A SMUGGLER'S LAST TRIP.

THE TURNING POINT FOR A YOUNG MAN ON THE BORDER.

It Happened in the Days When Smuggling from Canada Into Northern New York Was a Respectable Occupation—An Innkeeper's Hidden Tunnel—An Exciting Drive at Night.

In the smoking compartment of a Montreal sleeper bound for New York one night last week were half a dozen men discussing politics, the service of the road, and the possible annexation of Canada. As the train ran across the line into the United States one of the men looked out of the window with the interest of a man seeking familiar scenes. There was just light enough for him to see that the long ditch-marked farms of Canada, with their stone houses, had been left behind, and that the less picturesque farms of the States stretched out from the track. Settling himself back in his seat and including the other smokers in his audience he said:

"This country hasn't changed in twenty-five years, except for the introduction of this railroad. I was born in this neighborhood, and although it sounds like a queer admission, up to the time I was 22 years old I spent much of my time in smuggling whiskey, brandy, and alcohol across the lines. For various reasons there isn't much of this sort of thing done now. Probably the chief reason is that it doesn't pay, and then again, it is not looked upon as respectable. My father was engaged in the same business before me, and several of our neighbors, good churchmen, were in it up to their eyes, and it is not strange that my conscience didn't begin to work on this subject until one of the respected citizens of a near-by town was convicted and sent to prison for smuggling. The Government made an example of him, and although all of his acquaintances regretted it at the time, it has proved a good thing.

"Didn't the customs officers interfere? Well, some of them did conscientiously when they got a chance, and there were plenty of them all along this line who only made a bluff of interfering that deceived no one except the Government. I knew one officer who was in the business himself. As a young man I thought that smuggling was all right, and it never occurred to me that I was a thief. I haven't done any of it since. Coming through this region has brought back some of the old experiences. There were then, and I have heard that there are now, many stores built along the line, so that one-half should be in Canada and the other in New York State. This made it easy to smuggle in small articles, but at the same time the customs officers had to watch these stores closely or lose their jobs.

"I worked a better scheme than that. When I was 16 years old my father, whose farm was in the neighborhood, gave me a fast mare. She was very fast for those days, though she wouldn't be worth talking about now. I built a light two-wheeled gig for her, and I defied every officer along the line to catch me. They all knew that I was smuggling, but none of them could get the proof. My method was simple. I would leave home about dusk in my gig and drive leisurely across the line to a little stone hotel, where I received my liquor. The place was known to be a depot for smugglers, and suspicion was always directed toward any man who frequented it. The proprietor was a French-Canadian and as shifty as an Indian. On the ground floor of his house was a dingy dining room and opening into it a very respectable barroom for Lower Canada. The bar itself was of mahogany, and back of it stood an imposing array of ale kegs. The proprietor's name was Dumas, and his imagination was as fertile as that of his illustrious namesake. It pleased him to fool the customs officers and he did it in many different ways. Dumas kept his liquors in long, oval-shaped kegs in his cellar. There was no reason why he shouldn't have as big a stock on hand as he chose, and whenever inquisitive customs officers came over the line on spying expeditions Dumas was ready to take them into his cellar and exhibit his stock. Not until five years after I had left the smuggling business did the officers discover that one big cask in Dumas's cellar was simply a blind that concealed the entrance to a tunnel that ran to the barn thirty or forty feet back from the house.

