

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1903

A CHANCE SHOT

By Henry Wallace Phillips.

REDDY and I were alone at the Lake beds. He sat outside the cabin, braiding a leather hat-band-eight strands and the "reaper" figure—an art I never could master.

I sat inside, with a one-pound package of smoking tobacco beside me and newspapers within reach, rolling the day's supply of cigarettes.

Reddy stopped his story long enough to say: "Don't use the 'Princess' Slipper, Kid—that paper burns my tongue—take the 'Granger'; there's plenty of it."

Well, as I was saying, I'd met a lot of the boys up in town this day, and they threw as many as two stinks into me. I know that for certain, because when we took the parting dose I had a glass of whisky in both my right hands, and had just twice as many friends as when I started.

When I pulled out for home, I felt mighty good for myself—not exactly looking for trouble, but not a-going to dodge it any, either. I was warbling "Idaho" for all I was worth—you know how pretty I can sing? Cock-eyed Pearson used to say it made him forget all his troubles. "Because," said he, "you don't notice trifles when a man bats you over the head with a two-by-four."

Well, I was enjoying everything in sight, even a little drizzle of rain that was driving in in rags of wetness, when a flat-faced swabby at Fort Johnson halted me.

Now, it's a dreadful thing to be butted to death by a nanny-goat, but for a full-sized cowpuncher to be held up by a soldier is worse yet.

To say that I was hot under the collar don't give you the right idea of the way I felt. "Why you cross between the last rose of summer and a bob-tailed fish!" says I, "what d'yer mean? What's got into you? Get out of my daylight, you dog-robber, or I'll walk the little horse around your neck like a three-ringed circus. Come, pull your freight!"

It seems that this swabby had been chucked out of the third story of Frenchy's dance emporium by Bronco Thompson, which threw a great respect for our profess into him. Consequently he wasn't fresh like most soldiers, but answers me as polite as a tin-horn gambler on payday.

Says he: "I just wanted to tell you that old Frothead and forty braves are somers between here and your outfit, with their war paint on and blood in their eyes, cawooding and whooping it to heat hell with the blower on, and if you get tangled up with them I reckon they'll give you a haircut and shampoo, to say nothing of other trimmings. They say they're after the Crows, but it's a ten-dollar bill against a last year's bird's nest that they'll take on any kind of trouble that comes along. Their hearts is mighty bad, they state, and when an Injun's heart gets spotted, the disease is d-d catching. You'd better stop awhile."

"Now, cuss old Frothead, and you, too!" says I. "If he comes crow-hopping on my reservation I'll kick his pants down to his scaplock."

"All right, pardner!" says he. "It's your own funeral. My orders was to halt everyone going through, but I ain't a whole company, so you can have your own way. Only if your friends have to take you home in a coal scuttle, don't blame me. Pass, friend."

So I went through the officers' quarters forty miles an hour, letting out a string of yells you might have heard to the coast, just to show my respect for the United States army.

Now, this has always been my luck: Whenever I made a band-wagon play, somebody's sure to strike me for my license. Or else the team goes into the ditch a mile further on and I come out about as happy as a small yellow dog at canvas.

Some fellows can run in a rhinoceros that'd make the hair stand up on a buffalo robe, and get away with it just like a nice; but that ain't me. "If I sing a little note too high in the cellar, down comes the jar-top of me. So it was this day. Old Johnny Hardluck socked it to me, same as usual.

Gosh a mighty! The liquor died in me after awhile and I went sound asleep in the saddle, and I woke up with a jar—to find myself right in the middle of old Frothead's gang; the drums "boom-bipping," and those forty-odd red tigers "hyah-hyaying" in a style that made my skin get up and walk all over me with cold feet.

How in blazes I'd managed to slip through those Injuns I don't know. 'Twould have been a wonder if by our thoroughbred Kentucky horse—and I knew if I could get to the open then Injuns wouldn't have

piece of scouting if I'd meant it. You can most always do any damn thing you don't want to. Well, there I was, and, oh, Doctor! but wasn't I in a lovely mess! That warson put a crimp into me that Jack Frost himself couldn't take out.

It was as dark as dark by this time. The moon just stuck one eye over the edge of the prairie, and the rest of the sky was covered with clouds. A little light came from the Injuns' camp fire, but not enough to ride by, and, besides, I didn't know which way I ought to go.

