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**AN INCIDENT IN CALIFORNIA.**

CALIFORNIA, in the earlier days of the gold fever, when the country swarmed with desperadoes from every clime; when dark and violent deeds were of daily, even hourly occurrence, and when the terrible vigilance committee, with its sudden hand and wild justice, was just beginning, to be felt throughout the land;—this the time, scene and opening of our story.

The log-house, at the door of which George Abbott sat at the close of one summer day, was of the rudest description; but it included several apartments, and was strongly built. Though situated only a few miles from San Francisco, it was nothing more or less than a rendezvous of thieves and cut-throats, and Abbott, the owner of the house, was their chief confederate, who disposed of their stolen property to mutual advantage. Abbott himself by no means bore the appearance of a desperado. He was a tall, slightly-built man of about twenty-five or thirty years of age, well-dressed, and scrupulously clean and neat. His pale face was almost beardless, and his thin, sharp features, and his cold, gray eyes, bespoke the mean, crafty, calculating villain, with none of the bluff assurance of the rough knave. It might easily be seen that his might be the brain to plan, but never his hand to execute a bold and bloody crime. The house, which was chiefly known as Abbott's Ranch, looked immediately down the sandy road leading to San Francisco, with the broad Pacific on the left. While Abbott was seated at his door a man came up the road. He was a powerfully-built man, coarsely clothed, with low, brutish features, full of mingled ferocity and cunning. He nodded to the proprietor of the ranch and went inside. Abbott rose and followed him.

"Quick, Abbott, give me some brandy!" exclaimed the man with an oath, at the same time seating himself at a small table in the large dingy room.

"Anything in the wind to-day, Jack?" asked Abbott, as he placed the bottle of liquor and a tumbler before the man.

"Not much," was the reply, "only the infernal vigilance committee are beginning to watch some of our gang. Brady was told to vamoose to-day, and Bill White told me that a number were looking after him pretty closely. By thunder! if it comes to this, it may be my turn next. I am getting shaky; and don't care how soon I quit this place."

"Well, Jack," said the other, sinking his voice almost to a whisper, "there is no need of either you or me staying here much longer, you know."

"But when are you going to get things fixed?"

"In two days all will be ready. I have made all the necessary arrangements."

"Good! It will just be a jump on board the steamer, and away we go to New York."

"Precisely; but you won't breathe a word?"

"Do you think I want my throat cut? Why, they would kill me as quick as they would you. What will be the swag?"

"A cool two hundred thousand dollars—that is after we get through with the newly-arrived jeweler, which I have mapped out to be done to-night. In an hour or so I shall start for Stockton, to make arrangements regarding you and me; you can finish the jeweler while I am gone. I will be back to-morrow, and will meet you here. Of course I can get up something to keep the boys away from us, so that we can have the coast clear for our final sweep. We must be sly, for the gang are as full of suspicious as an egg is of meat; it is time they were dropping in here; I think I hear them coming up the road now."

One by one, on foot and on horseback the different members of the gang began to arrive at the rendezvous, until in a short time, as the lights were brought in by the man Jack, the room contained upward of twenty men of the most villainous description. As the drinking continued the oaths became more frequent and the personal epithets more violent and abusive. Abbott did not drink himself, but moved about the room with more than his wonted taciturnity. At length he signified his intention to go.

"And where are you going to?" asked Bill White, a burly ruffian who was partially intoxicated.

"I go to Stockton on business," said Abbott, sharply.

"Smash my crust if I understand it no-how," said Bill; "if the old man as keeps all the swag is to tramp around the country just as he pleases, why, I want to know what it means."

Abbott did not turn pale, but his heart was not easy. Jack, his friend, however, was quite ready with his diversion.

"Keep your minds easy, you maudling fools!" he said, angrily; "who is it but Captain George that puts up more than half an hour jobs for us? And who are you, that you question him?"

This sentiment was echoed by a number of the gang, and Abbott felt somewhat easier.

