeps the

NEW FURNITURE STORE, 13 WATERLOO STREET.



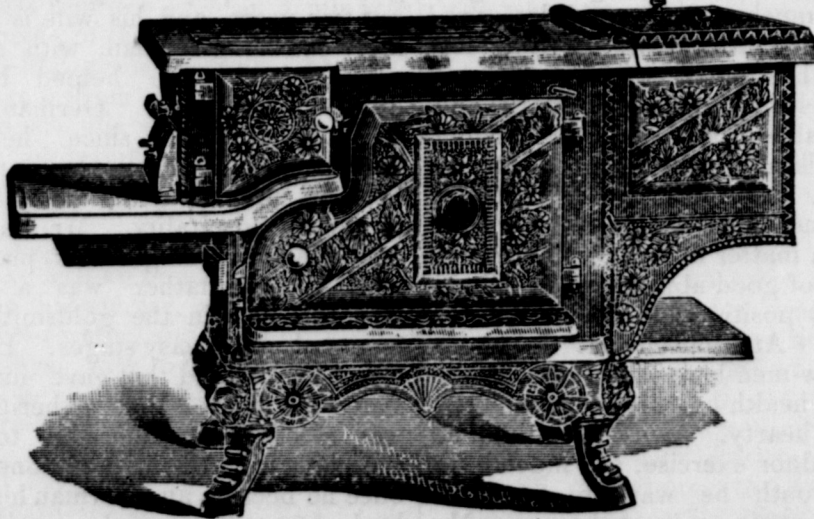
Ladies' Furs

—INCLUDING— SEAL GARMENTS, Shoulder Capes, Etc.

Finished up in the most approved style for the season, 1891-2. Inspection invited.

THORNE BROS., - 93 KING ST.

Handsome! Convenient! Economical!



PERFECTION A.

WOOD COOK. —Two sizes, either in Stove or Range | J. HORNCASTLE & CO., INDIANTOWN, N. B.