"That was the keynote of the smuggling scheme. Time and again I have sat in Dumas's barroom drinking ale with fellows whom I knew to be spotters sent to keep tabs on me, while Dumas's man, Madore, has softly rolled my keg of liquor through the tunnel and into the barn. My gig was fitted up with three heavy straps, so arranged that a keg could be held by them close up under the seat. By slipping the straps clear to one side I could easily drop the keg if I were closely pressed. When everything had been arranged Madore would come into the barroom whistling. That was my cue to order my horse hitched up. When that was done I would saunter out to the bar, get into my gig and drive out by a back road. Once started I knew that no customs officer could catch me. The customs spotters who knew that Dumas kept his liquors in his cellar, and who had watched me all the time and had seen nothing taken from the cellar, concluded that I had been bluffed out. Time and again I have taken that same mare a long dark ride and I have taken to land my stuff safely. If the officers decided to guard a certain road I had good friends who would tip me off, and sometimes I have been forced to drive ten or fifteen miles out of my way to evade them. One night when two of them got after me and my horse was tired out I saw that I was bound to be overhauled. I drove into the ditch, slipped my straps and dropped the keg, and then I jogged along waiting to be overtaken. On came the two officers with their horse blowing heavily.

"'Halt, now,' shouted one of them, 'or we will shoot. We've got you this time.'

"'What do you mean?' I answered, stopping my horse.

"The officers drew up alongside, examined my gig and pockets and then the spokesman said:

"'That's all right. You can go ahead. We were just fooling.'

"I told them that they could go ahead and I would follow when I got good and ready. Off they drove swearing at themselves and at me, and after so narrowly escaping hearing I drove back, picked up my keg and landed it safely.

"The Government knew well enough that there was smuggling going on up here, and they sent along a special agent to spy it out. He was a smooth one, and he nearly got me. This fellow—his name was Dart—went direct to Dumas's place and said that he had got into a little trouble in the States, and he wanted Dumas to take care of him until it blew over. That flattered Dumas's pride, and the old man took him in and made much of him. Dart and Dumas became great cronies. They went duck hunting together, they fished and drank together. As soon as I saw Dart I suspected him, and he wasn't slow in guessing what brought me to see Dumas so regularly. Dart tried to pump me by being hail fellow and by cursing the customs officers. I was only a boy but I wasn't so easily caught as all that. I defended the customs men and condemned smuggling. Dart just winked his left eye in a knowing sort of way. Fortunately, as it turned out, Dumas didn't give away his tunnel. He admitted to Dart that his place was a headquarters for smugglers, but he didn't commit himself any further.

"I had made three successful trips while Dart was staying with Dumas, and I guess that my success had made me a bit careless. My fourth trip was the last smuggling expedition that I ever engaged in, and it came so near being my finish in all ways that it thoroughly frightened me. It was a cold, nasty night in October, and I reached Dumas's place about 8 o'clock. Dart was sitting in the bar, and I joined him. We drank more than the usual quantity of ale, and when Madore came in whistling to indicate that my keg was strapped on the gig I said:

"'Well, Dart, I'm going just as soon as Madore can hitch up.'

"'I think I'll take a little horseback ride myself,' he answered, 'and see if I can't clear my head of this ale.'

"This disturbed me, for I couldn't say anything for fear he might get on to the right track and suspect my gig. I have since thought that Dart suspected that I picked up my goods somewhere along the road, and he expected to detect me in the act. I hurried out of the barn and drove out just as Dart came out of the barroom to get his horse saddled.

"Three miles down the road and just after I had crossed the line I heard a horse galloping behind me. I knew it was Dart, and that he would overhaul me unless I could reach a fork a mile ahead and confuse him as to which road I had taken. I whipped up my mare and we flew. As I looked over her head into the darkness I saw a light that was evidently a lantern just about where the forks of the road were. Dart had cornered me. I knew it. As soon as I saw that lantern I knew that revenue officers were with it. I couldn't slip my keg because the straps were tangled up. In an instant I had made up my mind what to do. There was a fairly level field on my left with no fence on the road. Without stopping my mare's speed I turned into it. My gig bumped clean off the ground. It was rough riding, but I realized that it was my only chance. The noise that I made going across that field warned Dart and the other officers what had happened, and they yelled to me to stop. I didn't, and then followed a dozen or more shots from their revolvers. The balls whistled over my head. I don't know how I got to the woods. I found a score of old wood roads, and selecting one of them, I walked my horse in and waited. I heard those fellows beating the bush around me for two hours. I had slipped the keg and concealed it, but I didn't want to be captured, even though they had no evidence against me. The officers gave it up, and I drove home at daylight minus the keg. My mare was used up, and a friend of mine tipped me off that the game was up. Dart was a special agent, and he was going to ring me until he got evidence enough to arrest me. I thought it all over, and I concluded that if I stayed so near the Canadian line the temptation to smuggle a bit would be so strong that I should weaken, and probably end by being captured. I had saved a snug little sum, and with it I went to New York. I have lived there since, and I am heartily ashamed of my early smuggling.