"Gentlemen, you are all primed for the jeweler; he quitted the steamer yesterday. I have never seen him; and have been unable to learn his name; but enough of you

have seen the old man to know him when he stops here to-night at twelve, on his way to the back country. Jack knows all about it, and you can certainly manage everything before my return to-morrow night. You will all be busy on the big thing I have worked up for you at Benicia. Jack will attend to everything about the ranch here in my absence. When you hear of the result of my present mission to Stockton, I know you will not question my motives."

"No," muttered Jack, in an undertone, "for by that time you will be so far away that you would not hear them if they do."

Abbott, although he perceived with alarm that the grumblers were daily increasing in number and boldness, had thus far maintained his power over them by the uniform success of his schemes of villainy, and his present little speech was hailed with considerable applause. After bidding them good-night he quitted the house and proceeded rapidly down the road for the five-mile walk to San Francisco.

The twilight was rapidly deepening into darkness when Abbott was once more on the road from San Francisco to the robbers' ranch. Reaching the door he found it locked, but at his knock it was speedily opened by Jack, in another moment Abbott and Jack were in the dimly-lighted and deserted interior. Jack had been doing little else but drink during his master's absence.

"Well, Captain George, what's the news?"

"Everything going smoothly, Jack, I have worked up the thing nicely. The Uncle Sam quits the wharf at ten to-morrow, sooner than I expected, but I suppose you are ready?"

"You may bet your life on that, captain. I shan't feel easy until I see the blue waters between us and the shore."

"But how about the jeweler?"

"The job was done as clean as a whistle! He came along at midnight. Between you and me it was the neatest job we have ever done—two thousand dollars in dust, besides a casket of gems?"

"Good!" exclaimed Abbott; "How did the boys act?"

"Prime! Bill White had a little row, but otherwise there was no trouble. Here are the stones. I suppose they are worth a pile."

Jack opened a strong box and produced a metal casket highly polished, with the key attached.

"Superb!" exclaimed Abbott, turning over the contents, which consisted of rings, pins and necklaces, and other combinations of precious stones and metals. "Why, Jack, they are worth a cool ten thousand at least."

Suddenly he paused. His hand shook. A paleness more deathly than its accustomed hue overspread his countenance.

"Was this ring in the casket?" he exclaimed, holding up an elegant chased gold ring in the form of a serpent with ruby eyes.

"No," replied the other; "that was taken from the finger."

"Strange!" muttered Abbott, speaking to himself in an absent way, but still white and trembling.

"But after all, it may have been stolen." Then, after thinking deeply for a few moments: "Jack!" exclaimed he, suddenly, "I must see the face of the jeweler."

"See it! You are crazy!" cried the other. "The old man is planted."

"Where?"

"At the foot of the big oak, over there in the timber."

"Jack, I must see his face!"

"Don't be a fool!"

"I am not one. Humor me this once, like a good fellow. Bring a lantern and tools. We will have plenty of time to return and pack up. Quick, now!"

The man muttered something about the unreasonableness of the thing, but nevertheless got the requisite implements and then passed out of the house, followed by Abbott. When they came to the foot of the large oak, that stood out grandly in the spare forest, and looked far over the sandy tract they had just traveled, Jack sat down the lantern, and fell to work with the pick. The ground was loose, but it was mingled with fragments of flinty rock, and the work was so hard that the perspiration fell from his brow in streams. At length, with assistance of the spade, a considerable excavation was effected. The man sprang into it. With many a curse he lifted a dark, heavy object partially above the surface. Then leaping out of the pit, he grasped the lantern. Abbott had been waiting quietly, out his breast was the theatre of a tragedy of alternating hope and despair. He staggered back as the bright rays of the lantern flooded the still features of the murdered man. A sharp cry broke from his lips. Jack gazed at him in mingled awe and astonishment.

"What ails you?" he asked.

George Abbott buried his face in his hands. His form swayed to and fro in a whirlwind of agony and dread. He dared not look again; for he recognized in the haggard, lifeless form before him his own father whom he had quitted years before in the land across the seas, and whom he had murdered—for it was he who had consigned him to the weapon of the assassin. He turned from the spot and fled, never stopping to look back. On, on he reached the bank of a precipice; with a shriek that echoed far and wide, he fell, a shapeless mass, on the ragged rocks below.

