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YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE HAUNTED PASS
AND OTHER STORIES

OR THE SECRET OF THE DEATH TRAIL

By An Old Scout

Two skeletons suddenly slid down the face of the cliff, and all but Wild turned and fled. "I reckon we'll find out something about this," he said, springing to grab one of the gruesome objects.
YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE HAUNTED PASS

OR,

THE SECRET OF THE DEATH TRAIL

By AN OLD SCOUT

CHAPTER 1.

MEETING AN OLD FRIEND.

It was a raw, cloudy day in the spring of the year, during which there was considerably less law and order prevailing in the region commonly known as the Wild West. John Young, the champion deadshot and wild

The magazine contained stories, sketches, etc., of Western life. The price was 5 cents.
much older, either. But I might have passed him and not recognized him, for whoever expected to meet him here?"

"I do not think of it at all," the man said, and then he tipped the old plug hat gracefully.

All hands quickly dismounted now, and for the next five minutes they were shaking hands with the eclectical banjo player.

Something like three years before he had lived for a few months in a hovel at the Black Hills, and his hero and his friends had the same old banjo he had, but it's a pretty good one, an' we figured that we might pick up enough money at the places we stopped at to buy tickets to the East. This ain't the same old banjo I had, but it's a pretty good one, an' we figured that we might pick up enough money at the places we stopped at to buy tickets to the East. This part of mine ain't never been East, but he thinks it's all right from what I've told him about it. His name is Jerry Junk.

Jerry Junk, as he was called, now took the opportunity of going on to the other and shaking hands.

"We were a mighty sort of fellow, and started in to tell his whole history.

But sprague cut him short by saying:

"Come off, Jerry. They don't want to hear nothin' about your life. All we want to know is where you've been.

West ain't got time for anything like that. I know it's the same with his partners an' the gals. You might tell it to that hobo back there. Maybe he'll listen to you. But I've got my doubts if he'll do that, for the first thing you know he would be tellin' you about his uncle in China. He had the same wonderful uncle that any one ever had. Jerry, by an' by you'll know all about it, maybe.

The late boss of the cattle range shrugged his shoulders and after staring at Hop Wah, who was the only one that had spoken for a few seconds, he gave a nod and then kept his lips tightly closed.

Wild asked Sprague a few questions, and in that way managed to learn that he had been in hard luck and that he had lost his wife a couple of years previous.

He had an inclination to go back East, where he had been born and reared.

When he declared that he knew he would go there, for the meeting with his old friends showed that he was at last in a streak of luck, they all laughingly assured him that they would be able to get there.

"Still followin' up the old game, I see," said. He proceeded to pack away his banjo in the green cloth covering he drew from under his long-tailed coat. "Couldn't manage to make my way goin' East with it. I couldn't, I, Wild?"

"Hardly, Bob," was the reply. "I reckon the West is good enough for me yet. When it gets so there's nothing to be found in the way of excitement here I might take a notion to travel. I ain't so anxious to go just yet, or else that time comes I think this will be good enough for me."

Still thinkin' the same old way. Always lookin' for a chance to rope in a gang of road agents or bad redskins. I'll bet you have been in it right along, too, Wild.

"Every time I get the chance.

"An' Charlie an' Jim stick right to yer always the same as they always did.

"You can bet your life on that, Wild.

"But I didn't think the gals would keep on ridin' around with yer like this.

"Well, they seem to be inclined that way yet, Bob.

"It sorter looks so. An' my ain't it improved 'em a lot, though. I honestly think that they've all got a whole lot better when they was just a smart banjo player, sayin' a whole lot, too, for where could you find three nicer lookin' gals than Artetta, Eloise an' Anna?"

"Stop that, Wild," said Young Sprague. "Don't throw any bouquets this way, please.

"All right," and the banjo player grinned broadly. "But when I say a thing I always mean it. I won't take it back, though I know that if you ain't a fan it won't talk like that any more."

"How me lookin', Misler Bob?"

"You look as smart as a banjo player, I guess."

"It was the way Young Sprague's wife looked at the Celestial's face caused Sprague to break into a laugh.

"I thought it was about time I heard somethin' from you, Hop," he said. "Well, you're mighty handsome, but you way was, so what's the use of me tellin' you that you needn't do anything more than what I said.

"Allee light, Misler Bob," Wing answered, smiling at the joke. It was just to please you. "Me and Mrs. Sprague run our own busness, me no fool Chinese like my brother."

I seen the time once when you thought you was a smart man, but when your brother comes along an' says yer that yer wasn't knee high to him, you settled down an' started to be a plain, common heathen, with no more canny.

But that's all right. I'll bet there ain't no Chinese livin' what's as smart as you are, an' me an eloquent, and me as eloquent as my uncle in China."

"Me really smarted Chinese, Misler Bob," Hop Wah sang up, cheerfully. "Me gootte uncle in China what me much smarter, an' me as eloquent as my uncle."

"There!" exclaimed Sprague, turning to Jerry Junk and laughin',. "It told you that story would come up soon enough. Then there ain't no use of you hangin' around here all day long. Most Likely Wild is lookin' for a good place to put his camp. It won't be more than a couple of hours after he begin to git dark. There's rain comin', too, so we lai' her up for the night right along.

"You jest ride here about, an' I'll he'ell tell you all about his uncle in China."

"All right, I'm mighty willin' to listen to him, to think there's goin' to be an awful funny story about it."

"You can dey declared, for he could see the zest an' interest he had thought it was some sort of joke his friend was tryin' to play on him.

"This fellow belonging to Bob and the cowboy were out findin' nibles at the short grass the other side of adobe.

"All hands mounted, and then with Bob Sprague ridin' along with Wild and Bob, they continued along the trail windin' its way upward along the mountainside.

"Ever been over this trail before?" asked the cowman, as they rode along.

"No, can't say that we have," was the reply. "We never happened to come up this way by accident, I suppose, so been down at Buckhorn Range, and we've been ridin' across here every day through the last of the sun could come out. We have had quite a lot of adventures, too, Bob.

"I'll bet you have. You're always lookin' for excitement, aren't you?"

"You have got that about right. But what's the use of tryin' if you can't have plenty of excitement? Then again, I'm born to help things along in general, I suppose. Nothing makes me better than to hear of some wrong doin', so I can use my chance to straightsen things out. I've been a very hectic little, Bob."

"I know that, Wild. In the first place you kin count on anything that ever walked or trotted on two legs. Then there are ten men who have got as much nerve an' coolness as yet as have those other ten who have got as much nerve an' coolness as yet as have those other ten who have got as much nerve an' coolness as yet as have those other ten who have got as much nerve an' coolness as yet."

"Another thing is that you're quicker than lightnin', too, Wild."

"You're piling it up a little too fast, Bob," the young cowboy shot up, laughingly. "Two or three things are mentioned when you spoke of another thing. But it's all right. Don't say anything further in that line, please. If I'm going on East, I'm going on East. I'll encourage you that you will have enough money to buy tickets for yourself and your pard, and then you get to Denver, too.

"All right, Wild. But if we do have enough money to buy the tickets I want to earn it. I ain't goin' to do no borrowin' from you, nor will I accept anything in the way of a loan. I've made up my mind if I can't earn enough to get back to I'm goin' to stay here in the West. That's the kind of a man I am."

"That's the way to talk, Bob," Jim Dart called out, laughingly. "But I reckon it won't take many days before you find a way to earn enough money to carry you through. There's always something turnin' up in the way of a job at any time I seen 'em."

"Yes, I reckon I know of a good chance, though I don't think much of it. I've got a bill I took in at the saloon we stopped at last night, a little of which the young Sprague says on it that a reward is offered for a notorious man nam'd Nat Henaves. He's 'posed to be workin' over this side somewhere, an' that's one reason why we took this particular way."

"Is that so, Bob?" and Young Wild West became very much interested right away.

"Yes, I'll show yer the bill."

He was not long in producing it, and when our hero read it over he learned that the outlaw called Nat Henaves
There's a trail that's thirty miles long, running from Big Cut, which is a great deal bigger camp than Lucky Spot, and it ends at Lucky Spot. You have got to get a horse, and if you strike the trail at the right end it's dark, though, looks as though it might rain pretty soon, too.

"It won't matter a great deal whether we strike the trail right on the other end," Wild retorted, as he finished sizing up the situation before him. "We'll pitch our camp somewhere, and then ride on to Lucky Spot in the morning."

"Oh, you aren't in any hurry, then," and the horseman toasted his attention to the girls, looking at them critically, as if they might have been horses that were offered for sale. "Ne, in no hurry at all.

We want to take a ride through the haunted pass, too."

"Haunted pass, eh?"

The horseman gave a start, and riveted his eyes upon those of the young deadshot.

"Yes, that's what I believe they call it, isn't it, Bub?" and Wild turned to Sprague.

"That's what we heard 'em talkin' about at the last place we stopped," came the quick reply.

"Oh, yes, there's a pass about five miles this side of Lucky Spot that's supposed to be haunted. But I don't believe in ghosts myself, so I don't take any stock in what I've heard say about it. I came through there today, and I didn't see anything out of the way. I didn't hear any sounds like chains clanking or groans from dead people, either. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Some one just had that up to some folks. Maybe it was so that travelers would go around the other way and get held up by Nat Havens and his gang. Maybe you heard tell of those fellows, too, kid?"

I thought these two had told us a short time ago. We just met them a little back here, and one of them happened to be an old friend.

"Had you fellows ever been up this way before?"

The horseman turned and looked at Bub and the cowboy as he asked the question.

