

THE BOURBON NEWS.

Published Every Tuesday and Friday by WALTER CHAMP, BRUCE MILLER, Editors and Owners

BESIEGED IN A CRATER.

BY H. ALAN CLARKE.

The adventure I am about to relate occurred in the summer of 1880, a time when the Apaches—those virulent scourges of the southwestern border—still dominated the lives and happiness of pioneers in that section. In July of the year mentioned, a party of five—Robert Winston, Joe Baker, Clyde Harris, Jeff Hinman and the writer—left the Rio Grande valley bound on a prospecting trip into the Zuni country, of whose extensive mineral wealth we had heard some dazzling rumors. Baker, Harris and I were originally from the east; but Winston and Hinman were Texans—both splendid specimens of the modern frontiersman. They were crack shots with rifle and pistol; could ride "anythin' that growed hair," as Hinman expressed it; and they were thoroughly versed in plains-craft and Indian warfare. Before we left the Rio Grande we heard considerable talk of attacks upon Apaches on the scattering settlers in the Salt River district; but such rumors were very current in New Mexico and Arizona at that time, and we paid but little attention to them, starting as soon as our preparations were complete. Nothing worthy of note occurred during the first ten days of our journey. Game was not very plentiful, but we managed to get enough to supply us with fresh meat; we found an abundance of grass and water for the horses; no signs of Indians had been seen; and, taking all together, we felt that our lucky star was in the ascendant. "Any of you fellers ever been to the Salt Lake?" inquired Winston, as we squatted at supper one evening. In response to our inquiries, he described the lake as occupying the bottom of a deep and almost circular rocky basin, the sides of which were so precipitous that there was only one place down which a horseman could descend. The bottom of the lake, he explained, was covered with a crust of salt, from six inches to a foot in thickness. "But the queerest part of it all is the crater. It stands at one side of the big lake, an' forms a part of the shore. When you get to the rim of it you find yourself standin' on the edge of a big funnel-shaped hole, about 200 feet deep; an' right down at the bottom of that is a little lake, so deep nobody has ever found a bottom to it." Our curiosity was strongly excited, and before we turned in for the night it was unanimously decided to pay a visit to the strange lake next day. Sunrise found us in the saddle, and a toilsome ride of two hours' duration brought us to the object of our search. Weird and ghastly are the only terms which properly describe the scene that greeted our eyes as we reined in our panting horses. At our feet lay an enormous basin of perhaps 1,000 acres in extent and some 70 or 80 feet in depth, its precipitous sides garished with masses of volcanic rock, some of them so grotesque in shape as to appear almost unearthly. At the bottom of the basin, and occupying the greater part of its area, shimmered a lake of dazzling whiteness, its shores encrusted with curious formations of salt, from which the sun's rays were reflected in glittering light. On the eastern shore, about a half-mile from where we stood, an enormous mound, in shape like an inverted wash-bowl, towered to a height of 200 feet or more; and this we at once recognized as the crater of which Winston had spoken. Dark and forbidding it reared its mighty shape, like an outcast from the infernal regions; its grim aspect seeming to accentuate the awful silence that brooded over the scene. "They say the Apaches, Navajos and Zunis have a superstition about the crater," whispered Winston, awed into something like reverence by the sublime picture of desolation spread out before us. "They imagine an evil spirit lives in the little lake at the bottom; an' that he emits thunder an' lightning whenever he gets mad at anybody. I've heard they won't kill even a white man in the basin."

Guided by Winston, we rode down the steep trail that led to the bottom of the basin, and established our camp near a little spring that bubbled out of the rocks opposite to the crater. It was the only fresh water in the vicinity, but there were no signs to indicate that it had lately been visited by man or beast. Filling our canteens, and watering the horses, we were ready to commence the ascent of the crater. Arrived at the summit we at once saw that Winston's description had not been overdrawn. At our feet yawned a great funnel-shaped hole, at the bottom of which twinkled a miniature lake, its hue of brightest emerald contrasting strangely with the dark scoria of the crater's sides. With many turns and twists, and much unavoidable sliding, we descended to the shore of the lake, and seating ourselves on fragments of lava, spent half an hour in endeavoring to account for the presence of such a jewel in so incongruous a setting. "They say the water is so thick with salt that a feller can't sink in it," remarked Winston. "Did you ever test it?" I asked. "No, sir-ree! You couldn't hire me to go swimmin' in such a hole as that. I'd be afraid that spizit 'ud grab me by the feet and pull me down. There's never been no bottom found in the center."

