

DARING AND DEVILISH.

HOW A BRAVE MESSENGER WAS FAITHFUL TO HIS TRUST

And Had His Skull Split Open by Brutal Train-Robbers—How a Drummer's Head was Cut Open—A Large Haul of Money and Diamonds.

"Does train robbery pay?" I asked this question of Mr. Grover B. Simpson, superintendent of the Wells-Fargo express company at St. Louis. I had no serious intention of going into the business, but we had been down in the Indian territory, hunting for the Bill Cook band of outlaws, and on our way home, having the smoking compartment of the sleeper practically to ourselves, Mr. Simpson had been entertaining me with stories of train robbers.

He has been with the Wells-Fargo company for 18 years, most of the time on the frontier, and he has personally directed the pursuit of many of the most desperate outlaw bands who are professionally engaged in plundering the treasure boxes of the express company.

In his capacity as superintendent of the St. Louis district Mr. Simpson has charge of the company's business in Missouri, Arkansas, Indian territory, that many of the most daring train robberies of recent years have been perpetrated.

When a train robbery takes place he doesn't wait for his special officers to run down the robbers, but gets out himself, personally organizes pursuing parties and sometimes spends days and nights in the saddle with a Winchester slung across his shoulder. He is a crack shot, and many a fleeing bandit has felt the sting of the bullet that came from his gun.

"No, train robbery is not a profitable business," said Mr. Simpson. "During a period of 18 years the Wells-Fargo company has 313 stage robberies, 34 attempted stage robberies, 23 burglaries, 4 train robberies and 4 attempted train robberies. The total amount of money stolen was \$450,000, and the company expended \$550,000 in prosecutions and rewards. Sixteen robbers were killed while engaged in holding up our trains and coaches or while resisting arrest and 330 were captured, of whom 328 were convicted and sent to the penitentiary, some for life and nearly all for terms of 15 to 30 years.

"In my immediate territory there have been a great many robberies, and yet our losses, so far as the amount of plunder taken by the robbers is concerned, amount to practically almost nothing. Take this Cook gang, for instance, one of the most desperate and reckless that we have ever had to deal with, and yet the total amount of money they have got from us would scarcely pay a month's board for Bill Cook alone at any first-class hotel."

Mr. Simpson, during the long hours we were on the train coming to St. Louis, told me some very entertaining stories of train robberies, and I will endeavor to repeat them as nearly as I can remember.

The most scientific train robber I have ever known, and also the most successful one was a Texas outlaw named Brack Cornett. I am glad to say he is now dead, for he was the most heartless and inhuman robber of them all, a perfect devil, rough, brutal and cruel. Human life was no more to him than the life of a yellow dog, and he had no more compunction in smashing a man's skull than he would have in kicking a dog that had got in his way. His career as a freebooter was of short duration, but it was full of excitement while it lasted. I know little of his antecedents, or early history, except that some eight or ten years ago he was convicted of some crime in Texas, and sent to the penitentiary. Texas convicts are leased out in gangs, and Cornett in some manner escaped.

The impudent nerve the fellow possessed you will readily understand when I tell you that not long after he made his escape he disguised himself and returned to the chain gang from which he had escaped and got employment as a guard over the other prisoners. It was probably nothing but a spirit of dare-devilism that prompted him to do this, for he must have known that he could not long remain in that position, among so many who knew him, without being recognized.

In fact it was not more than two weeks before his identity was discovered. They tried to take him, but he stood away off with his rifle and got away.

About the middle of May, in 1887, a short time after he made his second escape from the chain gang, he came to the front as a leader of an outlaw band and was known as Capt. Dick. His associates were nearly all escaped criminals, injured to all kinds of devilry, ready at all times to plunder and murder, defying the law and baiting who attempted to enforce it. Bill Whitley, a noted desperado and famous for the number of men he had killed, was Cornett's chief lieutenant, and others being John Barber, Ed. Reeves and Bud Powell. Their first train robbery was at McNeil, Tex., where they rode into town one evening, robbed the depot agent and all of the passengers, who were waiting to take the train, came along they detained it long enough to plunder the express car and the rest of the passengers.

A month later, on June 18, 1887, they held up and robbed the Southern Pacific train at Flatonia. The train was pulling out of the station a little after midnight and was just getting under way when a man sprang upon the engine and fell in a heap upon the coal pile in the tender.

The engineer thought it was some drunken fellow who wanted to get a free ride, but was soon undeceived, for the man staggered to his feet and leveled a big six-shooter at the engineer and fireman, at the same time calling out in a loud voice:

"Stop her; stop her, or I'll blow your head off."

The man was Brack Cornett. In a minute another man sprang the engine from the opposite side. He was Bill Whitley. The plain had been for the two robbers to board the engine at the same time, but waited until she was going too fast and Whitley had been unable to make it.