"Dart is connected with the Secret Service, and a few years ago I met him in the Hoffman House in New York. Dumas's place had been closed, and Dart and I after we had drunk together in remembrance of Dumas's old ale, said:

"'Were you smuggling or not the night we chased you into the fields?'

"'That question is outlawed,' I answered, 'and you didn't catch me. Let's talk about something else.'

"'Coming over this railroad, where I once drove with my smuggled goods, has brought it all back to me. That's all.'"

TRAVELLERS' ELYSIUM.

Its Location Is Not Made Public for Reasons Which Will Be Understood.

From the St. Louis Republic.

The pilgrim alighted on the depot platform of a small Ohio town shortly before midnight. A hack stood near by—a four-wheeler—and the tired traveller was soon en route to what the driver assured him was the best hotel in town. When the carriage stopped the visitor pulled half a dollar from his pocket and tendered it.

"No, thank you, sir," said the Jehu. "Pleased to have accommodated you."

Three minutes later the man had registered.

"Want to go to your room right away, Mr. Smith?" queried the clerk.

"Yes."

"Well, say," said the clerk, with a mysterious wink, "how would a good drink of whiskey strike you before you go to bed?"

"If it's a drink of good whiskey I think it might be the proper thing," was Mr. Smith's answer.

The clerk took one with his guest, "just to be sociable," and the somewhat astonished Mr. Smith retired.

Next morning Mr. Smith arose with the sparrows, but the clerk was with him.

"Morning, Mr. Smith," said he. "Hope you slept well. Just going into breakfast? Say"—another confidential wink—"what do you think of a nice cocktail for an appetizer?"

Mr. Smith, who believes in picking up all the gold nuggets on which he stubs his toes while walking life's pathway, yielded assent. He also wondered what kind of a game he had discovered.

At noon the obsequious clerk was at the dining room door.

"Would a bottle of beer fit in with your dinner, Mr. Smith?"

The now thoroughly astonished Smith simply nodded.

That afternoon he left town. His bill was simply for bed, breakfast, and dinner. The whiskey, cocktail, and beer were not in evidence.

At the depot he was engaged in conversation by a somewhat inebriated individual who was proclaiming in vociferous tones the beauties and glories of the town.

"M'fr'nd, where did you stop?"

Mr. Smith told him.

"You sh'd been at ozzer house," was the emphatic answer. "Everything free. Flowed with liqu'r."

Mr. Smith thought he had done pretty well in the spirituous line and said so.

Then the ticket agent smiled and said:

"If those darned fool hotel keepers don't quit fighting they'll bust themselves and make the brewers independently rich."

The name of this elysium is therefore suppressed out of consideration for the heirs and assigns of the hotel men.

Why the Whipping Post Law in Virginia Was Repealed.

From the Boston Herald.

RICHMOND, Va., Dec. 16.—A bill has been prepared and will at once be introduced in the Virginia Legislature to restore the whipping post. This obsolete evidence of barbarity existed in this State for many years prior to 1881. Its repeal was due to the fact that under its operations a young and pretty white girl was flogged for the theft of a pair of shoes. The story was published, and such a cry went up all over the State that the law was soon wiped off the statute books. It was intended for the benefit of the colored population, and came to ignominious and speedy death when a young white girl became its victim.

JUST HAD GOLD TO FIRE!