Says I to myself, "Billy Sanders, you are the champion all-around, old-fashioned fool of the district. You are a jackass from the country where ears less'n three foot long are curiosities. You sassed that poor swabby that wanted to keep you out of this, looting your bazoo like a man peddling soap; but now it's up to you. What are you going to do about it?" And I didn't get any answer, neither.

Well, it was no use asking myself conundrums out there in the dark when time was so scarce. So I wraps my handkercher around Laddy's nose to keep him from talking horse to the Injun ponies, and prepared to sneak to where I'd rather be.

Laddy was the quickest thing on legs in that part of the country—out of a mighty spry little pinto mare

I didn't like to make for the ranch, as I knew the boys were short-handed, so I pointed north, praying to the good Lord that I'd hit some kind of settlement before I struck the North Pole.

Well, we left those Injuns so far behind that there wasn't any fun in it. I slacked up, patting myself on the back; and, as the trouble seemed all over, I was just about to turn for the ranch, when I heard horses galloping, and as the moon came out a little I saw a whole raft of redskins a-bolling up a draw not half

saddle on his arm. "He's a particular kind of cuss," I thought; "bareback would suit most people."

Taking it a little easier for the next couple of miles I gave him a chance to pull up.

We pounded along without saying anything for a spell, when I happened to notice that his teeth were chattering.

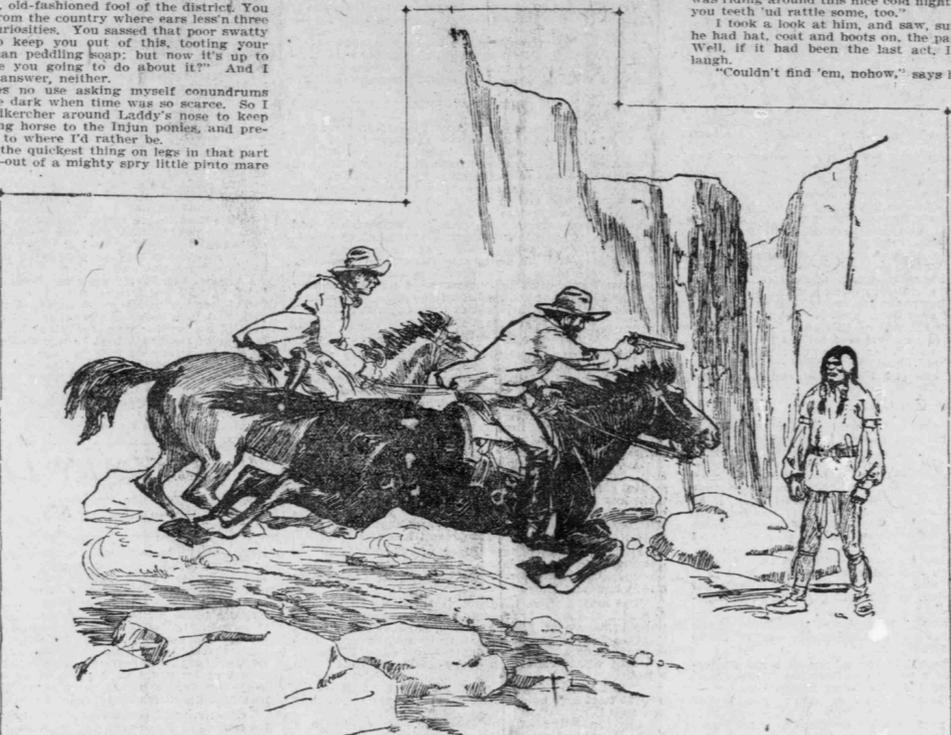
"Keep your nerve up, pardner," says I. "Don't you get scared—we've got a good start on 'em."

He looked at me kind of reproachful.

"Scared be derned!" says he. "I reckon if you was riding around this nice cold night in your drawers you teeth 'ud rattle some, too."

I took a look at him, and saw, sure enough, while he had hat, coat and boots on, the pants was missing. Well, if it had been the last act, I'd have had to laugh.

"Couldn't find 'em, nohow," says he; "hunted high



"THE INJUN STOOD UP STRAIGHT AND TALL AND LOOKED US SQUARE IN THE EYE."

much of a chance to take out my stopper and examine my works—not much. A half-mile start, and I could show the whole Sioux nation how I wore my hair.