They ordered the engineer to put down the track until he would come to a blazing bonfire and then stop. The order was obeyed and the other three outlaws boarded the train.

A little way beyond was a couple of rifles pressed uncomfortably close to his head, so that to stop the train on the trestle, so that only the locomotive and the express car, which was immediately behind, should be just across the trestle. The reason

for this was to enable the robbers to pilage the express car without hindrance, they knowing that in the inky darkness neither passengers or train crew would venture to cross the trestle, even should they get up sufficient spunk to face a band of desperadoes who were armed with Winchester.

When the train came to a standstill Cornett ordered the engineer and fireman to climb down, go back on the trestle and get into one of the passenger coaches.

The fireman quickly obeyed but the engineer was a big, fleshy fellow, who couldn't move very fast, and in trying to get back he got tangled up with a cattle guard that was made of wire fencing. Cornett didn't give him much chance to extricate himself, but got behind him and prodded him with the barrel of his rifle, and in the struggle the fence fortunately gave way and let him through.

Cornett and his companions then turned their attention to the express car. Hammering on the door with the butts of their guns they loudly commanded the messenger to open and let them in. The messenger kept them waiting outside long enough to enable him to open the safe and thrust the money packages under the stove. By this time the robbers were firing bullets through the door and threatening to dump the car down the embankment if the door was not opened. When Folger, the messenger, at last unfastened the door Cornett strode into the car at the head of his band, and his first move was to smash the messenger over the head with the butt of his revolver.

"The next time I tell you to open up you open, and be quick about it," were the words that accompanied the blows. Then the messenger, with blood running from the wound on his head and blinding his eyes, was compelled to open the safe.

Cornett uttered a cry of rage when he found it was empty, and pressing his revolver against the messenger's head threatened to blow out his brains unless he told him what he had done with the treasure.

Folger was a nervous fellow and stood them off, but the money was finally discovered beneath the stove, and because of his fidelity to his trust Folger was dealt another blow on the head, which split open his skull and knocked him senseless. The robbers got \$5100 in money and about \$2000 worth of diamonds.

They went back to the passenger coaches. Three of the gang remained outside firing their guns in quick succession, while Cornett and Bill Whitley entered the smoking car, leveled their weapons and ordered the passengers to hold up their hands. Every hand quickly went up.

The peanut boy was the first to catch it. They took his money and filled their pockets with cigars and candy. The negro porter was in the front seat. He handed over a small, cheap watch, and then begged Cornett to let him keep it. Cornett glanced at the watch, saw it was of little value and hurlt it from him with all his strength against the end of the car. The case was smashed, and the wheels flew in every direction.

Then Cornett amused himself and struck terror to the hearts of the already frightened passengers by cracking the porter's skull with a blow and knocking him bleeding and unconscious from his seat. When they got through the car there was not a cent or a piece of jewelry left in it.

They went into the next car, Bill Whitley poking his revolver into the faces of the passengers with one hand and with the other he held to his mouth a big stick of barber pole candy. As he crunched the candy he would smack his lips and call out to Cornett to get him a nice gold watch. Cornett was full of business. The first man he tackled was a drummer who had concealed most of his money and his other valuables, and who handed over only a few dollars.

"Give up the rest, quick now," demanded Cornett.

"That's all I've got," protested the drummer. "Smash went the butt of Cornett's revolver on the drummer's head, and down went the drummer in a heap, with his head cut open."

That was enough for the other passengers. They saw it was a brute, a devil they had to deal with, and even those who had hidden their valuables while the express car was being robbed dug them up and handed over all they had. It was the same way in the other coaches, the brutal Cornett snatching diamonds from the ears of the women and the rings from their fingers, and banging men on the head, and utterly reckless of the physical pain he inflicted.

When they got to the sleeping car they found most of the passengers in their berths, some of them asleep, and the car in darkness. Cornett went back into a forward coach for the conductor, whom he compelled to return with him to the sleeper and light the lamps. Then every passenger was plundered, some of them being pulled from their berths and pounded till they were unconscious. It was a rich harvest they reaped, a valuable haul of diamonds being taken from a traveling salesman, and a very large amount of money from a rich Mexican army officer.

The sheriff said he knew a house where Cornett sometimes visited, and his plan was to lay for him, and when Cornett next visited the house he would back a load of hay against the house, set fire to it, and when Cornett ran out he and his posse would fire upon him. About eight months after the Flavonia robbery Cornett was killed by A. Y. Allee, who was once his schoolmate and nearly all his life had been his closest chum.