TALE OF A SAILORMAN OF A GALE IN THE SOUTH SEA.

It Blew Him to an Island Where There Were Savages Who Fired at the Vessels with Bullets of Gold—Then It Blew Him Away—He Would Like to Find That Island.

No," said the man, sitting listlessly on the pier, as he puffed away languidly enough at a pipe of peculiar shape. "No, I ain't got no heart to splice myself to hope and go to the Klondike country. Nor no other country, for that matter, except I git a job that takes me there and pays me for it by the month regular. Co rse, I understand how a man might fall down a well and come up with a bucketful of gold, but I ain't the man. That kind of luck is meant for somebody else. Once, though, there wasn't any kind of a snap that I wouldn't undertake; but since the setback we got in the Pacific ten years ago next March I ain't had no wind in my sails to speak of and I don't so much as keep a lookout now to see which way we're goin'. If there's land ahead, all right; and if there ain't, all right just the same.'

The man sitting on a bag of peanuts adjoining the speaker asked a question.

"Didn't you never hear of that?" said the man in response. "I thought everybody knew what a blow I got out there. Of course I'll tell you if you'd like to hear. It happened down in the Pacific somewhere, about 150° west, 20° south, where the sea's as full of islands as a yeller dog is of fleas, and, as I said, just ten years ago come next March. I wasn't in the sailor business exactly, being a trader on the seas instid of a navigator, and, havin' a friend in Auckland, New Zealand, who liked my style, he fixed me up with a sailing vessel and a crew of ten men and a skipper, and we went sailing around among the islands of the archipelago looking for bargains, as it were.

"I guess we'd been splashin' around in the water for five or six weeks or such a matter, and doin' like Riley did with the hotel when one night the weather thickened on us, and by midnight there was a wind a-blowin' that would take the hair off of the head of a barrel, and we were skinnin' before it like a scared dog. By morning there wasn't any land in sight, something that don't happen often among all them islands scattered everywhere, and our boat was makin' about forty miles a minute, but she was goin' round in circles mostly, and tearin' up the water worse than a bull in a chiny shop.

"Along in the afternoon the wind laid down a bit, and when we sighted an island off our weather bow we kind of beat up to it, or whatever them sailor fellers called it, and we got in under the lee of it and found a little harbo that looked like it might afford us enough protection to make some repairs after the wind had got done having fun with us. There was a chance, too, that we might find a bargain in something layin' around waiting for our arrival.

"It was dark by the time we got in and we couldn't tell much what kind of a place it was except that it was rocky and mountainous with a smell like a dead volcano, and it seemed to be big enough to accommodate a good many inhabitants. We anchored about three hundred yards from shore, and though there was still more wind than we cared to have, it was not so bad but that we could keep the schooner where we wanted her.

"There wasn't any signs of life on the island that we could see, but there was plenty of good water and nice fruit, and the boat that we sent off as soon as we got settled brought back not only fruit and water, but an animal that looked as near like one of our rabbits as anything could look, and that tasted the same way. We had about got ready to turn in, say at 9 o'clock that night, when we heard voices of people on shore yelling in some queer language that none of us understood. The people didn't seem to like us bein' there, though, that was plain enough, and we begun to send word to them that we were all right, and if they didn't want us we would get out as soon as the weather would permit. It didn't sound that way to them, likely, for at midnight they had filled the shore and had fires burning all along. We could see they were black and that they didn't wear any more clothes than was needed, and that they were armed with bows and arrows and spears and a few old muskets like most of them natives have. The sea was too rough for them to try to get at us in boats in the dark, so they took it out in slingin' stump speeches at us from the shore.