I cut for the place where the Injuns seemed thickest, lifting myself up till I didn't weigh fifteen pounds, and breathing only when necessary. We got along first-rate until we reached the edge of 'em, and then Laddy had to stick his foot in a gopher hole, and wallowed around there like a whale trying to climb a tree.

Some darn cuss of an Injun threw a handful of hay on the fire, and, as it blazed up, the whole gang spotted me.

I unlimbered my gun, set the irons into Laddy and we began to walk.

A mile away. That knocked me slab-sided. It looked

like I got the wrong ticket—every time the wheel turned.

I whooped it up again, swearing I wouldn't stop this deal short of a dead sure thing. We flew through space—Laddy pushing a hole in the air like a scart kiyote making for home and mother.

A ways down the valley I spotted a little shack sitting all alone by itself in the moonlight. I headed for it, hollering murder.

A man came to the door in his under-rigging.

"Hi there! What's eating you?" he yells.

"Injuns coming, pardner! The country's just oozing Injuns! Better get a wiggle on you!"

"All right—slide along; I ketch 'em up to you," says he.

I looked back and saw him hustling out with his

and low, jick, Jack and the game—just comes to my mind now that I had 'em rolled up and was sleeping on 'em. I don't like to go around this way—I feel as if I was two men, and one of 'em hardy respectable."

"Did you bring a gun with you?"

He gave me another stare. "Why, pardner, you must think I have got a light and frivolous disposition," says he. "And with that heaves up the granddrum of all the six-shooters I ever did see. It made my forty-five look like something for a kid to cut its teeth on. 'That's the best gun in this country,' he went on.

"Looks as if it might be," says I. "Has the foundry that cast it gone out of business? I'd like to have one like it, if it's as dangerous as it looks."

"When I have trouble with a man," says he, "I don't want to go pecking at him with a putty blower,

just irritating him and giving him a little skin complaint here and there; I want something that'll touch."

He had it, for a broadside from that battery would scatter an elephant over a township.

We lunched along quiet and easy until sun-up. The Grindstone Buttes lay about a mile ahead of us. Looking back, we saw the Injuns coming over a rise of ground 'way in the distance.

"Now," says my friend, "I know a short cut through these hills that'll bring us out at Johnson's. They've got enough punchers there to do the United States army up, starved and blueed. Shall we take it?"

"Sure!" says I. "I'm only wandering around this part of the country because this part of the country is here—if it was anywhere else I'd be just as glad."

So in we went. It was the steepest and narrowest kind of a canyon, looking as if it had been cut out of the rock with one crack of the ax. I was just thinking, "Gee whiz! but this would be a poor place to be snagged in," when bang! says a rifle right in front of us, and mesarr! goes the bullet over our heads.

We were off their horses and behind a couple of chunks of rock sooner than we hoped for, and that's saying a good deal.

"Cussed poor shot, whoever he is," says my friend, "Some Injun holding us here till the rest come up, I presume."

"That's about the size of it—and I'd like to make you a bet that he does it, too, if I thought I'd have a chance to collect."

"Oh, you can't always tell—you might lose your money," says he, kind of thoughtful.

"I wouldn't mind that half as much as winning," says I. "But, on the square, do you think we can get out? I'll jump him with you if you say so, although I ain't got what you might call a passion for suicide."

"Now, hold on a bit," says he. "I don't know but what we'd have done better to stick to the horses and run for it, but it's too late to think of that. Jumping him is all fool-busness; he'd sit behind his little rock and pump lead into us till we wouldn't float in brine—and we can't back out now."

He talked so calm it made me kind of mad.

"Well," says I, "in that case let's play 'Simmons says thumbs up' till the rest of the crew comes."

"There you go!" says he. "Just like all young fellows—gettin' hostile right away if you don't fall in with their plans. Now, sonny, you keep your temper and watch me play cushion carroms with our friend there."

"Meaning how?"

"You see that block of stone just this side of him with the square face toward us? Well, he's only covered in front, and I'm a-going to shoot against that face and ketch him on the glance."

"Great, if you could work it!" says I. "But Lord!"

"Well, watch!" says he. Then he squoched down behind his cover so as not to give the Injun an opening, trained his cannon and pulled the trigger. The old gun opened her mouth and roared like an earthquake, but I didn't see any dead Injun. Then twice more she spit fire, and still there weren't any desirable corpses to be had.

"Say, pardner," says I, "you wouldn't make many cigars out of this game?"