Allee owned a ranch near Pearsall, and was the only man outside of his band whom Cornett trusted. The \$1000 reward tempted Allee, and, securing a commission as deputy marshal, Allee made up his mind that he would win the reward. One day while dodging the posse that were pursuing him, Cornett went to Allee's ranch, expecting to be concealed and protected, but while he was eating breakfast Allee shot and killed him. Allee says that he ordered Cornett to surrender, but that Cornett shot at him, and in self defence he killed him.

Bill Whitley and John Barber remained together for awhile, making numerous daylight raids on Texas banks, killing a U. S. marshal near Cicero and a deputy sheriff in Williamson county. Whitley was killed by a marshal's posse at Florisville in September, 1888, and not long after Barber was killed while resisting arrest in the Indian Territory.

Bud Powell disappeared, and for five years the Flavonia robbery was not heard of. At last a sheriff located him up in Montana, where he had joined the church, and was engaged to be married to the

daughter of a wealthy stock raiser. He was brought back to Texas in 1892, and is now in the penitentiary. Reeves was also captured and sent to the penitentiary.

LANDSCAPES WHILE YOU WAIT. A Lightning Artist Who Keeps Up with the Auctioneer.

The great American desideratum of speed is strikingly illustrated by a painter who has opened a studio and auction room on one of the principal business streets, apparently to demonstrate that Longfellow was exactly in error when he wrote "art is long," says the Boston Transcript. A man who happened to stray into the art gallery one morning chanced to speak of Raphael, and was asked by the painter if he belonged to the 2:30 class. Before he could answer the artist had executed "The Falls of the Yellowstone" in oil, the picture had been framed, sold, and the purchaser had gone out with the prize under his arm. The lightning colorist had his paints spread out before him in heaps on a sort of mortar board and ranged behind him in pairs, while on one side of him are the thousand canvas frames that he turns off before breakfast. Follow him while he produces a moonlight scene. First, he gets out his whitewash brush without the handle, and dipping it in the slate-colored ink, primes the sky of evening. But he is careful to leave a small circle unscathed in the center; that is to stand for the moon. Then across the bottom of the canvas the brush is flashed, leaving behind it a heavier trail, while two big patches of black paint at each side form the shadowy hills. Then, with a narrow brush of black, the trees and their bare branches are located, as if the artist were stripping the wheels of an express wagon. Another dash of black answers for a boat, and two irregular touches are the men propelling it. By this time the auctioneer is crying: "How much for this elegant moonlight scene in the north woods? Start me!—One dollar and sixty-five cents do I hear? Sold!" And the buyer gets the colors on his sleeve in putting it under his arm. "Little boys," said the auctioneer at this point, "you had better go home and give the old folks a show. 'But, boys,' he cries after the slowly-retreating forms, 'come down tomorrow. I'll have some nice birds put up here tonight, so that you needn't go home to sleep.' And the 'professor' has the lead by three pictures on the auctioneer, who begins to point out the merits of "an elegant forest scene."

THE LIVERY STABLE. How the Women That Kicked Against It Were Reconciled.

There is a livery stable on a certain fashionable street in Detroit which has been a bone of contention since its existence, and is likely to remain such, although it has closed its doors. It began life with a neighborhood quarrel. The man who built it did so against the protestations of the entire street. A committee waited on him to represent the neighbors, and he received them with the famous Vanderbilt motto, only instead of "the public" he substituted "neighbors."

The stable was built, and for the succeeding six months every woman on the street avoided passing that stable as if they were haunted.

"It's so dangerous, you know," was the common cry; "horses and buggies dashing in and out, and strange men standing round. Oh! it's perfectly horrid."

The stable kept on the even tenor of its way, and those who had horses began to keep them there, and ladies who hired rigs got them there, and there came a time when neighbors calling on each other after dark said:

"I'm not a bit afraid to go home alone. You know the stable is always open, and I got frightened I would run in there, and it makes the street, so light too?"

Last week the stable was closed, on the building was, the horses being taken to another part of the town. Now the ladies on that street are saying to one another: "I shall never dare move out at night, the street is so dreary since the stable shut up. It's as dark as Egypt in that block now."

Time reconciles all differences.

Bats as Flycatchers. A gentleman who went into the woods region on a hunting excursion and "put up" at a farm-house in a remote clearing was annoyed during the daytime with the abundance of flies that found access to the house. But when twilight or evening came he was treated to an exhibition of fly catching that more than repaid him for his vexation. The windows were opened as the darkness settled down, and the hostess' talow dip only partially dispelled the gloom in the old-fashioned kitchen when he suddenly became aware of odd creatures darting to and fro in the room, often coming almost in his face, while a queer little noise of "snip, snap, snap" seemed to follow their velvety flitting motions. For an instant he was startled, not knowing what to make of such intruders. "It's only the bats," said the landlady quietly, as she pursued her work. They're catching flies. Don't you hear 'em snap off their wings? There'll be hundreds of fly wings on the floor here in the morning."