**KENTUCKY JOKES.**

IT was during the Presidential campaign which resulted in the election of Buchanan, that the writer of the appended sketch, in company with three other politicians, rode from Paducah to Boston, Ky., in a hack. They were bound for one of the old-fashioned barbecues, and he tells what happened on the way thus:

The joking Judge M. was one of the party, and the bottles that peeped out from the baskets under the seat seemed to improve the sparkle of his wit, the flavor of his jokes and the music of his laugh, until the happy contagion even reached the driver.

Our fun was at its highest when, turning a curve in the road, we saw down its hot dusty stretch, a solitary ox cart, with its owner perched upon what proved to be bags of corn. As a kind of advance guard, a great, ugly, brindle dog came trotting along in advance, and attracted by our noise, he threw himself in an attitude of defiance, determined to dispute our advance. With his savage growl, red eyes and erect bristles, he indeed presented a formidable appearance. Judge M. could not let such an opportunity for a practical joke pass.—Said he:

"I'll bet the drinks of the day that I can run that dog off the road."

"Done," said we.

Stopping our hack he got out, and threw the skirts of his "swallow-tailed" coat over his shoulder, stuck his old slouch hat on the back of his head, and going down on "all fours," he scampered toward the dog with the most frightful yells, reminding one of the fable of the ass in the lion's skin. This was too much for the dog, and, howling with fright, he took to the brush.

The oxen also saw the fearful monster coming down the road, and with one wild bellow they took to the brush, and with their tails standing straight out behind. Away they went, with wheels bouncing in the air, bags of corn bursting open, and spilling their contents in a continuous drill.

"Whoa, Blaze! Whoa, Ball! O, Lordy! what shall I do?" came from the frightened man on the cart, now grabbing a cart-pole, then catching at a bag of corn as it went over the side.

This kind of performance couldn't last long without a change for better or worse, as the oxen went tearing down the steep bank of a little creek and overturned everything in the water, about waist deep. One ox getting loose, went up the opposite bank and soon disappeared, while the other covered down, piteously bellowing as we came up to the scene of disaster. There stood the poor man in water to his waist, his wagon overturned, and half his corn soaking in the water, while the other half was scattered in the woods. He looked scared and pitiful, and said:

"O, Lordy, stranger, don't never do that any more. I'm ruined!"

It was a splendid success, that joke, and there stood the Judge holding on to a sapling and laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks.

We took up a subscription for the poor fellow. The Judge headed the list with an amount nearly covering the damages, and we, added to it until we left the man in thankfulness that he had sold his corn so well. At the barbecue, the Judge bet all his money on a little horse-race, and lost, and from that and the effects of his drinks at our expense, we had to carry him to our hack on a barn door. On his way home he insisted upon standing on his head.

**Curing Him.**

"It's no place for a woman." So said a young husband in Lawrence, Ill., to his wife a few months ago, when she, tired of staying alone, took her three little children to the billiard room and took a seat by his side. "It's disgraceful," said he, looking daggers at her. "I know it," continued the injured wife, "and you have borne the disgrace so long, my dear, that I am determined henceforth to share it with you," and she took out her knitting work and settled down for the evening.

Her husband persisted in urging her to go home. "I will go," said she, "when you go, and not before." He was evidently a little disconcerted in his playing, and went home a little earlier than usual. The next evening the programme was all acted over again. This time the young husband went home a little earlier than before, and carried the baby himself. This was the last time he was ever seen in the billiard room.

There are eight pin factories in the United States, whose annual production is 2,000,000 packs, each pack containing 3,660 pins; a total of 6,720,000,000 pins. One manufacturer's agent in Boston, sells from 700 to 1,000 cases of pins per week, each case containing 672,000 pins. The factory which he represents turns out eight tons of pins per week. Hair-pins are jobbed by the case. There is but one factory in this country that produces them. They turn out fifty tons per month. The machine cuts and bends the wire making 360 hair pins per minute, ready for japanning. Yankee pins are saleable in nearly every city of the world, and the production and the consumption increase each year about ten per cent.