"No," both of them answered, quickly. "We're from the town out of the Shoshone, and we've never been to Denver.

"Got a good long ride ahead of you, I reckon. But you're going to stop at Lucky Spot, I suppose? Maybe you have got the idea of striking it rich over there. There's men finding plenty of dust there, so they say, and it seems every day or two that a big strike is made."

"I ain't goin' to bother about goin' any prospectin'," Bub Sprague retorted, shaking his head in a decisive sort of way, "I've made up my mind to go East, where I come from, an' stay there the rest of my life. I've got enough of the West. I ain't got as much money now as I had when I first got here. I've put in a tough time of it for over four years, an' I'll be mighty glad to git back where I kin git a whiff of the salt air once more."

"Dat's," and as if he was of no consequence at all, the horseman once more turned to our hero.

"If I'm not too inquisitive," he said, after remaining silent for several seconds, "but in a couple of weeks, don't you think I'm going to have something that'll make a good-sized city in no time. Never heard of Big Cut, eh?"

"No, that's a fact, stranger."

"I happen to live over there. I'm interested in the biggest mine there, you know. But I've got an eye to business, and I take a ride now and then over to Lucky Spot to see how things are going on. We're getting a big strike up out of that miner out, and if things pan out all right I make a big pile of money from doing it. But I haven't told you my name yet, and I suppose you wouldn't like to know it."

"Suit yourself about that, stranger."

"Maybe it would be better if I were to hand you my card."

Throwing back his coat, the horseman drew a neat-looking gold card from a pocket of his vest, and opening it, nodded his head.

CHAPTER II.

THE THREE MASKED RIDERS.

There was nothing particularly striking about the horseman who suddenly came in sight of Young Wild West's party. He appeared to be a cattlemann, or some one well used to that part of the country, for he was attired in the fashion of a man who had been on cattle trails for many years. He had a mustache almost completely concealed his mouth, and a pair of eyebrows of the same hue showed prominently above a pair of dark-gray eyes that were particularly marked. Young Wild West told us as he rode up closer and shook his horse down to a walk.

"How are you, strangers?" he called out, in a free and easy way. "Looking for the Big Cut Trail? I suppose you are of the same sort as we are trying to find, yes, or here answered, coolly. "But we have heard there is a place back here somewhere that is called Lucky Spot Camp, I believe that there is.

"Well, that happens to be right at the end of the Big Cut Trail. There's a trail that's thirty miles long, running from Big Cut, which is a great deal bigger camp than Lucky Spot, and it ends at Lucky Spot. You have got to get a horse, and if you strike the trail at the right end it's dark, though, looks as though it might rain pretty soon, too."

"It won't matter a great deal whether we strike the trail right on the other end," Wild retorted, as he finished sizing up the situation before him. "We'll pitch our camp somewhere, and then ride on to Lucky Spot in the morning."

"Oh, you aren't in any hurry, then," and the horseman toasted his attention to the girls, looking at them critically, as if they might have been horses that were offered for sale. "Ne, in no hurry at all. We want to take a ride through the haunted pass, too."

"Haunted pass, eh?"

The horseman gave a start, and riveted his eyes upon those of the young deadshot.

"Yes, that's what I believe they call it, isn't it, Bub?" and Wild turned to Sprague.
On it was inscribed "N. H. Driscoll, Mining Engineer, Big Cut, Co."

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Driscoll," Wild retorted, in his cool and easy way, and then he took care to place the card in his pocket where he might be able to find it again in case he wanted it.

"I suppose all we'll have to do is to follow this rough trail until we strike the one that runs through the haunted pass in the camp, he went on, a bit anxiously. "Yes, but you have got about fifteen miles to go yet, and you'll find it rather rough travelling when you get a little further. I think it a good idea if you don't try to make the camp tonight. You seem to have a pretty good camping outfit with you," and he nodded toward the two pack-horses that were in charge of Hop and Wing.

"Oh yes. We are used to camping out in all sorts of weather. We won't mind it much if it starts raining.

"If you think I can be of any assistance to you I'll ride back and help you find a good place to camp. I think there are several of them between here and the trail.

"Don't put yourself out any. I suppose you had some particular destination in view or you wouldn't be riding this way.

"No particular destination, Young Wild West. I am only doing some prospecting. I am supposed to be an expert at the art of the thing, you know.

"He turned and felt of the steel pick that was strapped behind the saddle.

"Yes. I see you have the proper sort of tools.

"Oh, yes, a pick and pan is all I want. I have got an eye like a hawk when it comes to sifting pay dirt. All I have to do is to pick loose the earth here and there and it don't take long to spot anything if I think it's worth while. Then I can fill up a pan and go to the nearest brook and wash it out. If I find that it's worth while I mark the spot and let the men in the employ of the company will come and stake it out. Then, if it pays, it won't be long before we'll be running the ore over to Big Cut in wagons. I'll admit that I make a big pile of money at my business. But that is what prospecting is all for. Who would want to rough it if he is not a native of the West, you know. I was born and bred in the city of New York, which is a long distance from here.

"I suppose so."

"Sprague was telling us about it."

"Is that so, Charlie? Well, some such a thought as that has crossed my head, too. But never mind. Wait till we get back. I'm pretty sure it won't be long before you see a gold mine. Now then, it certainly is going to rain, which is just what I was thinking of when I mentioned that he was right on that point. Let's make up a lively and find something in the way of shelter. We have a couple of good tents with us, it would be easier if we could get under some shelter where there's a broken by and fodder for the horses.

"Lots of them places through this part of the country," Young Wild West observed, as though he was not worrying so much about finding a camping place.

Half an hour later middrops began falling, and then it was not long before a sort of drizzle set in. This gradually increased until it was a genuine rain, and then our friends were fortunate enough to come to just the right sort of spot they had been looking for.

Tumbling down the mountainside was a good-sized creak, and at the foot of it a bubbling, foaming brook.

The water continued on an almost level stretch for a good many yards, and right within easy reach of the stream a little cave had been dug out several feet, leaving more than ample space for a sizable party of any number of shelters.

Here we are! Young Wild West exclaimed, as he stepped on the edge of the cave and brought his horse to a standstill.

"I'm just beginning to get a little worried, and I'm glad to have found this place.

He vaulted down from his horse, and the rest was long in following his example.

The two Chinamen led the pack-horses forward to where they were supposed to erect the two tents, and then they set to work. In a little while they were up and ready for the party.

Meanwhile, Young Wild West and his partners and two guests, as they might be called, were looking into the rear of the horses.

They were all tied with lariats where they could not reach the grass and other vegetation that grew along the side of the stream, and in case they got tired of this they could shelter themselves under the overhanging branches.

Hop and Wing went right at work, and as they had set out doing it they were not long in putting up the tents.

Then the girls lent a hand and put them to rights as called for.

This was all done inside of twenty minutes after it had started.

Then Hop and Wing, with the assistance of Chinaman Charlie, gathered a big pile of wood, and when a fire was kindled the garments that had become moistened by the rain were hung about so they might dry, while others were placed in a sheltered place.

When just they thought they had everything in good order and were thinking about supper, three horsemen came riding along, and as they knew exactly where their friends were, galloped swiftly to the spot.

There would have been nothing strange in this if it had not been that the faces of the three were concealed by masks.

"Got to cover, girls," Young Wild West called out, and the girls, "Yes, sir."
CHAPTER III.

TWO PRISONERS ARE TAKEN.

The trio of riders brought their horses to a halt with wonderful quickness.

Suddenly they had not figured on meeting with such a surprise.

Tare stood the boy, the rifle at his shoulder and his cheek snug upon the stock, the barrel swaying slightly so it covered them alternately.

None of them had a revolver in his hand, but he made no effort to use it.

His sudden action had been the signal for Cheyenne Bill and Jim Darr to pull their guns.

It happened that our hero’s Remington rifle was within easy reach of him at the time, and hence it was easy for him to keep his gun overs the approaching horsemen.

There stood the three men, their horses moving uneasily, as they came, completely at the mercy of Young Wild West, at his parting words:

“Will you fellows have made a little mistake,” the boy asked in his cool and easy way. “Probably you have had an idea it would be easy to get the best of us. Of course your456

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guns are over us, but let me tell you right here that we are not in the habit of being robbed, especially by such chaps as you are. Now then, if either of you attempts to shoot it will be the last thing you’ll ever do on earth. I’ll follow with the gun, just let it drop, and be quick about it!”

The boy knew that his partners had the men covered, so he raised his rifle straight for the heart of the man he referred to as “Bill, kid.”

“You’ll be sorry some day, if you don’t go too far with me. You’ll be sorry. I command you, the boy, his eyes flashing dangerously.

The felllow shot a glance at his two companions, who were a left, and then suddenly ducking his head, he pulled out the blade, causing his horse to wheel. He was taking the chance of being shot, and no doubt he really was.

But probably he was very much opposed to showing his face, as the horse swung around and started to gallop away. Wild Bill’s first sight of his half-turned head as it bent over the neck of the steed.

A quick sight from the boy and the trigger was pulled. CRACK!

As the report rang out the black mask flew from the man’s face, while a sharp cry of pain sounded.

Charlie was turned that way for an instant, and then our hero recognized the man as N. H. Driscoll, the mining engineer, who had met them along the trail a short time before.

“Come back here, or I’ll shoot you,” he shouted. “I showed you how I could do this same thing to your face. If I fire again I’ll kill you.”

But the command was not obeyed.

With a yell of defiance the villain rode on and quickly was out of sight behind a clump of rocks.

Kid could easily have shot him, of course, but it was not his intention to do so just then.

The discovery he had made seemed to satisfy him for the time being.