The gentleman arose early and looked for the wings, and sure enough the floor and tables were littered with them.

It's Men that Droons Boats.

The Rev. Dr. James MacGregor, in some notes of his travels in Brittany, recalls a very good story of Dozalid, the servant of Rev. Dr. Macleod, the high priest of Morven. Donald was reputed to be the best boatman in the West Highlands; the doctor himself coming in an easy second. The story goes that on a rather boisterous day the doctor had to pay a visit to the island of Lismore. On their return the storm had increased, and a dangerous bit of water was lying before them. Silently the doctor left the tiller and took the sheet. As silently Donald took his place, and they rode safely through it. The silence was at length broken by the doctor: "Donald, that was well done." Donald, silent for a while, at last replied: "Ay, Doctor, it's no' boats that droons men; it's men that droons boats."

On One Condition.

He—Would you never consent to my filling your husband's place?
Faithful Widow—Yes, it that could bring back him back to me.

A BEAR IN HIS BED.

How Mr. Judge was More Startled Than he Thought he Would be.

A. S. Judge, brother-in-law of Pierre Lorillard, and general superintendent of the old Iron Pier at West Brighton, made a bet some time ago with Harry Sturdevant of the bathing pavilion that he would not be frightened at meeting any kind of an animal at any hour of the night on the dark pier.

Mr. Judge retired to his rooms over the pier about one o'clock this morning, when several friends thought they would test his remark about meeting animals.

Sturdevant went to an animal show and borrowed one of the performing bears. The party quietly took the animal up to Mr. Judge's room and turned it loose.

The room was dark, but the bear walked over to the bed where Judge was sleeping and began to paw at the clothes.

Soon the sleeper opened his eyes and, striking a match, was horrified to see the big beast in his room. He rushed down to the pier, wearing only his pajamas.

After parading the long pier for more than a hour trying to keep warm, Sturdevant and the party of jokers appeared. Judge was somewhat indignant at first, but when reminded of his bet he joined in the fun. The party went upstairs, and after a hard tussle managed to get the bear out of Judge's bed, where he was sleeping soundly.

A JAP WOMAN TOOK COREA. Empress Jingu Conquered the Country and Won Everlasting Renown.

It is to a woman that Japan owes her claim to Corea and to the naval supremacy of the eastern world. The first naval expedition which made Japan's "arms to shine beyond the seas," as the chroniclers of the day so proudly wrote, was planned and conducted by a woman, Empress Jingu, and it was directed against Corea. Empress Jingu, according to the Japanese chronicles, was young and beautiful and as pious and obedient to the gods as beautiful. As a reward for her fidelity Heaven inspired her with determination to conquer Corea. So Jingu, ordering a fleet to be collected, set out in 201 A. D. upon Japan's first naval expedition. The empress won a rich reward for her courage and energy, and Corea became tributary to Japan. Immediately on her return a child was born to the empress, who, when he grew up, became a great warrior, and is now worshipped under the name of Hachiman, god of war. In later times it became the fashion to attribute the Corea victory to the influence of the unborn child. All over Japan there are temples erected in honor of both Hachiman and Jingu, and as late as 1784, when the Japanese troops left for Formosa, many of them prayed for the special protection of Hachiman, god of soldiers.

Scared Them Off.

Friend—How is this? I thought you were to be called as a witness in that trial. Sharp—I got out of it. "Eh? Why, I heard that both sides were after you." "I scared them both off." "Cracky! How?" "Told 'em that if I was called I would tell the truth."

Uncertainty.

"She is determined to be a musician, but can't decide whether to make a specialty of the violin or the piano." "Has she no positive predilection for either?" "Oh, yes, but some of her friends think she looks better standing, and others that sitting is more becoming to her."

A Big Cable.

The new cable which has recently been laid across the Atlantic weights 650 pounds to the mile. This is the biggest of all the cables. Although this latest one is larger than the others, the fashion of making cables has not changed since 1851. More than £12,000,000 are now invested in Atlantic cables.

Their Misapprehension.

Citizen—I suppose you will agree with me that education is a necessity for our people?

The Defeated Candidate—You're dead right it is. If the blokes vote was my party's judges at the polls had a known the least thing about arithmetic I'd a been elected by a safe majority.

An Empress on Servants.

The Empress of Germany thinks that the root of the servant trouble lies in the fact that mistresses are too little concerned about their comforts. They ought, she says, to do everything they can to make the leisure hours of their servants as agreeable as possible.

In a certain northern parish a vicar was waited on by a deputation from the stall club, who pointed out the serious grievance they had against him as follows: "You have got a new curate; we wanted an Association chap; this man is a Rugby chap; we shall have to put him in goal, as he is no good anywhere else."

Wasps rank next to the higher classes of ants in point of insect intelligence.

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