The rest of us had no such scruples, however, and, doffing our clothes, we were soon splashing about in the briny element. It gave me a grewsome feeling to

swim across the rathomless abyss in the center. Its ragged circumference, seen distinctly many feet below the surface, suggested the ravenous jaws and gaping maw of a monster of the Cyclopean world, lying in wait for whatever unwarlike creature might venture into its vicinity. I caught myself wondering how I should feel if some mighty force were suddenly to seize and drag me downward; and I had almost succeeded in working myself into a state of genuine fright, when a shout from the rim of the crater diverted my thoughts into a more sensible channel. After watching our aquatic sports for a few minutes Winston had ascended to the crest of the mound, where I now caught sight of him lying flat on the inner edge of the crater and excitedly gesticulating to us. To scramble into our clothes was the work of a few moments, and we climbed up the steep to his side. He did not wait for us to ask for an explanation of his call. Pointing to the bluffs on the northern side of the basin, he ejaculated the single word: "Look!" leaving us to observe and draw our own conclusions from what we saw. "Indians!—and a big bunch of 'em!" cried Baker, who was the first to glance in the indicated direction. "There's just 19 of 'em," said Harris. "If they are hostiles and discover us—" "Discover us!" interrupted Hinman. "How can they help discover us when they'll strike our 'sign' the minute they start down in the basin?" "If they failed to see our 'sign,' they couldn't very well overlook that bunch of saddled hosses standin' at the foot of the hill," said Winston, arising and starting down the path at a rapid pace. "We can't afford to let 'em get the outfit," he said, as we overtook him at the bottom; "so we'll just lead the hosses to the bottom of the crater, an' find standin' room for 'em on the inside." The suggestion was adopted. Mounting our horses, we drove the pack animals to the bottom of the ascent, and sent them all up the winding path at a pace that must have astonished them, since heretofore they had good reason to regard us as men merciful to their beasts. Securing the horses to blocks of lava on the inner slope, which afforded a somewhat precarious footing for them, we again centered our attention upon the causes of our disquietude. They were riding along at the same slow trot as when first seen, and were now within 100 yards of the trail leading down to the basin, which it was evidently their intention to enter. All doubt as to the warlike mission of our visitors was removed as they descended into the basin and followed our trail toward the spring, at a long, swinging slope. The absence of women, children and dogs, their painted faces and the "fighting trim" of their scanty habiliments, proclaiming them a war party of Apaches, while the confidence with which they advanced unquestionably indicated that they had already gathered from the trail an approximate idea of our numbers and character. They seemed to consult together for a few minutes, and one of them finally stepped out of the group and advanced to the foot of our stronghold, holding his hands above his head with the palms to the front, as a sign of his amicable intentions. "Buenas dias, amigos!" he hailed in Spanish, with which language the southwestern Indians are generally conversant. "They know we're here, an' we might as well talk to 'em," said Hinman. No one objecting, he rose to his feet and answered the salutation of the dusky herald in the tongue in which it was given. "Buenas dias! Que quiere usted?" (Good-morning! What do you want?) I understood Spanish sufficiently well to enable me to follow the conversation that ensued, and I knew enough of Indian diplomacy not to be particularly surprised by the herald's propositions on behalf of his very hospitable compatriots. These involved nothing less than the turning over of our horses and arms, and the giving up of our persons to be bloodthirsty a band of cutthroats as ever harried the defenseless citizens of the border. The Indian prefers artifice to fighting in his efforts to disarm his enemy, and this band was only following the instincts of their craft. "If my friends will only come down," he said, "they shall be entertained like chiefs. The hearts of the Apaches are full of love for our white friends, and we would like to take them by the hand."

"Yes, and you'd like to take us by the hair, too, which you've forgotten to mention," said Hinman, with a snort of disgust. "Now, Senor Apache, you travel back to your compatriots, and tell them that we're a kind of a solitary outfit that don't believe in promiscuous handshaking, nor have we any desire to be treated as big chiefs. Vamos!" Our inhospitable reception of the messenger was the signal for hostilities to commence. No sooner had he communicated the result of his mission to the band, than three of them drove the ponies up the trail to the mesa, where they could graze secure from our fire; the others taking shelter among the rocks that lined the sides of the basin. We could easily have killed some of the ponies, but we had no desire to injure dumb brutes; and, besides, we preferred to have the first overt act come from the enemy. We had not long to wait. Harris incautiously exposed his head for a moment; keen eyes were searching the crest of the mound; the crack of a dozen rifles awoke the echoes of the basin, and he was dodged back with a bullet hole through his hat that evidenced the skill of an Apache marksman. So far we had not pulled a trigger, and finding us so unindemnitious, our foes gradually grew careless of their personal safety. They commenced to expose themselves in the most tempting way,