Meanwhile, the other two horsemen had not attempted to aid their escape.

Charlie and Jim had taken the right, while Arletta was dead close by, a rifle at her shoulder.

“Well, that fellow go, boys,” our hero said, nodding to his partners. “I suppose you caught a glimpse of his face after you shot the man from behind.”

“I know who he was. Wild,” Arletta spoke up. “I saw the face plainly, though it was only for the fraction of a second. It was the man we met down upon the rocky trail.”

“That’s right, El. He gave his name as N. H. Driscoll, and he said he was a mining engineer. But I reckon he’s an outlaw, possibly Nat Havens himself. Probably these fellows can give us a little information. We’ll let them take off their masks, so we’ll be able to recognize them if we should happen to meet them again somewhere.”

Without having to be told to do so, one of the villains raised his hand and pulled off his mask.

The face was a strange one to our friends, though they marked it well as they looked upon it.

“I don’t know you. Wild,” said, shaking his head. “How about you?” and he turned to the other.

“I spose I’ve got to show my face, too,” was the reply, and then off came the mask.

They both looked to be ordinary men of that region.

It could not be said that they were exactly villainous in appearance, either, though the fact that they had appeared with masks on their faces was enough to warrant their true character.

“You fellows feel like living very long?” Wild asked, as he drew a gun from the holster at his side and placed it firmly at a nearby rock.

“There ain’t no use in askin’ such a question as that,” the one who had been first to remove his mask answered, quickly. “Get ahead with your piece, kid, and ask us what you want.”

“I want to know who and what that fellow who got away is.”

“His name is Driscoll.”

“That’s all right. He goes by some other name, too.”

“Maybe he does,” and the fellow shrugged his shoulders and looked questioningly at his companion.

“If he’s Nat Havens, he’s an outlaw.”

The boy took a step closer and reached out a little further with the revolver he held in his hand.

“You know who I am,” he added, his eyes flashing dangerously. “Probably you have heard of what I am capable of doing, too. You value your life, of course. You want to live a good while yet. But I promise you if you tell me a lie you’ll die inside of two minutes.”

“I don’t know as there’s any use in me lyin’. You have guessed it right, Young Wild West. Nat Havens was the man who just got away from here. He was a little too quick for me, and I think that he knows my business pretty well.”

If the man had refused to answer his question Wild would have been just as well satisfied that it was Nat Havens, the outlaw who had escaped from them.

But now it was an absolute fact, for it was hardly likely that such an admission would be made if there was any doubt of it.

“Wild,” said the scout, after a short pause, “hadn’t we better hang the two galoots right away an’ have done with it?”

It ain’t safe for sich fellers to be ridin’ around loose, an’ there ain’t no use in troublin’ ourselves by takin’ ‘em to the mizzin’ camp.”

Charlie’s words caused the two prisoners to show great uneasiness.

But he hardly meant what he said, and when they saw a broad grin on his face they realized it.

Young Wild West usually had his own ideas of doing things. No doubt a great many if they had been in his place would have disarmed the two men and held them as prisoners until they could have been taken to some one in authority.

But that was not his intention.

He had two reasons for acting in another way.

One was that should he hold them and start to take them to the mining camp that lay at the other side of the pass that was supposed to be haunted, it was a pretty sure thing that their friends would ambush them and try hard to effect a rescue.

Another reason was that by letting them go and following them he might discover the hiding place of the outlaw band that had been causing so much trouble in that part of the country.

“Boys, let those fellows dismount and have supper with us. Then later we have talked with them a while, I am going to let them go.”

The two villains showed signs of pleasure, but no one appeared to notice it.
“Get down off your horses,” Wild said to them.

One of them obeyed by cartridge but the other was a little slow, and Cheyenne Charlie felt it his duty to assist him, which promptly did, the result being that the villain landed upon his back much as though he was a package.

The scout was not long in taking him from the weapons he had, while Jim relieved the other of his hardware.

Each of these had carried a brace of revolvers and a hunting-knife, and their comrades carried similar arms, showing that they felt it necessary to be well prepared for an enemy.

Wild called Bob Sprague and the cowboy and told them to sit down and look at the victim. He was soon done, and then the two prisoners were forced to sit down upon a rock close to the fire.

They were very uneasy as they obeyed, but for the space of a few minutes they remained silent, while our friends talked matters over and kept a watch in the direction the trio had appeared from.

Our partners had seen quite enough of N. H. Driscoll, alias Nat Havens, to make them feel that he was capable of doing something daring, and it might be that he would take a notion to try to rescue his two pals.

It continued to rain, and soon the clothing of the prisoners were steaming from the heat of the blazing fire.

“I reckon that fire feels rather comfortable, don’t it?” one of our men said to them, when he thought it about time for them to talk again.

“The fire feels all right, but I ain’t goin’ to say that I’m glad I’m here,” replied, forcing a smile.

“Don’t like it much, eh?”

“Not much.”

“Well, suppose you answer a few questions while our cook is getting the supper ready.”

“Fire away. I’m wildin’ to answer anything you ask me, if I’m able to do it.”

Someone was now in tellin’ everything you know,” the other spoke up, warningly.

“Wouldn’t it be an awful lot if I was to tell everything I know? What hurt could I do us, anyhow? All we know is that we last saw Nat Havens about an hour ago, and that he promised us a chance to make pies of money if we’d come with him. There ain’t nothin’ wrong in tellin’ that, is there, Lon?”

“Yes, but you don’t have to tell that much, though.

“Keep quiet and let this fellow do the talking,” Wild added, shaking a finger at the fellow who showed signs of being rather grouchly.

Then he turned to the other man and said:

“What is your name?”

“Bill Murray,” was the prompt reply.

“And the other fellow’s name?” motioning to his companion.

“Lon Hoke. I suppose his first name is Alonso, same as mine is William. But we generally go by nicknames in these here parts.”

“Yes, I know that much. So your name is Bill Murray, and his is Lon Hoke, eh?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“You’re sure you’re telling the truth?”

“Sure Wild West, I don’t know as I’d have any occasion to lie about my name or Bill’s either. I’m wildin’ to tell ye anything you want to know, so go ahead an’ ask me.”

“You just said that you had never met Nat Havens until about an hour ago.”

“Yes, I said it, an’ it’s the dead truth, too.”

“But you had heard of him before?”

“Oh, yes! We met a friend of his about three weeks ago, an’ he told us that Havens wanted a couple of good men to help him in his business on the trail up this way. We been in that particular line talked it over an’ sent word three days ago by the stage coach from Big Cut that we would meet him today. We didn’t come by the regular stage-coach trail, ’cause he didn’t want us to. He met us not long after he was talkin’ to you folk. He told us all about that part of it, an’ said as how he had give you his card. He wasn’t lyin’, either, when he told you he was a minin’ engineer, an’ I s’pose his real name is Montezuma. But Nat Havens is the name he goes by when he’s in the hold-up business. He must be a man with a sort of double nature, I s’pose. I don’t know what else you could call it.”

Our friends were quite satisfied that the man was telling the truth.

They watched the other prisoner, and it was easy to see that he was wild. His eyes were bright, and he said nothing.

But he had been told to keep silent, and he said nothing.

“After you had talked with Nat Havens a while, I suppose he proposed the thing you were going to carry out?” Wild continued.

“That’s just right. He told us that you was Young Wild West, too. But that didn’t stop us from believin’ in him. We had heard a good deal about Nat Havens, you see, and we thought that he couldn’t fail in anything he undertook. He heard an awful lot about you, only that you was the Chase Detective an’ that.”

“What, you were somewhat surprised when you saw the mistake you had made?”

“Yes, I was.”

We knocked them both plumb silly. I couldn’t have pulled a gun if I had tried. You sartainly did git that rifle just to your shoulder in a hurry. Why, I jest thought you was all chuck up your hands right away when you seen the man on our faces. Lon thought so, too.”

“Never mind what I thought,” Hoke spoke up, sharply.

“An’ I s’posed to do any talkin’ just now, an’ you ain’t sposed to tell what I thought, either.”

“Be silent,” commanded our hero, shaking a warning finger at him.

While the conversation was going on, Wing Wah, the cook, was working away just as though nothing out of the ordinary had taken place.

He had a coffee-kettle swung over the fire, and was nursing some hearth-irons for braising, while already a basket of potato heads had been placed in among the red-hot coals.

The scout’s wife sometimes assisted him, and when she started to make a batch of corn muffins she came to him, and the work progressed while Wild and his partners in their attention attracted otherwise.

Arletta and Elodie sat on a stone near the overhanging ledge, the former with her rifle ready to fire a shot at a moment’s notice.

She was doing the most of the watching for the others, low appeared. It seemed.

Wild went on questioning the rascal who was so willing to answer him, but he could gain nothing further than he and his companion were new recruits for the band of outlaws.

Murray declared three or four times that he had no idea just where the headquarters of the band was located.

Havens had told his men that when they got to town they were to be blindfolded and taken inside, where they would have to take an oath of allegiance to the band before they would be permitted to see again.

This seemed plausible enough, so Wild was willing to let it go at that.

“Now then,” the young deadshot said, when he had talked with Murray, “Lon Hoke, I am going to ask you a question or two.”

“I don’t care what you ask me,” was the reply.

“Wel, the first thing I am going to ask you is if you ever to live very long.”

“I’ll live till I die, that’s certain,” was the quick retort.

“THERE’s nothing brilliant about that answer. Everyone will do that. But I mean by the question, do you really expect to live many days longer?”

“What are you a-sassin’ me for?”

“Just because I have an idea that if you stick to your contention of joining the outlaw band that Nat Havens is a leader of, you will die pretty soon.”