"Now, don't you get uneasy," says he, "Just watch!"

"Biff!" says the old gun, and this time, sure enough, the Injun was knocked clear of the rock. I felt all along that he wouldn't be much of a comfort to his friends afterward if that gun landed on him.

Still, he wasn't so awful dead, for as we jumped for the horses he kind of hitched himself to the rock, and laying his rifle across it and working the lever with his left hand, he sent a hole plumb through my hat.

"Bully boy!" says I. I snapped at him and smashed the lock of his rifle to fillet size. They on course, he was our meat. As we rode up to him my pard held dead on him. The Injun stood up straight and tall and looked us square in the eye—say, he was a man, I tell you, redskin or no redskin. The courage just stuck out on him as he stood there waiting to pass in his checks.

"D-n it!" says he. "I can't do it. He's game from the heart out. But the Lord have mercy on his sinful soul if he and I run foul of each other on the prairie again!"

Then we shackled along down to Johnson's and had breakfast.

"What became of Frothead and his gang?" Oh, they sent out a regiment or two and gathered him in—'bout twenty-five soldiers to an Injun. No, no harm was done. Me and my pard were the only ones that bucked up against them. Chuck out a cigarette, Kid. My lungs ache for want of a smoke.

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THREE MODERN FABLES.

BY GEORGE ADE.

THE MODERN FABLE OF WHAT IS IN A NAME UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

ONCE there was a well-meaning Soul who was handicapped by a true and lasting Friendship.

Sometimes he suspected that if he could be left to himself, he would struggle along from one Saturday Night to another and keep out of the Way of the Cars, and possibly extract some Joy from this Life in his own simple Rube fashion.

But every time he turned around, Friend was right there to tell him what to do.

ments for him and then letting him know about it later on.

And sometimes Friend would try to choke him and take his Money away from him and invest it in some shine Enterprise that was going to pay a 40 per cent Dividend every thirty Days.

Friend always meant well, at that. When he selected the Girl that the Victim was to marry, he was prompted by the most unselfish Motives. Notwithstanding which the Victim did the tall Duck.

A Policeman found him hiding under a Bridge and asked, "Are you a Fugitive from Justice?"

"No," was the Reply. "This is merely a case of Friend."

MORAL: They never seem to be properly Thankful for all that we do in their Behalf.

THE MODERN FABLE OF THE MAN WHO HAD A TRUE FRIEND TO STEER HIM ALONG.

Once there was an Estimable Lady named Mrs. Killjoy, who used to hunt for Trouble with a Search Warrant.

She was not happy unless she was being Insulted. Before anyone Chirped she knew that she was going to have Bricks thrown at her Character.

Mrs. Killjoy held to the obsolete Theory that Man was put into this Mundane Trouble Factory to protect weak and defenseless Woman from all Sins, Sights and Insults. That is why she picked out for her True Knight an undeveloped Specimen about the size of a Philadelphia Squab, with four-inch Biceps.

His steady Assignment was to fight her Battles. Mrs. Killjoy was one of those Sensitive Plants who could not get into a Trolley without having someone rudely Stare at her. She always suspected that the He-Salesmen in the Stores were trying to make Love to her, and if any Man happened to be walking behind her on the same side of the Street, she knew that she was being Pursued.

"Are you going to sit here and allow your Wife to be Insulted?"



The Teamster Grabbed Mr. Killjoy and Dusted the Bin With Him.

That was the Speech she would hand him when they were out together. Then it was up to him to call some 200-pounder, or else be prepared to lie Awake half the Night and listen to the Story of her Wrongdoings.

Sometimes he suspected that she wanted to realize on his Life Insurance.

His usual Play was to promise to be an Avenger. Then he would hunt up the Person who had grossly insulted Mrs. Killjoy and apologize in her behalf and say that she was a trifle Dippy.

What Mrs. Killjoy needed was a Husband in a full Suit of Armor mounted on a White Horse and thirsting for Blood. She had read the wrong kind of Books. Husband knew that she would stack him up against it sooner or later.

Sure enough, one Day he found her in Tears and learned that the Man delivering the Coal had been Impertinent and had failed to remove his Hat while speaking to her. She wanted to know if Mr. Killjoy was a Man or a Mouse, and that settled it. He went out to roast the Teamster, and she followed along to Gloat.