openly passing from one rock to another in a spirit of bravado that presaged an epidemic of sudden mortalities in the band should it continue. We were only waiting for enough of the band to show themselves to make simultaneous targets for each man's aim, and the chance soon materialized. Four of them soon stepped out from behind their shelters, and commenced a disgusting series of antics for our edification. We improved the opportunity; our rifles spoke simultaneously; and two of them measured their lengths on the sand, while another scrambled to cover with a halting motion that indicated a serious weakness in one of his extremities. After this lesson no further active hostilities were indulged in by either side. We were careful to keep well under cover; they commanded the water supply, and we were willing to play a waiting game. When the sun dipped below the horizon we separated, taking stations at such points around the crest as would best enable us to command the entire outer circle of ascent. The horses were secured anew, and we settled down to a night of anxious alertness. Several hours passed without incident, the only sounds breaking the deathlike stillness of the scene being the uneasy stamping and pawing of the horses as they endeavored to achieve a more comfortable footing on the steep slope of the inner side. Old Barney, the mule that carried our blasting outfit, was particularly restive, and I was strongly tempted to lead him up to the crest and secure him there for the night. A disinclination to lead a mule loaded with explosives up a dangerous ascent in the darkness prompted me more strongly to leave him where he was, however, and I contented myself with slipping down to him and ascertaining that he was securely tied. The atmosphere had been very heavy and sultry all the afternoon, and I was not surprised to see the heavens giving every indication of a storm before midnight, which augured ill for the security of our position, as it would enable the Apaches to scale the mound with but little danger of detection. The advent of the tempest was soon after heralded by a vivid flash that illuminated the basin beneath as though an enormous arc light had suddenly been turned upon it, followed by a chorus of reverberations that voiced the intentions of the murky heavens. I took advantage of the light to search the ground beneath me, and I was sure that I detected several dark figures about midway of the slope. In a few minutes the rain began to descend in a saturating torrent that resembled a miniature cloudburst, and the side of the crater was converted into a watershed, down which innumerable tiny streams trickled to the lake below. Flashes of lightning of dazzling brilliancy were followed by crashing peals of thunder that seemed to shake the universe, while the impact of the raindrops on the lake resembled the steady roar of some mighty cataract. Suddenly that intuitive consciousness—as certain as ocular knowledge itself—of the presence of some other human being near me warned me to be on my guard. Rising slowly to my feet, I waited for the next flash as a double medium of enlightenment. It came, and with it a stinging pain in my shoulder and the bear-like hug of a pair of sinewy arms about my body that told only too plainly the nature of the crisis. Instantly recovering from the effects of the knife thrust and the surprise, I made a mighty effort that freed me from the grasp of my enemy, and, springing backward, I grasped my heavy rifle by the barrel and endeavored to beat him to the earth with it. Round and round we circled in the darkness, the constantly recurring flashes revealing to me the diabolical visage of a brawny Apache brave as he danced just without the deadly sweep of the gun. The blood was flowing from the wound in my shoulder, and a creeping numbness began to invade my entire body, warning me that my powers of defense were rapidly waning. Suddenly a volume of light seemed to leap out of the heart of the little lake at the bottom of the funnel-shaped hole; the mass of lava beneath my feet trembled and shook as though stirred by an earthquake, all accompanied by a deafening roar that hushed even the tumult of the storm. I was hurried to the ground as though prostrated by the hand of a giant, my head coming into violent contact with a lump of lava in the fall, which deprived me of consciousness. When my senses returned another day had dawned, and I found myself the center of an anxious group, from which none seemed to be lacking. I was lying beside the little spring, and from the surfeit of moisture in my hair I concluded that some of its product had been recently applied to my aching cranium. "We've been waiting for you to wake up, so you could help us to hunt up the fragments of old Barney," said Hinman, as I opened my eyes. "Where are the Apaches?" I asked. "Gone! The evil spirit, in the shape of our blasting outfit, spit thunder an' lightning at 'em, an' they 'pulled it' for the hills as fast as their ponies could travel." As nearly as we could ascertain the facts the restive Barney had at last broken the rope with which he was tethered, and, in endeavoring to ascend or descend the crater, had missed his footing and been precipitated down the slope, exploding his load in the fall just in time to save me from the knife of the Apache. The knife wound in my shoulder soon healed, but I never see the scar without being reminded how opportunely the spirit of the crater spoke to preserve me from a more deadly application of the steel.—Frank Leslie's Week-