“Don’t know as I’m very anxious about joinin’ it now.”

“Oh, you have changed your mind, then?”

“Maybe I have.”

“But you know as well as I do that if we were to let go as soon as you met Havens you would go with him as sworn in as a member of his band.”

“I don’t know whether I would or not.”

“You wouldn’t, would you, Murray?” Wild asked, turning to the other.

“I s’pose I would,” was the truthful reply.

“All right. You can do as you like about it, but if you can see my advice you’ll do your best to get away from Havens at once and strike out for the place you came from as soon as we let you go. I want you to understand that I am going to try to let you go free just as soon as we have supper. There’s nothing amiss about that. When we have had our fish in a sort of double nature, you will never like them to go away hungry.”

The boy laughed lightly at this, and the two men continued to talk.

Wild now left them to themselves, while Charlie and I kept a watch upon them.

Picking up his rifle he nodded to his sweetheart and said:

“That’s all right, Et. I see you are doing guard duty,

Near the end of the story it says:
CHAPTER IV.

THE OUTLAWS OF THE HAUNTED PASS.

It will be in order for us to follow Driscoll, alias Nat Havens, it was certainly a bold move on the part of the villain when he refused to obey the command of Young Wild West and at once throw his pocket over the edge of the cliff. Thus he was in danger of being shot at again. But he had no fear of the law, and he turned and made his way back to camp, and kept in time for supper.

"THE DEATH TRAIL."

That was all there was to it.

The villain laughed in a pleased sort of way, and then rolling the other card he placed it back in his pocket and turned to his horse.

"Straight ahead is the haunted pass," he said, again laughing.

"To the right is the Death Trail. I rather think that a stranger happening to come this way in the daylight would be apt to try the pass after reading that little sign of mine on the tree over there. Now then, I will go on to the cave, and if it happens to stop raining before it gets too late I’ll proceed to the other end of the pass where the Death Trail comes out and put up the other sign. That will let any one know the truth.

Once more the laugh sounded above the noise made by the patter of raindrops and soughing of the pines overhead."

"Straight into the haunted pass, as he called out, the outlaw rode.

The ground was stony, but comparatively level, and the clang of the steel hoofs as they came in contact with the rounded strawberry place in the dark forest.

But Havens rode on for perhaps half a mile, and then bringing his horse to a halt he remained in the saddle, looking down the pass alternately for the space of fully five minutes.

It seemed that the villain was showing the utmost caution, and so doubt he felt it necessary to do so, since he was now virtually at the entrance of the hidden retreat he had fitted out for the purpose of making his headquarters while he carried on his villainous work of robbing travelers and holding up stagecoaches occasionally.

Not the least sound could be heard that would indicate the approach of any one from either direction, and finally becoming convinced that it was all right, he dismounted, and taking his horse by the bridle, turned sharply to the right and entered a narrow split in the great wall of rock that loomed almost straight above him for two or three hundred feet.

For a distance of perhaps fifty feet he went, and then he paused and produced a match safe.

Stirring a match he held it in front of him, and then with a look of satisfaction, placed the match hard upon what seemed to be a jutting part of the solid rock.

But it was not, for it promptly slid inward, leaving a hole.

But this was not all.

Slowly a wide door swung open.

Nat Havens took the horse by the bridle and pushed through the doorway, and then another match was struck.

By its light he found a lantern on a shelving rock, and when it had been lighted he closed the door, which was really made of stout boards and covered with a sort of cement to impress the appearance of an actual rock.

Having tried it to see that it was secure, he moved on with the lantern, leading the horse at the same time.

Pieces of rude furniture were scattered about, and at one end was a row of roughly-constructed bunks.
CHAPTER V.

THE OUTLAW S’ RETREAT IS DISCOVERED.

The two villains who had been anxious to become new members of Nat Havens’ outlaw band showed that they were here and they ate the supper our hero and his friends provided for them with great relish.

As soon as they were through, Wild told them they were liberty to go, and he even went so far as to give them their weapons.

“I have already advised you to steer clear of this man,” Nat Havens,” he said to them, as they were departing. “But you can do as you like about that. If you join his band and stick to him it’s a pretty sure thing that you won’t be more than a couple of days.”

“I ain’t goin’ to have nothin’ to do with him,” Bill Murray declared, but Len Hoke did not deign to make a reply.

It was about dark, of course, and the rain was still falling through not as heavily as before.

As soon as the two men had disappeared from view, Wild turned to his companion and said:

“Now then boys, I reckon a couple of us will folIow the fellows. I have an idea that the outlaw will be looking for them. The chances are that he is in need of some extra men and he won’t let them go if he can help it. Charlie, you will go after them and keep an eye on them.”

“Good enough!” exclaimed the scout, showing his desire.

“I was waitin’ to hear you say that,” Joe stated pleasantly. “We’re runnin’ up ag’in’ what I call a pretty good country. Here’s a band of outlaws at a place where they s’posed to be ghosts. If that don’t make enough excitement to last us for a while I’ll miss my guess.”

“Let me go with you,” Wild, Bat Springe spoke up.

“I like this here sort of thing, blamed if I don’t. Anyways it will hinder take the worry off my mind about gittin’ mixed up in all this weather.”

“All right, Bob,” was the reply. “I reckon you can,
told him quite plainly that the hiding place must be very close at hand.

Nearer he drew to them, Charlie not more than six feet behind him, and Bob Sprague creeping along slightly in the rear of him.

Presently Wild was so close to the men that he thought it advisable to halt and wait.

His companions stopped also.

Wild increased just then that the fellow called Bill Murray was explaining what had taken place after they had been captured.

He told his story somewhat hurriedly, and when he finished he declared that he thought it better for him to take Young Wild West's advice and ride on to Lucky Camp.

Then it was that Lon Hoke spoke up, and he condemned his pard fiercely for what he said.

Nat Havens laughed lightly, all three of the listeners recognizing the laugh as belonging to him, for they had marked his manner and voice well when they first met him on the trail that afternoon.

“Chicken-hearted, eh?” they heard him say, with something like contempt. “Well, you are on the verge of becoming a fulminating knight of the road. You can do as you like about it. If you think I am not a match for Young Wild West, go on to Lucky Spot.”

“Oh, I don’t want to leave my pard,” Murray answered,站点: plain that he was sitting in the dark, but I will say that Young Wild West acted white. He gives us a good feed afore he sends us away. I s’pose we could have stayed with him if we had wanted to.

“Not much we couldn’t,” Hoke spoke up sharply. “You don’t s’pose he would have us around, after knowin’ that we come there with masks on our faces to rob him an’ his crowd, do you? Nat Havens, I’m ready to jine your band, an’ I’ll take any kind of an oath you want me to. I’ll stick to the oath, too, an’ you’ll always be able to depend on me.”

“Wouldn’t that be too much?” asked Murray.

“I’ll stick to the oath, too,” said Murray, after hesitating for a moment.

“If I take an oath you kin bet I’ll keep it, too.”

“You’re beginning to get your senses back, I see,” Havens said, laughing lightly. “All right, I believe I can trust you now. It’s just because you are Young Wild West that frightens you a little that you were willing to take his advice, Murray. You’ll soon get over that after you have joined our band. There are seven of us now, and you two will make nine. That means that we’ll be able to do a lot of business. Think of the money you’ll make, too. It will keep coming right to us almost daily. All we have got to do is to keep the ghosts working in the pass here so as to attract the attention of those who are brave enough to come through, and then it will be easy to swoop down on them and relieve them of their money and valuables. In this day, boys, and we’ll make plenty of money in it.”

Lon Hoke expressed himself as being delighted with the prospect, and Murray hastened to declare that he no longer considered the advice of Young Wild West as amounting to anything.

“If you’re ready we’ll go right into the cave now,” Nat Havens said, after a short silence. “Miller, you take—one horse. Bob, you take the other. But wait. I almost forgot. They must be blindfolded.”

“I thought you was forgettin’ somethin’,” Hoke observed, with a chuckle. “Don’t think I’m afraid to be blindfolded. I’m in this thing for all I’m worth, an’ I’ll stick, as I jest said a little while ago.”

“An’ I’ll stick, too,” added Murray. “You’ll never have no cause to call me a traitor, Mr. Havens.”

With their own red cotton handkerchiefs the two were blindfolded, and then the outlaw leader and his companion took their horses by the bridles and led them in single file through the narrow passage until they came to the secret door.

Wild stepped cautiously along after them, and he was within six feet of the blindfolded horses when Havens lighted a match so that he might find the knob which must be pushed in order to force the door open.

The boy saw it quite plainly, and that was enough for him. He waited there until the four had passed through, and then he found Charlie right at his back.

But Sprague was a few feet behind, and when the door shut to, making but a slight sound, he moved up a little closer, and observed:

“By jingo! This is what I call great. Now then, I’m goin’ to help you capture Nat Havens, the outlaw, an’ then if you feel like it you kin give me my share of the reward.”

“Mind the reward now,” the young bandit retorted.

“That part of it will come later on. I want you two to come inside that place with me. We’ll give them a chance to put
away the horses, and then I'm going to try and open that door. There's a door there, all right, though we can't see in it in this darkness.

The boy stopped forward until he was leaning against the door.

He listened and could hear the sounds made by the horses, as they were being relieved of the saddles.

Then the faint footsteps of men could be heard receding.

Wild was dead. He struck a match, and sure enough, he located the lurch right away.

He pushed it gently, but at first it would not move. A hard push and it slowly went back, and then a draught of air blew in his face.

The door was open.