"That's what they slung at first, but when we began to yell back at the howlin' devils they changed their tactics, and along about 3 o'clock in the morning they let off one or two of their old muskets with a roar that sounded like war times. We give them the laugh on this, but pretty soon they got the range, and the first thing we got serious about was a shot that went through our first mate and buried itself in the foremast. They were ounce balls that were comin' our way over the waves, and every time one of them hit the ship it sounded with a dull thud that meant business clean down to the bottom of the sea. After the first fifteen or twenty shots, I don't think they ever missed our boat again, hitting either in the hull or the rigging, and six of our men got a bullet through them somewhere. We got out on deck with our guns and banged away ten shots to their one, but they had the whole island to hide in, while our boat was the only thing they could hit except wind and water, so they counted more than we did.

"All the time the shooting was going on our skipper was trying to get the ship headed around so's we could escape as soon as light came, for we would soon be in the soup, we knew, if them natives ever got their boats out and rowed around to the unarmed side crippled, and it was a hard job dodging bullets and working ship, but we managed somehow, and just as soon as there was a bit of light to show us how to keep off the rocks we caught the wind that was still blowing a gale and let her go right out to the open. We went like lightning, too, and the gale got to be a hurricane, and we lost three men trying to do something with the sails, and then we lost the sails. The mate died of his wound, and so did four more of the crew and that got us down to hard pan and the wind still a-blowin' the stuffin' out of the sea and scatterin' it all over the ship and the sky and the bosom of the ocean. I never seen anything like it, and the skipper said if it kept up none of us wouldn't ever see anything like it again. Two days later everything on deck had been blowed to the four corners of the compass and there wasn't anybody left but the skipper and me and the cook, a Chinyman just ornery enough to be the only man not to get hurt.

"The third day we sighted a ship, and when we put up our signals for help the ship bore down on us. There wasn't anything to be done but for us to get out our lifeboat then and pull over to the vessel that was there to save us, and we done so as soon as we could. But it was an unlucky day for the skipper, for as he got into the boat he lost his balance and went headforemost into the water. I tried to make the Chinyman go in after him, but the heathen wouldn't, and as I couldn't swim I dasen't, so the poor skipper was lost. Thet left the Chinyman and me, and we got safe aboard the other ship, where we had good care.

"We didn't loose our ship, though, for the strangest reason of all, repair itself owing to the blow, and, as the wind settled that night, she lay to to fix up a bit. The next day, seein' our old schooner bestin' around in a mighty lonesome way, I asked the Captain if I couldn't have a boat and a crew to go over to her and get out my valuables. He let me have it, of course, and when we got on the schooner's deck and begun to look around we found something that I haven't recovered from yet. I noticed first in a broken timber a piece of yellerish lookin' metal that seemed kind of natural, and, goin' closer to examine it, I found it wasn't nothing more or less than pure gold. At first I couldn't understand how it ever got there, but a little further study showed me that it was a bullet, and that it had been shot there by them dern natives back at that island.

"That put an idea into my noddle, and, not sayin' a word to anybody, I slipped around and found another bullet hole in the stump of the mast that was left. I dug into it with a hatchet and found another gold bullet. Then I chased for another one and found it lower down in the mast, and soon dug out my third ounce. By this time the men with me got onto what I was doing, and made me tell them what I had found. You ought to have seen them after that. It was worse than a rush to the Klondike, for, in a minute, every man had out his knife chasin' bullet holes all over that deck. They dug out all they could find and then went over the sides and got out all there was in the side of the ship that had been next to the shore. I was doing my share at it, and as I had the hatchet I could do faster work and get out something like thirty-five bullets, the rest of them getting from twelve to twenty apiece. In all about 150 ounces was dug out of the wood, for the bullets run some heavier than an ounce apiece. The worth of the lot was $3,000 when we finally got to San Francisco where we turned it into the mint.

"We got back to the other ship as fast as we could, and I told the Captain about our find and what it meant to us all if we could get to the island and open up negotiations with the natives. It was a plain case that they had gold as most other people had iron, and they used it for bullets, and that night they must have shot away $5,000 worth, counting what went into our timbers and the men that we lost. Nobody could tell how much they had fired at game and other natives all their lives, and there wasn't any reason for believing that the island wasn't full of it and the fool natives didn't know any more what it was than to trade it off to us by the boat load for any trinkets we might take along with us. It was a bonanza and no mistake, and the Captain got as enthusiastic as I was, while the men were plumb crazy.