**FUNERALS OF THE HINDOOS.**  
Rites Observed in India by Relatives and Friends of the Deceased.  
When a Hindoo dies the services of an undertaker are not needed, as word is immediately sent to the relatives and friends of the deceased, who meet at the house and attend to all the details of the funeral. Some of them buy at the bazaar the articles necessary for the ceremony, such as a piece of linen, copper pots, pieces of sandalwood, one earthen pot, some "ghee," or clarified butter, rice, a few split chips of bamboo and two strong bamboo poles for the bier. In rainy weather some oil and resin to revive the flames are added to the stock of necessities. A sacred grass, the "durbhas," and some "tulsi" leaves are spread over the bier. It is very necessary that the son of the deceased should perform the ceremony. If he is absent at the time of the death the father or brother of the deceased or some other male member of the family may take his place. When there is no son in the family one is adopted for the purpose. The performer of the ceremony must first bathe, then shave off the mustache and bathe again. The priest constantly recites the "muntras," or sacred hymns, from the "Vedas." A sacred fire is lighted in the earthen pot and the body, after it is washed and bound about the waist with a piece of cloth, is stretched upon the bier and completely covered, save as to the face, which is left exposed. The friends then carry away the bier. The son, who lights the funeral pyre and is the chief mourner, walks ahead with the earthen pot in his hands. Every mourner is bareheaded—it must be so. I have frequently seen such processions in Benares and listened to the sad funeral dirge: "Ram, sri ram, ram volo bhairam." When the body reaches the burning ghats the mourners erect a pile after this fashion: Four strong posts about five feet high are firmly driven into the ground, and between them the piles are erected, so as to keep them from falling apart while burning. The body is placed upon the pile when half of it has been laid. During this part of the ceremony the "muntras" are repeated. When the body has been placed upon the pile some of the relatives and friends scatter pieces of sandalwood over the body. "Muntras" and prayers are again repeated and the remaining fuel is placed on the body. Then the chief mourner walks around the pile three times and fires it. Very soon it is a huge flame, and in about three hours the whole body is reduced to ashes. The fire is now put out, every mourner drops some water on the spot, in the name of the deceased, and then all proceed to the river or sea or one of the many tanks that abound in India to bathe. The poor are not forgotten, as alms are distributed. Before the mourners retire to their respective homes they return to the residence of the deceased to look at the lamp that was lighted on the spot where the body was kept.—N. Y. Times.

**WORK OF SCIENCE.**  
Influence of Sanitation and Hygiene Upon City Life.  
In a recent lecture on what sanitation has done for human life Prof. Brewer, of Yale university, said that no one doubts that human life has been prolonged by the application of science in the last 50 years. How much, mathematically, this amounts to, in years, in per cent., is an unanswerable question. We can never have the data in figures. Even if we had our vital statistics completed for that period men would differ as to the relative values of the several factors in this problem. Our great cities would not exist—they could not exist—without the aids of science. We have had the ancient Egyptian and Greek and Roman civilizations, which were pagan, and later Christian civilization, and all were powerless to convert practices. Between the epidemics which raged from time to time and the high death rate in the best years, the population of Europe as a whole probably scarcely increased at all for 1,000 or 1,200 years. This century came in without a single city in Christendom with 1,000,000 inhabitants. Paris had in 1800 but 543,000; London and the suburbs, in 1801, 864,945. The other English cities had less than 100,000. Great cities could not endure then. First, the people could not be fed. The most of the food had to be produced within 20 miles of the place of consumption. Science has now made it possible to transport food half way around the globe and has discovered new methods of preservation as well. City population was not self-perpetuating. Men died off; the death rate was continually high, and from time to time there was death by pestilence. Even where there were sewers they were to drain the ground of water rather than to carry away sewage. Now cities are made nearly as healthy as the country. —Mining and Scientific Press.

**The Shah's Harem.**  
The shah has an exceedingly small harem for an eastern monarch. There are not above 60 ladies, and he has four sons and 23 daughters. The only occasion any of the shah's wives are to be seen is in the streets of Teheran when they pass in carriages. When the ladies go out driving they are preceded by a gang of farshes, who caper ahead on their horses, shouting: "Go and hide yourselves!" And all men have to scamper up side streets or be thrashed.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

**Very Ambitious.**  
"Did you say that boy of yours was ambitious?"  
"Ambitious! Well, I should say! Why, that boy does nothing but sit around all day and think of the great things he's going to do!"—Philadelphia North American.

**She Recovered.**  
White—Did old Green recover from that railroad accident yet?  
Black—No; but his wife did—to the tune of \$10,000.—Twinkles.

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2 cent Bank Check, blue, post perforate 5 cents  
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2 cent Express, blue, imperforate.....5 cents  
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2 cent Playing Cards, orange.....10 cents  
2 cent Proprietary, blue, imperforate.....10 cents  
2 cent Proprietary, blue, post perforate.....10 cents  
2 cent Proprietary, orange, full perforate.....15 cents  
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81 cent Manifest, imperforate.....41 cents  
81 cent Mortgage, full perforate.....31 cents  
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