Hearing that a guard might be inside, he waited, but nothing happened; so beckoning to his companions, who were right at his elbow, to follow him, the young despatch boldly stepped into the cave.

Wild was not going to run the risk of being caught in the place, so whispering to his companions to stand where they were a moment, he went outside, and finding a stone that must have weighed at least fifteen pounds, he carried it back and placed it against the door so it could not shut of its own accord.

"There you are," he whispered. "Now then, come on. It seems that they don't take the trouble to have a guard here. Probably Nat Havens feels certain that no one would ever think of such a thing as there being a door here. But that's all right. It's a door, though in the light of the match it couldn't look like one. It's made of horn and it and covered with some kind of mortar or cement to make it look like the solid rock."

Neither Charlie nor Bud Sprague said anything, but both nodded, though the boy could not see them do this, for it was as dark as pitch where they now were.

The horses could be heard stamping and munching away at the grass, but they didn't look like cam. It made of horn and it, and covered with some kind of mortar or cement to make it look like the solid rock.

He was fortunate in doing this, for by moving in that direction he came to a turn in the rocky chamber and was able to discern something that looked like a passage.

"Only a faint light showed from it, but that was sufficient."

"Charlie and Bud followed him, of course, and moving toward it, the three were soon where it was much brighter.

Then a minute later they found themselves peering into the cave that was used as a habitation by the outlaws.

They were just in time to witness the initiation of the two new recruits.

Still blindfolded, Bill Murray and Lon Hoke were standing in the center of the rocky apartment, while around them in a circle stood six men, each with a mask covering his face and an upraised knife.

Also masked and with a long cloak upon him that came to his ground stood a man whom the three readily guessed to be Nat Havens.

There was a deathly silence in the place, and this was no doubt intended so the outlaws wouldn't be able to see the other.

"Just look at what was going on, Bud Sprague stepped a little to the right."

It was an unfortunate movement on his part, for a stone turned under his feet, and before he could catch himself he pitched forward, striking an empty barrel, which rolled from the place, making an unearthly clatter.

CHAPTER VI.

VERY SATISFACTORY RESULTS.

Young Wild West was quick to think and act. He realized instantly that their position was a bad one, and without waiting the fraction of a second he made a grab for Bud Sprague and succeeded in catching him by the collar of his coat.

Back into the passage he pulled him, and fortunately there happened to be a good-sized niche right there.

"Charlie and I saw a second longer looking at the outlaw in the chamber."

When the barrel rolled in they were much startled, as might be supposed. Exclamations of surprise went up from nearly all of them, and then all but the two who were being initiated started for the spot.

Charlie knew exactly what Wild was doing, so he sprang from the barrel, and caught Bill Murray, and held him in getting there without showing himself in the passage.

"Much to his surprise the piece of rock gave way, and he had the cup to do it."

"Crash!"

It struck the rocky floor of the passage, making a solid noise.

When the scout crept into the niche, and crept the barrel, Wild, who had just got Sprague safely there.

The outlaws were in no great hurry to enter the passage, for their friends could not see them of course, but they were right at the mouth of it and looked at the barrel with a small degree of surprise.

Of course they had known it was there, but to have a bounce into the cave in such a sudden way made it as if human assistance had caused it.

All had revolvers in their hands, for probably they had thought it just then that some one had found a way inside the secret cave.

The falling of the stone Charlie had been nothing but the spot added to the alarm felt by the outlaws.

They stood there listening for a few seconds, and then Havens himself advanced a few feet into the passage.

The first thing he saw was a stone that had dropped on the ground.

He looked at it sharply, and then his gaze turned to the place from which it had come from.

He soon discovered the spot, and when he put his head of rock fell from it. It's hardly likely that any one would let it fall. It tumbled down of its own accord, probably caused the earth around it gave way just then."

"Yes, but what made the barrel roll in here?" one of the asked, in a puzzled way.

"Something may have dropped from above and that would easily account for it," the leader explained.

"That's so," another of the men. "I'm glad we know what done it."

"Well, boys, I think the barrel rolled out and the stone down from natural causes. There's one thing certain know pretty well that no one could possibly get into cave unless they knew the way to do it. It happened to be last one in myself, and I'm certain that there was no outside when I came in. I can't for a moment make any belief that the disturbance was due to human agency. But to make sure of it we had better a thorough search of the whole cave. Two of you stay the candidates and the rest of us will look around."

"I don't see no use of lookin' much," the man called Y observed, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"I don't, either," the leader answered, with a last just merely suggested it, so I satisfied you all."

Wild and his two companions were taking all this in.

It occurred to the boy that they should go through the passage to the place where the two were seated and the secret door open they might change their opinion.

Nat Havens was so near to the niche where they were crouching that there was no possible chance of leaving him and shut the door or to get out if they wanted to. The only thing they could do was to remain right where they were and trust to luck.

But it happened that the outlaw leader decided that cause of the racket had been explained, and he turned and walked back into the cave and once more took his place between the two waiting candidates, who were no doubt amused by the prospect of a question.

However, they may have thought it was a part of the excitement, and since neither of them asked a question Havens let it go that way.

When the last man had taken his place in the circle he thrust his head cautiously from the niche.

Then he crept outside, at the same time advising Sprague to remain where he was.

Charlie followed him; however, and the two lay on a ground and watched what was taking place.

The barrel had not been put back where it was when placed and left against the wall.

It remained where it had stopped rolling, but was set the way of those in the main cave.

"Charlie thought just then that if Hop was only there..."
we wouldn't see any. But we'll be on the watch for them tomorrow. Nat Havens will surely fix up something for us if he finds we are going through the pass which is supposed to be haunted. If we go the other way the chances are they'll have us running from ghost to ghost. They're supposed to be around the peaks, but simply to spy upon them and then arrange a trap to capture them all.

There was the initiation of the new recruits was again put up.

The members of the band stood in position with their upraised knives, the leader reciting a short but binding obligation which the two repeated readily.

Then they had sworn to all that was required of them, then removed the hooftwinks from their eyes.

Then in the light from a swinging oil lamp, Mill Murray and Len Hoke saw the upraised knives, the points pointing toward them.

Then an awe-inspiring sight, no doubt, but neither of them seemed to be more than ordinarily affected.

A word from the master of ceremonies the knives were lowered and quickly placed in the belts of the masked men. Then Havens shook hands with the two new members and then they were now on the same footing as those who had preceded.

As a signal for the rest to come up and shake hands, they had all done so the masks were removed, and the lads took off the long black gown.

The thing was very interesting to Wild and Charlie, of course, for it was not the first time they had witnessed such a ceremony.

Some often such things were practiced by different bands of the same order that made up the band of the band.

Very band wanted to be as secret as possible, and they were merely blamed for making a new recruit swear to tell by them.

Then the outlaws began chat and laughing. Wild thought it about time to leave the place.

He gave Charlie a nudge, and then stepping to the niche, started to go out.

Scurry got very carefully, for he felt humiliated at being so nearly caused disaster by one careless step before.

The three went into the other chamber, and they were shown in the reaching the door.

But they went, and Wild pushed it to.

He lighted a match and not knowing just how to fasten it around until he found the knob of stone he had hidden in.

He was just able to catch the edge of this with his fingers, at which he pushed it back there was a faint click, and he knew the door was locked.

"There you are, boys," he said. "Now then, all we have to do is to get our horses and ride back to the camp, just as it is, for the others are up there.

Scurry got very carefully, for he felt humiliated at being so nearly caused disaster by one careless step before.

Then when they got into the pass they found it still very bare though there was no rain falling. However, the rain had not fallen for a week, and they might expect to see it laugh before they could reach the camp.

Mounting their horses, they started off, putting them to a fast pace at the very start.

For several minutes they rode along without any one making a remark.

Then Cheyenne Charlie got alongside the young deadshot, and said:

"Well, Wild, what are you goin' to do about capturin' them outlaws?"

"I haven't exactly made up my mind yet, Charlie. But I think it will be better to wait until tomorrow. If we can have a chance to get them when they are out of the cave we could possibly and easily surprise them when they come back for their horses. We have heard about is certainly being watched by Nat Havens and his gang. I want to find out something about that part of it. Bub, I believe you said that skeletons and ghosts have been seen in this pass."

"That's what I an' Jerry Junk was told," Sprague answered, promptly.

"Ghosts usually show up in the night. How about those who have been seen in the daytime?"

"The daytime is when the ghosts an' skeletons have been seen. I don't suppose they could see 'em very well in the night. Of course if somethin' white was to pop out in front of us we could see it all right. But I ain't afraid of ghosts, you know that pretty well, Wild."

"Yes, I've heard you say that before, and I believe you're about every bit as sensible as you had said, we can't wait to look for any ghosts to-night. If we did I'm sure we wouldn't see any."

"We'd be on the watch for them to-morrow. Nat Havens will surely fix up something for us if he finds we are going through the pass which is supposed to be haunted. If we go the other way the chances are they'll have us running from ghost to ghost. They're supposed to be around the peaks, but simply to spy upon them and then arrange a trap to capture them all."

Cheyenne Charlie applauded the loudest of any of them, though all showed that they appreciated the efforts of the young man.

Bub must have thought it about time for him to show his hand.

He had played quite a few funny tricks upon Bop Sprague in the days gone by, but since meeting him this time nothing of the sort had occurred.

Just as Bub started in to sing another song in response to the man who had been so plucky, he got a kick from Bop, and went and turned behind the rock upon which he was sitting.
No one seemed to observe him, and, of course, he did not want them to.
But was twanging away at the banjo and had just started in upon the second verse of the song when—

Bang!