"But wh t's the use talking? I wasn't born with a gold island in my mouth, and when it comes to getting back to that one, I couldn't pilot a ship there worth a cent. We sailed around looking for the dern thing for a month, when the Captain couldn't stay no longer and then we went on to San Francisco and got a ship and come back on the quiet to king for it again. No good; no good. We just couldn't find it. I made another try for it two years later, and then I went off on a three years' trading trip through China, and I just got into New York four days ago. I ain't got no heart any more, but I ain't old enough yet to quit, and if I live till next year I'm going to make another try. It's got to be the same thing though. No Klondike or any other strange gods. That island is for me or I'll die lookin' for it."

THE FIRE OF AGUIRRE.

A WILL-O'-THE-WISP DREADED BY VENEZUELAN PLAINSMEN.

An Englishman Who Was Hypnotized by It and Nearly Drawn Into a Flood—Superstitions About the Phenomenon—Accidents That the Plainsmen Attribute to Sorcery.

"It was 10 o'clock of a moonless night that Domingo Verato, the llanero, or plainsman, and I started from camp to ride the last ten miles of our round," said Edgar Maystrom, who for several years was engaged in exporting cattle and hides from Venezuela. "It was the time of year when the annual inundation of the Orinoco and its tributary valleys was to be expected, and on the broad ranges of Diego Feres and his neighbors along the Apure River, all hands for weeks past had been in the saddle driving the cattle from the river bottoms and savannas to the higher plains where they would be safe from the freshet. We had gathered all the cattle we could find late at the close of this day, and had eaten our supper of broiled beef and tortillas cooked at a campfire. Then, while the other llaneros drove the stock toward the mountains, Verato and I rode for the great bend of the river to see if there were any signs yet of high water.

"We had gone perhaps half the distance when I saw off on the right, at about the level of my eyes, a ball of flame which, if it had been on the ocean, I should have taken to be the starboard light of a ship. It was red of color, and in the darkness that shrouded the plain it could not be told whether it was near or far away. I called my companion's attention to it, but he muttered something that I could not understand, and sheered his horse a little from the light. As we rode on for a while without speaking, I noticed that the light kept abreast of us. I spoke again.

"'What is it, Domingo?' I asked. 'Let's ride over and see.'

"As I spoke I turned my horse's head toward the flame. The llanero laid his hand on my bridle rein.

"'Señor, in the name of Jesus and Mary and Joseph, ride straight on,' he said, swerving from the light as he quickened his horse's pace. 'Do you not know? That light is the fire of Aguirre.'

"I had not been years in the pampas country without having heard of the fire of Aguirre—the ignis-fatuus that moves and shifts about the Venezuelan pampas, appearing sometimes as a distant light, and again as a ball of living fire in the traveller's path. Llaneros who have been bold enough to approach this flame assert that near at hand there may be seen in it the burning entrails of Aguirre—Lopé de Aguirre, the tyrant, the discoverer of the upper Amazon, and oppressor of Spaniard and Indian in his rulership of New Granada. Now, the llaneros believe his soul is condemned to wander on the pampas wrapped in flame, and this roving fire is an evil omen. Domingo Verato, my companion, was a brave man, whom I had seen face wild bull and jaguar without flinching, and he bore on his body the scars of more than one knife duel, but plainly he was uneasy in mind at the sight of this light that had come into view, and would have liked to be somewhere else.

