

"I'll be trustin' my own head to them," says I.

"Very well," says he, and explains to me the scheme, the same being to break all the neutrality laws we could lay our hands on."

"What!" I exclaimed.

"Ye-eh," said Slim, "that's the way a Mexican mind works."

"But why?" I asked.

"Oh, just to start a war with the United States and solidify all the Mexicans under Madero."

I gasped, and began to see why I had so utterly failed to understand the Mexican situation.

"So," continued Slim, "I went out and got Mahoney, MacDonald and Charpentier. I knew them all of old. They were all Americans, and one was of Irish descent, and one of Scottish, and one of French, and they had been everywhere, and seen everything, and were warranted to turn up anywhere there was rough work to be done.

"Tis funny about these fellows. I've been around the world some few times myself, and got into some tight messes. But whenever I'd steer into trouble, there would bob up alongside of me—Mahoney, MacDonald and Charpentier. I think they smell trouble!

"I took them all into Senor Llorente one day, and he looked them over an' was satisfied. He told us:

"I want you fellows to go down into the heart of the rebel country where rebels patrol the failroads day and night. I want you to blow up and burn Mexican

bridges until I call a halt. The pay is \$2,000 and your outfits. Here is \$900 for the outfits. Good-day.

"So we went away from there, him not being what you would call conversationally inclined, and the next day, which was June 12, 1912, we piled our stuff in an auto and slid for Yisotte.

"Then—we crossed to the Bonche mountains and down into the flat rebel country, which is the same ye see stretching before ye now."

"Slim" Noonan paused, and sighed.

"And?" I prompted.

"And," said he, "the next twenty-four days were wan long picnic. We burned bridges; we ran the rebel lines two or three times a day; we destroyed telegraph instruments; we pulled down wires."

Slim paused again.

"'Twas grand," he said, simply.

"But what was the object of all this?" I asked.

"Oh," he said, "just to bottle up old man Orozco and Salazar, the rebel chiefs, in Juarez.

"Orozco and Salazar are the ones who fight for the common folks, you know. The Wall street bunch doesn't have a look-in with them!

"Put us down for havin' burned and blown up a dozen bridges in those twenty-four days—the one at Barreal alone was 400 feet long!

"Along about June 25th Mac—MacDonald, that is, got shot.