A loud report sounded and he was enveloped in a cloud of smoke.

"Hi, ho, boys!" a voice shouted, and then Hop Wah came running from a direction that was entirely opposite to the spot where the explosion had occurred.

The smoke quickly cleared away, and then Bub was discovered sitting upon the ground, his banjo hanging in a clump of bushes about six feet from him.

"That settles it," he said, when he saw the laughing faces before him. "I won't never play or sing ag'in as long as that hothead's around. I know he done it. He set off a big firecracker or exploded some gunpowder right under me. I oughter ketch him an' chuck him in the brook, that's what I oughter do."

"Go ahead an' do it, Bub," suggested the scout, who was ready to witness just such a thing. "He's artfully deservin' of it."

"No, I won't do it," and Sprague shook his head sadly and got upon his feet.

Then he took the banjo from the bush and looked it over carefully he added:

"It'll right. I oughter been watchin' him, that's all. Maybe I'll have a chance to git square with him afore I start for the East."

He got the strings then, and finding everything all right, placed the banjo back in the green bag and laid it where it would be ready when the camp was broken up.

The little entertainment Sprague had given them delayed our friends somewhat in making the start.

But they now made up for it by hurrying to saddle the horses.

Hop and Wing were assisted by Bub and the cowboy, and the pack-horses were loaded in a jiffy.

Then all hands mounted and started from the spot.

We have got quite a little ride ahead of us, Et," Wild said to his sweetheart, who was usual was ridin' at the front with him. "We'll strike the haunted pass about the middle of the forenoon, I reckon. Then you can look out for something to happen." "I'll be on the watch, Wild," the girl answered, with a nod of her golden head. "I want to catch a glimpse of the ghosts and skeletons Bub has been telling us about."}

CHAPTER VII

WILD CAPTURES A SKELETON.

When our friends struck the regular wagon trail they could proceed at a faster pace, and they rode along at a good clip and somewhere about the middle of the forenoon they came in sight of the left of the American, which was ridin' at the front with him. "But we'll strike the haunted pass about the middle of the forenoon, I reckon. Then you can look out for something to happen."

"I'll be on the watch, Wild," the girl answered, with a nod of her golden head. "I want to catch a glimpse of the ghosts and skeletons Bub has been telling us about."

Wild's curiosity was aroused, and making a motion with the hand which indicated that they were to wait for him, he swung his horse around again and rode swiftly along the trail.

As he neared the spot he kept his eyes open, and then suddenly saw a man creeping along a ledge toward a large opening in the cliff.

It was but natural that the boy should think it was one of the outlaws.

"Hold on, there," he called out, leveling his revolver. "Stand right where you are, my friend."

The man obeyed instantly, and seeing that he had wanted where he had wanted, Wild added:

"Come on down here."

Without a word of reply, the fellow did as directed, rummaging the earth and small stones to rattlin' down as he descended. He was a medium-sized man attired in the usual costume that miners and prospectors are in the habit of wearing.

His face was bearded, but there was a paleness that showed distinctly.

While he appeared to be somewhat frightened, the man was not altogether lost his nerve.

"Well," he said, "you stopped me. What do you want me?"

"I reckon I'll make you a prisoner," the young desperado answered, coolly.

"What for? I haven't done anything to you."

"Maybe not. But that don't say you won't if you get a chance. Where are the rest of the gang?"

"Oh, I understand," and the stranger's face lighted up. "I think I belong to Nat Havens."

"I did have such an idea," Wild answered, never once raising his revolver.

"Well, that's where you make a mistake, I am no more followed Nat Havens to these parts for the purpose of bringing him. He did me a great wrong, and I'll never feel satisfied until the debt is paid. Three times I have missed a shot of shootin' him, and each time I have made up my mind that it would not occur again. But who are you, young fellow?"

"My name is Young Wild West."

"A peculiar sort of name," and the man shook his head, showing plainly that he had never heard of the young as shot.

"Who are you?" Wild asked, after a short silence, during which he watched the fellow sharply.

"You can call me the Man of Mystery, if you like. I would tell you anything further if you shoot me false and continuing just for refusing. But you can believe me when I tell you that I am not an outlaw. What little I have said to you is the truth. The outlaws finding that they have made a mistake by killing travelers so the majority of them don't go through the pass any longer, are now turning their attention to this. But I have had my attention here a few days, and I think I have found something for them. Two or three travelers have been shot down because they put up a fight when the men who have had their hold up. But the time will come when I'll get to face this with Nat Havens and pull a trigger which will mean death. I don't want to do this, but I don't want to be shot. If I run away, I want to see him and tell him something before it is too late. He did me the greatest wrong that one man could do another.

The man grew excited as he spoke, and it occurred to WJ that possibly there was something just a little bit wrong about his mind.

But he had been convinced that he was not an outlaw and that he really was looking for the life of Nat Havens. Having become tired of waiting for him, Arlette came up just as this was.

"Who are you talking to, Wild?" the girl asked, in surprise.

"Excuse me, young fellow!" the Man of Mystery exclaimed enthusiastically. "Here comes a young lady, and I must not hear her."

"Don't be in a hurry," the boy said, reassuringly."

"But I must go now," and then in spite of the fact that Wild was still holding the revolver he turned and ran across some rocks and disappeared from view.

"Well, Et," our hero said, as he turned to his sweetheart, "there's something more to think about. Here is a fellow who calls himself the Man of Mystery hanging around and the rocks here. He isn't an outlaw, I'm sure, and he doesn't belong in this here for no particular reason. He's a fellow of business, I must say little girl."

"I should say it was, Wild. Tell me all about it."
But, there was to tell Wild let her know as they permitted their horses to walk back to their waiting friends.

"As it had to be told again, and to say that there was no surprise, even if he had been it, but he was expressing it.

"Through Pass an' Death Trail," exclaimed Cheyenne Charcotting his head. "Say, if there ain't enough to keep you around here for a while I'll never take another chance. I'm a fan of Mystery, too. What are you goin' to do about it, anyhow, Wild?"

"Will ride on through the pass and we'll go it a little slower. Maybe we'll have a chance to see the pass and skeletons. If we don't most likely we'll come upon the outlaw's. I don't mean to ride all the way through just then. When we come to the spot where we left our horses I think we had better halt and be a little careful.

"That it, Wild. Come on. I'm in a hurry to git there."

The scout showed a great eagerness, and it was about the way with Jim Dart.

They all permitted their horses to walk along, and it was only a few minutes before they came to the place where Charlie and Sprague had stopped the night before after losing the two new recruits to the outlaw's cave.

Breathing, the horses were led along some rocks at the edge of the pass, and then Wild nodded to his sweetheart and with Jim Dart.

"Hey, tell you what, you stay right here with me. I am going to go around here, and I suppose Charlie and the boys will want to do the same."

"Yes, I will, too, Wild," Sprague spoke up.

"I say as well go along. I ain't done nothin' yet to show me I'm made of," Jerry Junk observed, as he felt of his pocket.

"If they only let any of them could leave the spot voices were not far away.

"Tell up his hand warily, and then slipped along along the rocks and soon saw Bill Murray and Lon Hoke lying almost directly in front of the little cut that led to the door of the cave.

"The skeletons seemed fixed down the face of the cliff, and they raised up his mind what to do, the young deadshot sent to those behind him to follow, and then started toward them.

"Are the new recruits heard their footsteps right away, and they saw them coming showed signs of great surprise.

"Tell me, you fellows!" Wild called out, but not speaking in very loud tone of voice, for he knew it was possible that the outlaw were near at hand.

"That, Young Wild West!" Murray answered, acting very as though he was pleased. "Jest got here, eh? Where's rest of you?"

"We left the boys and the Chinamen at the end of the path, we didn't want to let them come on here through and take the risk of getting lost. Most likely Nat Havens is waiting for us. Have you seen anything of him?"

"Not a thing."

"We saw Lon Hoke who said this, but Bill Murray shook his head."

"Don't you bear out the lie."

"We all got in a group, and were talking away when suddenly we heard a shout from the top of the cliff and all turned.

"All eyes were turned in the direction.

"Here's startling thing happened.

"The skeletons suddenly slid down the face of the cliff, and the Wild turned and fled."

"They reckon we'll find something out about this," he said, going to grab one of the gruesome objects.

"Charlie and Jim had hung back a little, and when they were of our host they ran swiftly to the spot.

"He did not need their assistance, for he seized one of the skeleton figures by the thigh-bone just as it started to go sliding snapped, and down it came, rattling in a way might have been called ominous.

"He ran out up rapidly and quickly disappeared through a crevice near the top of the rocky wall.

"We get him, boys," the young deadshot called out, in his easy way. "I'm sorry it isn't a ghost, but a skeleton has won the race.

"He climbed over the rocks, dragging his prize with him.

"Sprague, in spite of his boasting that he was not afraid now, had fled with the two villains.

"Here he was now one seemed to know, for they had heard.

"Junk soon came from behind a bowlder, and looking rather sheepish, hastened after Wild and his partners. Wild thought surely that Bub must be with the girls, for the fact was that he never thought anything about him.

"But when he got there and found him missing he was somewhat surprised.

"'We saw the handsome objects, Wild,' Arletta said, as she looked at the skeleton he was dragging along with him and shook his head. 'What did you bring that thing here for?'"

"'Oh, so I could have a chance to look it over and see how it is fastened together,' was the reply. 'But say, where is Bub gone?'

"'Why, I don't know, and then all hands looked toward the spot where he had been last seen.'"

"'Yes,' said Charlie, catching the young deadshot by the arm and showing no little excitement, 'I'll bet he run out into the outlaw's cave with them two sneakin' galoots.'