**COMMUNICATED.  
Proceedings of the Teachers Association of Buffalo Township, Pa.**

The association convened at the Centre School House, on Saturday, the 27th day of January, 1872, and organized by electing Mr. James E. Stephens, President, and Mr. Edward R. Debray, Secretary. The subject of orthography was then taken up, and a class drill conducted in it by Mr. Michael H. Grubb. After which Mr. Samuel E. Bucke took charge of a class in reading. Mr. Bucke called the attention of the teachers, to the importance of having the pupils understand the difference between the high pitch of the voice, and the low tone, and, also the same in regard to the low pitch, and the soft or subdued tone. The class then read several selections, after which a general discussion on reading ensued, participated in by Messrs. J. E. Stephens, J. P. Long, E. R. Debray, M. H. Grubb, J. R. Bucke, L. E. McGinness, and others, and from their enthusiasm it is apparent that this much neglected subject has received a new impetus in Buffalo township. The subject of Penmanship was next introduced by Mr. James P. Long, who spoke of the importance of a strict classification in writing, and the advantages resulting therefrom, such as having the whole class write at the same time, thus creating a spirit of emulation among the pupils of the class, who are all writing the same copy, and will naturally strive to excel each other. He spoke at length, giving instructions in regard to correcting errors of the position and work of the pupil. It is evident from the manner in which he spoke that he has given the subject of Penmanship much thought. The subject of Geography being next on the programme, it was opened by Mr. Isaiah E. Stephens, who gave his method of teaching Geography, which is to begin with the immediate vicinity of the schoolhouse, or the child's home, and thus expanding as the intellect expands, until the whole globe is embraced. Mr. Stephens, also advocates the use of the outline maps, conducting oral lessons upon them for the benefit of the pupils whose parents either neglect, or are unable to purchase the necessary text books on Geography for them. Mr. Stephens, remarks show him to be a conscientious teacher, and one who zealously works for the permanent good of all his pupils. After a short discussion upon Geography, participated in by all the teachers present, the association adjourned to meet in two weeks.

E. R. DEBRAY, Sec.

**The Division of Time.**

In dividing time into convenient quantities the sun plays an important part. One revolution of the earth around the sun constitutes a year, the grand basis of our calendar, and modern science has attained to such accuracy that it gives, as the exact length of a year, 365 days 5 hours, 48 minutes, 49 seconds and seven tenths of a second; which is pretty close calculation for the movements of such a large body as our mother earth. The odds and ends of time over 365 days are carefully gathered up for future use, so that when enough has accumulated to make twenty-four hours—once in four years—we get another day to the year. And still this is not exact, for a day every fourth year is too much by 11 minutes, 10 seconds, and three tenths of a second. In 1582 these surplus seconds had well proved that "many littles makes a good deal," for Pope Gregory found that they had amounted to ten days, and ascertaining what would be the correct thing for the future, decreed that the extra day hitherto reckoned in leap year should be dropped three times every four hundred years. All this is rather curious, but it makes no practical difference with our own lives and deeds, only in the lesson taught, that small and seemingly trifling as are the seconds of time, they, by their steady, never-ceasing progress, slowly and surely count out the lives and actions of all created beings, and no moral power can stay the hours as they pass.

**Lapland Glue.**

The bows of the Laplanders are composed of two pieces of wood glued together; one of them of birch, which is flexible, and the other of the fir of the marshes which is stiff, in order that the bow, when bent, may not break; and when unbent, it may not bend. When these two pieces are bent, all the points of contact endeavor to disunite themselves; and to prevent this, the Laplanders employ the following cement. They take the skin of the largest perch (it is probable that eel-skins would answer the same purpose), and having dried them, moisten them in cold water until they are so soft that they may be freed from the scales, which they throw away. They then put four or five of these skins in a reindeer's bladder, or they wrap them up in the soft bark of the birch tree, in such a manner that water cannot touch them, and place them, thus covered, in a pot of boiling water, with a stone above them, to keep them at the bottom. When they have boiled about an hour, take them from the bladder or bark, and they are then found to be soft or viscons. In this state, they employ them for gluing together the two pieces of their bows, which they strongly compress, and tie up until the glue is well dried. These pieces cover afterward separate.