"'No, señor, do not venture near the light, but pray that it depart,' he said, as our horses loped over the plain. 'Have you heard of what befell Abran Lostando, who last year rode toward the flame of Aguirre thinking that it was a camp fire of his fellows where he could find warmth and food? He suspected nothing of the reality until his horse stumbled in a badger hole at the edge of a gully and they rolled to the bottom together. The horse's leg was broken and Abran limped home with his shoulder wrenched and two ribs broken so that he did not ride again for three months. Worse still was the fate of Antonio Lestro in my father's day. He was a daredevil who feared nothing and one night during the *rodeo* when the fire of Aguirre appeared he rode toward it saying to his comrades that he would not return until he had overtaken the light. Horse and rider never were seen by mortal eye again; only the tracks of the horse leaving into a broad pool of the Apure. Crocodiles? Caribes? The fiend in person it may have been! *Quien sabe!* There were plenty of ways for his ending once he had followed the evil light where it took him.'

"I do not account myself in the least superstitious, and the talk of Verato only served to excite my curiosity and make me desirous to investigate the cause of this mysterious light. In northern forests I had seen the phosphorescent glow of punk-wood in timber swamps and the vaporous lights that float sometimes above marshes. The light that I now saw was intenser and brighter, more resembling those balls of fire which high masts in latitudes appear at the masthead and yardarms of ships—the corpus sancti lights, or, as sailors call them, corposants, which usually are assumed to be of electrical origin. I thought I saw a chance to make the investigation I desired, when, with an exclamation that was an oath if not a prayer, the llanero brought his horse to a standstill with a jerk at the bridle that nearly set the creature back on its haunches—for there, dead ahead, at about its former distance away, was blazing the light which an instant before had been abreast of us.

"'We won't turn out for it, Domingo,' I said, and touched my horse with the spur. I heard the llanero calling to me in horror-stricken tones, but I gave him no heed as my horse bounded ahead, for all my attention was bent upon the light which I meant should not escape me.

"How long I went and how far I could form no idea, for the light, receding, seemed to grow upon my consciousness so that I lost all sense of time and space. Then something fell softly around my arms and body, tightened sharply about me, and, as my horse plunged forward and downward as if the earth had dropped from beneath his feet, I was drawn swiftly backward out from my saddle. I struck the ground a considerable distance in the rear of where I had left the horse's back, and instantly was dragged through the grass for some distance, unable to help myself until the pull upon me slackened, and, half stunned by the rough handling I had undergone, I looked up at Domingo Verato bending over me loosening the noose of his lasso from about my arms and body.

"'Hullo! What does this performance mean? What happened, anyway?' I asked, getting to my feet and staring around. 'Where's my horse gone?'

"Verato's horse was standing close by, its ears pricked and nostrils distended in high excitement. My horse was nowhere in view. As my eyes took in these things there came to my ears the sound of surging waters and heavy splashings. The llanero pointed in the direction his horse was looking, and I saw, at the same distance away as before, the light I had followed. It blazed above a great uprooted tree that swung and tilted in a vast expanse of heaving waters, overspreading what on the day before had been the dry savanna and bottom lands by Diego Feres.

"Surging and eddying against the steep bank that separated the lower from the higher plain, the waters continually were undermining it, and the splashings I heard were the fall of earth and trees into the flood. Amid the heavy roar of the waters I fancied I heard cries of birds and beasts, and on the face of the flood could be seen indistinctly here and there a swimming capyvara or a jaguar, driven from its covert, or the horned heads of cattle overlooked in the round-up of the weeks before. Of my horse nothing was to be seen. It had been swept away instantly and drowned.

"The inundation had come, and Verato and I were the first in the Diego Perez country to behold it. As we rode for the ranch, riding double upon his horse, he told me how in spite of his fears, he had followed me when I took after the deluding light. It had been a long pursuit, far longer than I was aware of, and strangely I had heard and seen nothing of the flood as I approached the bank. I now believe that I was mesmerized or hypnotized through steadily gazing upon the floating flame. Indeed, Verato said as much to me.

"'You were *encantado* [enchanted] with the fire of Aguirre,' he said. 'You ride straight after it into the water and drown—never think.'