"'Do you think he would be foolish enough to do that, Charlie?'

"'Well, it surely looks that way, don't it?'"

"'Yes, but could he have been so frightened that he did not realize where he was going?'

"'Most likely. He was puttin' up a big bluff when he said he wasn't afraid of ghosts an' such, an' he even asked you if he wasn't that way. I believe you said you thought he was, or somethin' like that.'"

"'Yes, I may have made such a reply, Charlie. It really does look as though Bub lost his head for the time being and that he has gone right into the jaws of the outlaw. Quite likely Murray and Hoke were as much frightened as he, and they have let him follow them in without thinking.

"'Well, if he's in there it isn't likely that Nat Havens is going to let him out very soon,' Jim Dart observed, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"'No,' and our hero shook his head and looked rather serious.

"'But,' he added a moment later, 'maybe he has run and hidden himself somewhere else. We'll wait a while and see if he turns up.'"

"Satisfied that their position was a pretty good one, in case the outlaw made an attack upon them, Wild advised his two partners to keep a watch and then he turned his attention to the captured skeleton.

"He quickly found that the bones were fastened together by a copper wire, and that wire had been used to lower it down the cliff.

"'This thing might be called cleverly put together, and I suppose it is,' he observed, when he had finished his examination, while the girls and the cowboy were looking on. "But I reckon any one could put a skeleton together if he took the time to do it. Just think how foolish it is for any one to get frightened at such a thing as this. While it is true that it is the bones and skull of a human being, it certainly can't hurt any one.'"

"'It sort of reminds me what I'll be some time or other.'"

"'It is a sort of reminder,' and the young deadshot smiled at his own joke. "I think I'll keep this as a souvenir of our trip through the haunted pass. But I don't feel like taking it with me just now, so I'll try and find a place to hide it until I can come and get it.'"

"'There's plenty of places right along here where you kin hide it an' if anybody ain't watchin' yer they'll never find it," the cowboy said, suggestively.

"Wild nodded to him, and then starting back along the foot of the cliff he soon came to a crevice that was ample large enough to conceal a skeleton.

"He carefully pushed it in, and then rolled a bowlider against the opening.

"'That will be safe enough there until I want it again, unless, as Junk says, somebody watched me as I was putting it there,' he observed, as he came back and joined the rest. "Now we have got to find out where Bub is.'"

"'He's in the outlaw's cave, as sure as guns," the scout declared.

"'I'll creep along that way and have a look. The rest of you wait here,' the young deadshot said, when he had thought for a moment.

"'Without losing any further time he proceeded to make his way along, hiding himself as well as he could behind the rocks that were so plentifully strewn along through that side of the pass.

"He was within about fifty feet of the little passage that led to the cave when he heard low voices.

"The young deadshot pricked up his ears and listened.
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His face was concealed by a black mask, and Wild gave a nod of satisfaction; for it was surely one of the outlaws band.

"I don't hear anything of 'em goin' away," the masked man said, in a low tone of voice, "so I reckon they must be there yet. Had we better go on up and tackle 'em, Nat?"

"Yes, we might as well make a clean job of it. We've got one out of the road, though I warn't say that I want them. We ought to be able to surprise them now, for they must be looking at the skeleton they captured. A mighty clever trick of Young Wild West, I must say. That's what I got for treatin' our two new men to a little show. I wanted to surprise them, but I had no idea that any one else would come along and become spectators. It's too bad, for when this gets spread about it will spoil the ghost business here. If we remain here and keep in business I suppose the Death Trail will be abandoned altogether, and travelers will use the pass as before. I don't like it, boys, and that's why I'm willing now to go ahead and make a clean job of it. I want to have the pleasure of shooting Young Wild West, and you want to see to it that his partners get the same dose. Don't harm the girls or bother with the Chinamen. We don't want anything to do with them."

"All right, Nat."

This was said by some one further back in the opening. Wild had heard enough to satisfy him that an attack was to be made right away.

He made his way hurriedly in and succeeded in reaching his friends before the villagers showed themselves in the pass. "Boys," he said to his two partners, "take the girls and go and mount your horses right away. The outlaws are coming out of the back way. You don't have to ride very far, because they'll be on foot. I am going back there, and when they come out I'll go into the cave and bring out Bub Sprague. Go on now, and do as I say. But be careful you don't let them get a chance on you. If they do you're going to have them down, that's all."

The words were spoken hurriedly, and Charlie and Jim at once started to obey. Beck went Young Wild West, creeping along as before, and when he was nearly at the spot where he had been listening to two men suddenly appeared from the opening in the side of the cliff.

They were followed by another, and then four more came out, one after the other. All were masked, and had revolvers ready to shoot. Wild crouched behind a rock and just as they had passed him he heard his friends riding away.

"Come on, boys," he heard one of the men exclaim, and he knew it must be Nat Havens. "They're started to go away. We've got to hurry or we'll miss them."

Then as the Villains started on a run, Wild slipped from behind the rock and made his way to the entrance of the underground rendezvous.

Through the opening he hurried, and when he found the door wide open he did not hesitate to hasten inside.

Treading lightly he crept that part of the rocky chamber where the horses were kept, and then through the short passage to the cave that was occupied by the outlaws.

As he reached the end of the passage he came to a stop, and took a good look.

Standing near a table at one side of the apartment were Bill Murray and Lou Hoko, and lying on the floor near them was Bub Sprague, bound hand and foot.

The poor fellow had a very white face, which Wild could not help noticing, for it was quite light in there, since there was an opening at the other side of the cave near the rocky ceiling.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Man of Mystery Again.

Cheyenne Charlie brought up the rear as they all rode away in accordance with Wild's instructions.

"I wish we could race Bub Sprague," said the masked man running as fast as they could to overtake them.

They were scarcely two hundred feet behind, but the scout did not urge his horse to any faster pace, but rode along just fast enough to keep the same distance ahead of them.

The others, however, were going a little faster than that. Charlie was simply trying to draw them on, so Wild would have a good chance to recapture Sprague. Then again, he was taking the chances of being shot at by them.

But he was willing to take a chance at two hundred feet and actually was hoping that they would fire upon him. This he would have an excuse to answer the front, for he meant to do it with his rifle, which made it pretty sure that some of the masked bandits would run down.

Jim Dart looked back and he quickly guessed what was up to, so he slackened the pace of his horse. Then Arlotta did the same thing, though Annas and Ed kept right along with the cowboy and the two Chinamen.

Cool and calculated as he was, Nat Havens, the leader of the outlaw gang, must have become exasperated, for he raised his revolver and fired a shot.

The bullet whistled through the air dangerously close to the scout's head, and then with great quickness he turned the saddle and threw the butt of his rifle to his shoulder.

Taking a quick aim, Charlie fired, and one of the men fell flat upon his face. This caused them all to halt.

But three of them began firing as fast as they could.

Crang! Charlie's rifle spoke again, and another went down.

That was quite different.

The rest ran for cover among the rocks that were right hand. This gave Sprague a nod of satisfaction when he saw them pick the side of the pass that was opposite to the entrance of his cave.

"Boys," he said, and even though they were quite a little distance from that pass and he knew that they would hardly dare to expose themselves to view in an effort to get to it.

You brought your horse to a halt and waited until Jim came back to him.

"They started it," he said, as though to explain why he had shot two of the outlaws. "You seen it, didn't you, Jim?"

"Yes, I saw it," Charlie said. "I saw you duck as though you heard the hum of the bullet."

"I did hear it," he replied. "It came mighty close. That was the way I fired that shot. He's shot pretty good, 'cause he was only two hundred feet."

"But you didn't get the leader, Charlie. I saw him run a rock the first time."

"I could have got him all right, Jim, but I don't know I was thinkin' of just which one I wanted. It made no difference to me, and I just plugged the nearest one to me. It's all right, I'ce most likely Wild wants to take Nat Havens alive."

"Certainly he does. Now then, suppose we had better get right here and try and prevent the villagers from going to their cave. Wild must surely find Bub Sprague there, when he comes out he'll have to be careful or they'll open fire on him."

Nothing more was talked. Soon a man would be able to be afoot some brush close by, and when Cheyenne Charlie and Jim saw a bearded man emerging from a cleft in the face of the cliff.

"It was the man who had surprised Young Wild West," said Jim, "telling him that he was going to take the life of Nat Havens. Charlie and Jim Dart had not seen him, but both rode right away that he was the fellow who called himself the Man of Mystery."

"I heard you shoot, and I came on through from my way, the man said, just as if he was well acquainted with me."

"Did you kill any one?"

"Only two of 'em," the scout answered, and then he faced the man squarely in the face, he added. "Ain't you the Man of Mystery?"

"Yes, that's who I am."

"All right, then. I thought so. How in thunder did you get here so quick? I thought you was hangin' out on what we call the Death Trail."

"It's only about five hundred feet from where I am standing now—the Death Trail, you know. But say," he added, not very seriously, "did you shoot Nat Havens?"

"No, I didn't. Git him, it was two of the others I get."

"Ah! I'm glad of that, and the pale face of the Man of Mystery lighted up, while a bright glee shone from his eyes for a second."

"Listen," he said, as he came closer to the two. "Some has named the route back there, pointing toward the south of the cave, the Death Trail. I'm going to tell you right now that there is a secret to the Death Trail. What is will be discovered later on. But mark you well what I say. You must have Nat Havens alive."

"You were telling Young Wild West that he did not do great wrong and that you meant to kill him but wanted
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CHAPTER IX.

WILD HAS AN EASY THING OF IT.