The Teamster was a Low-Brow with a 48-inch Chest, and he did not know a thing about the Henry of Navarre Business. He grabbed Mr. Killjoy and dusted the Bin with him.

While the Sufferer was in the Hospital, waiting for the Bones to join, Mrs. Killjoy sat beside him and said, "As soon as you are well enough to be around, you must hunt him up and shoot him."

"I will," said the brave Knight, "if I can get one of those Sandy Hook Guns that will carry Six Miles."

MORAL: In these Days, Chivalry must wear a Tag or it will not be Recognized.

THE MODERN FABLE OF THE NINETY-POUND KNIGHT ERRANT AND HIS LADY FAIR.

Once there was a Main Squeeze of a Business Concern who had a faithful Man Friday.

The Undertrapper kept the Books and stalled off

the Canvassers, and when there was nothing else to do he would go out Collecting. Every Morning at 8 he was buckled down to Work. When the High Guy arrived, the humble Employee would bring the Morning Mail and answer all Questions in low, respectful Tones.

Now, the Boss knew that one of the Secrets of Business Success is to throw an awful Bluff, so he changed the Firm to a Company and called himself President. In order to make the Letter-Head imposing, he put on the Bookkeeper's Name and called him Business Manager. It did not cost anything and it dazzled the Correspondents.

Also he allowed the Business Manager to have a Desk with a Brass Plate on it, so as to impress Visitors.

Whereupon the Man Friday began to wear a Tall Hat and show up every Morning at 10 instead of 8. He stopped calling the Stenographer "Mattie," and

used her Full Name. When anyone came to see him he had the Office Boy bring in a Card.

In speaking of the Company he said "We." If asked to do any regular Office Work, he put up a loud Holler, because he did not think that a Business Manager should be compelled to monkey with any small and cheap Duties.

In short, although his Salary remained the same, the High-sounding Title was too much for him. He developed a severe case of Enlargement of the Coecum, and in a short time he was breathing the Fresh Air.

MORAL: Many a good Subordinate has been ruined to make a gilded Figurehead.

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Then the Man Friday Began to Wear a Tall Hat and Show Up at 10 Instead of 8.



Use Used to Tell the Victim Where to Have His Clothes Made.

Friend was somewhat of a Shell-Fish in the regulation of his own Private Affairs, but he knew just how to manage for someone else.

So he used to tell the Victim where to have his clothes made, and he would pick out his Shirt Patterns for him, and tell him how often he needed a Drink, and in other ways relieve him of all Responsibilities.

If the Poor Mark wanted to remain in his Room and read something by William Dean Howells, the Friend would compel him to put on his Low-Front and go out to a War-Dance and meet a Bunch of Klondikes who wore No. 6 Hats and talked nothing but Fifte.

The Friend was always making Business Engage-

HAVE just done a venturesome thing. I have been re-reading an old favorite—a book loved long since and lost awhile. No other than Mr. J. H. Shorthouse's "John Inglesant."

I came to do it because the Macmillan company has just reissued the book in a three-volume edition de luxe, uniform with its library edition of Walter Pater. The format is so charming that it would tempt one to read anything, though the fine sense of artistic fitness which presides over the Macmillan publications would never permit the error of taste involved in giving so classical a form to a book which was not to some extent in the running for classical honors.

The Macmillan company has published many a successful novel, but I fancy there are

few novels on its lists written in recent years that it would think of promoting to so significant a format. By presenting "John Inglesant" in such a style the publishers imply its possession of unusual excellence and distinction and a quality of comparative permanency. And it is likely that this implied opinion of theirs has not been reached without an intuition that theirs has not been reached without a dozen Reasons, yet two books may seem to satisfy them equally, and one of the books will live, and the other die. Perhaps we arrive as near to an answer as we ever shall by say-

ing that the life of a book depends in the end on some special vitality in "the man behind the book," to borrow a phrase which Mr. Bliss Carman makes the text of one of his sound illuminating causeries in the current number of the Literary World, already I am pleased to see, newly under weigh under his editorship.

The question is brought up to me from another quarter by the handsome prospectus just issued by the Scott-Thaw company of "The Chiswick Library of Noble Authors."

"Noble Books in Noble Form" is the rallying motto of the publishers, and from the quality of the prospectus, which in size (folio—the only really "noble" size for a book), paper and type, is a foretaste of the books themselves, it is safe to predict a series worthy of the motto. "By Noble Authors," the publishers explain, "is meant those writers

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