"Luckily he had heard and recognized the sounds of the inundation, and spurring after me had thrown his lasso just in time to pull me back from destruction.

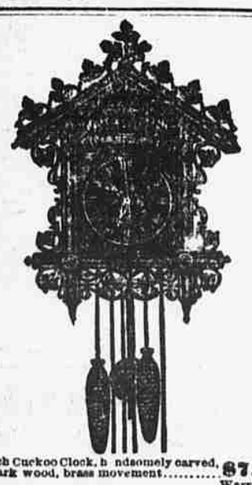
"This is one experience—my own—with the fire of Aguirre. If you go to the Venezuelan pampas the llaneros will tell you a thousand. Of course, the phenomenon, which is no more remarkable than that of the corpus sancti of the seas, must be explainable on accepted natural grounds. Nevertheless, my advice, like that of the llaneros, would be to let it alone, for it will lead its follower into undesirable places. It is not for nothing that this will-o'-the-wisp bears its bad name."

How Alaskan Indians Trap Bears.

From the Morning Oregonian.

William B. Otis, who has been all over the world as one of the ichthyologists in the employ of the Government, has just returned from his second visit from studying the fish in Alaskan waters. He says:

"Strips of whalebone are folded into the shape of the letter 'N,' enveloped in 'hunks' of fat, and frozen that way. The fat thus prepared is left in promising spots for great white bears to devour. Along comes one of the monsters, gulps a lump down whole; the gastric juice melt the fat and eat away the strings of tendon with which the whalebone is bound; the whalebone springs out straight across the animal's stomach, and presently it dies. Next day Mr. Eskimo comes along and gathers in a bearskin worth several quarts of whiskey."



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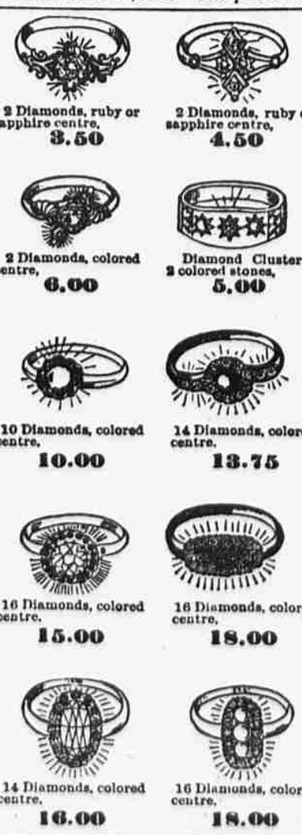

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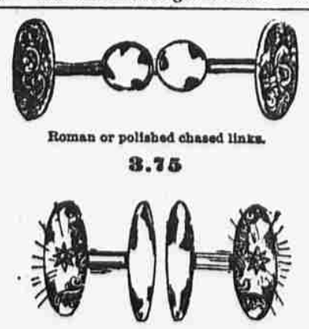
Diamond Cluster, 2 colored stones, 5.00
10 Diamonds, colored centre, 10.00
14 Diamonds, colored centre, 13.75
16 Diamonds, colored centre, 15.00
16 Diamonds, colored centre, 18.00
14 Diamonds, colored centre, 16.00
16 Diamonds, colored centre, 18.00



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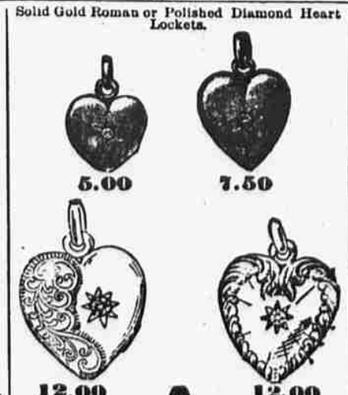

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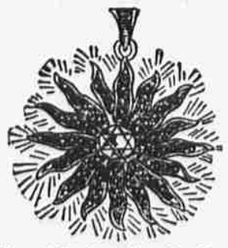

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