Young Wild West was as cool as he ever was in his whole life when he stood looking in at the prisoner and the two men who had no doubt been left there to guard him.

When the two reached the end of the pass they saw Arletta riding over the Death Trail alone.

"Go on," Jim called out, motioning for her to proceed.

"Hurry and tell the others to keep a watch on the left side, and if that Man of Mystery calls out to you do exactly as he says."

This was rather mystifying to the girl, but she had experienced so much that nothing was very surprising to her now.

She urged her horse forward, and then Charlie and Jim rode on after her, watching for the outlaws to appear.

They were a good hundred yards in advance of them, anyhow, but just as they were turning a bend in the regular trail they saw them appear.

Neither of them had taken time to get a rifle, and this was encouraging to the two, for they could keep closer to them.

A hundred yards further on and they saw those who had gone ahead at a halt.

Charlie waved his hand for them to continue, but Arletta turned her horse and motioned for them to keep close to the left side of the cliff.

"I don't know what in thunder this means, Jim," the scout exclaimed, as he glanced at his partner for a moment. "It's the blankest piece of business I've ever struck. Just see what's been happenin' ever since we first met that galoot yesterday afternoon."

Jim made no reply.

He had his rifle to his shoulder, and was watching the Bandits in the distance.

They had gained slightly, and seemed bent on keeping up the pace, regardless of the fact that the two ahead of them were armed with rifles.

Charlie and Jim, placing dependence upon what the Man of Mystery had told them, let their horses go at an easy trotter now, and when they reached the spot where they had last seen Arletta and the rest they suddenly found themselves before a sort of cave.

No one was to be seen, however, but a voice called out from above:

"...into the cave. I can see Nat Havens coming..."

Both recognized the voice as belonging to the self-styled Man of Mystery, and without any hesitation they swung their horses around and succeeded in getting them over the rocks into the cave.

It was only a narrow place they had to go in, but as it turned sharply to the right they found quite a large chamber.

In this were the rest of the party.

Knowing that they were safe for the present, Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart dismounted, and rifles in hand, crept back so that they might see the outlaws when they came back.

They hardly had time to get there before they came riding along.

But they were not riding so fast now, for evidently they had just somewhat punished at no longer hearing the hoof-beats of those who they had been pursuing.

As the outlaws passed beyond their range of vision, a rumbling, crashing sound was heard, and then there was a roar that fairly shook the ground.

Charlie and Jim promptly rushed outside, and after them came Arletta, who was bound to see what had happened.

What they saw was somewhat surprising.

A sort of cut ran between some high rocks, leaving a space barely wide enough for a wagon to pass.

Into this a big boulder weighing many tons had lodged, effectually blocking the way over the Death Trail.

If the heavy mass of stone had been sent crashing down for the purpose of wiping out the outlaws it had not succeeded, for there sat the four masked horses, acting very much as though they were dumbfounded.

The mass of rock had simply blocked their way, that was all.

As the three stood watching, a whistling sound came from above them, and then the snaky coils of a lariat circled in the air for an instant and the broad moose settled over the head and shoulders of one of the masked horsemen.

It was Nat Havens who had been caught!

So they did so at once.
Knowing that it was possible that the rest of the outlaw gang was at hand at any moment, he made up his mind to do his work at once.

He was holding a revolver in his right hand, but not satisfied with this he drew another, and then raising them both he thrust them into the rocky chamber.

It happened that neither of the villagers was looking that way, and Wild was able to get within ten feet of them before they became aware of his presence.

As Lon Hoke gave a violent start and was about to utter a cry, the young desperado exclaimed:

"Silence! One word from you and you'll die. Hold up your immediate or your life.

Bill Murray almost sank to the floor when he recognized the young desperado.

"Up with your hands," repeated Wild, in a voice that told plainly that he meant what he said.

With something like a gasp Murray obeyed, and then his companion, realizing how hopeless the case was, followed his example.

"So you two fellows joined the outlaw band, after all, did you?" the boy said, in his cool and easy way, as he stepped toward them, taking care to keep them covered with his revolvers.

"There wasn't no way to get out of it, Young Wild West," answered Murray, in a faltering voice. "I didn't do it by my own will, you know.

"Well, it's just the same. Now then, Murray, you can use your left hand to take the gun away from Hoke. Hurry up, for God's sake, as fast as you can.

Hoke gave vent to an angry growl as his pard did as the young desperado told him to.

"Throw that gun over here by my feet."

This was quickly done.

"Now, then, let me have yours."

"You kin have it an' welcome, Young Wild West," Murray answered, quickly, and then glanced at the pistol; it was a right-hand model.

"That's all right," the boy said, with a nod of his head.

"You have got a knife there. Suppose you use it to cut the rope that is wound around the fellow on the floor."

There was no objection to being bound, but Hoke made some objections.

A threat from Wild caused him to cool down a little, and he was soon rendered helpless, as far as doing any harm was concerned.

It was just then that Wild heard a commotion in the outer cave.

"The gang is coming back, Bub," he exclaimed, in a low tone of voice. "Just hustle those fellows in that dark corner over there, and grab up the guns you see on the ground."

Another threatening motion toward Hoke caused him to hurry along with his pard.

Sprague picked up the two revolvers, and standing before the prisoners, who had a short time before been his guards, waited to see what the young desperado would do.

Wild took his station at one side of the natural doorway. He could hear horses moving about, and it suddenly flashed upon him that the villains were not coming in, after all, but had merely come to get their horses to pursue to those who had been left out.

When he heard them leaving the underground place he gave a nod, and turning to Sprague, said:

"That's all right, Bub, but they're not coming in here, but are going on out. I suppose they mean to try and catch Charlie and Jim and the rest. We'll wait a few seconds to make sure, and then if we hear nothing of them we'll go out and see what's going on."

"All right, Wild," Bub answered.

"You kin depend on me to come and tell me to," the boy added.

Wild waited for nearly a minute, and not hearing the least sound from the other part of the underground place, he nodded to Bub to fetch along the prisoners.

Taking each of them by the arm, the man did so. Hoke was very sullen, but Murray seemed ready to cry at any moment.

"Brace up, you rascal," Wild said to him. "Don't act like a part of a baby. You had a chance, but you didn't take it."

Lon Hoke was a lively young fellow, and all the prisoners except Havens considered himself a very bright man, but I reckoned he didn't fool us any. We followed you when you came into the cave last night. If Havens' explanations, his friends had told us to come right on in the band. I didn't want to do it very much, but when you insisted on it I gave in. We both joined the band just before you happen to know all about it. I was looking about you time you took the oath of allegiance."

"Yer?"

"Yes, that's a fact. So was Cheyenne Charlie and this Bub. We followed you when you came into the cave last night. If Havens' explanations, his friends had told us to come right on in the band. I didn't want to do it very much, but when you insisted on it I gave in. We both joined the band just before you happen to know all about it. I was looking about you time you took the oath of allegiance."

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"You have done a mighty smart thing, Young Wild West."

"I'm glad you think so, Lon Hoke declared, half angrily. "But this ain't over yet."

"Well, Nat Havens cleans up the rest of your gang. I've taken him long to get your orders; but you followed us as managed to sneak in here don't say that you're safe.

"You're mistaken on that, Hoke. I consider that I have already won out. You heard the shooting outside. I suppose you didn't hear one shot. You followed us as managed to sneak in here don't say that you're safe.

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Out into the stable part of the cavernous place they made their way, and seeing a few horses there, our hero told Bub to fetch along a couple of them.

But before Sprague could obey he changed his mind and added:

"Never mind. We can get them when we come back. I there's a rope hanging there. I reckon we can use that. Let's take a few turns about these two fellows and see if they're fixed so they can't possibly get away. Then you can lead them along with the rope."

"All right, Bub," the boy answered, without any chuckle. He showed that he knew how to make good knots, and the next thing we knew, both of the men were tied to the fence along with the rope.

"I'll do that mighty quick, Wild," Bub answered, with a smile.

Then our hero led the way outside and they were soon in the pass.

A man was in sight, and after looking cautiously in both directions the young desperado ventured out to the mouth of the trail and looked in the direction he knew his companions must have gone.

In a few moments they were in sight, and the next minute two horsemen appeared.

They were riding as though for their lives, and with a look of pleasure the young desperado stepped aside and, revolvers in hand, waited for them.

He knew very well that they were outlaws, and bent over capturing them alive, he stood there until they came in view around a bend.

At that very moment the two horsemen saw Bub come with his two prisoners.
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stopping their horses suddenly and looked on both sides
when they wanted to find an avenue of escape.
"Away! If you try to get away I'll shoot you both."

They cried one of them, throwing up his hands in
alarm, while the other threw down his head close to his
horse's neck. "Saw you fellows must have enough of it," the boy said,
"sawed and easy way, as he walked toward them. "Hold
it, the hell with you."

He was said to the covering outlaw, who promptly
stepped up and did as he was told.
The hesitation took their weapons
away from him and bade them disarm.
"There is Nat Havens and the other fellow?" the young
man asked.

If he was released and hauled somewhere back there, one
man answered, in a trembling tone of voice. "The
other fellow got shot. Awful things have been happenin' since
about now, you fellows."
The answer was somewhat surprising to the young
deadshot, as he could not imagine who it was who had lassoed the
leader of the outlaws.

"It's right," he said. "You may as well submit quietly, for
he could shoot you."
"Don't you dare," shouted Cheyenne Charlie, waving his hat. "Here
comes Wild now."

Then he saw Bob Sprague leading the four prisoners.
"Great guns," he added. "I reckon Wild got them two
captured. I'm going to the other two, then. But he's got
tied together with a rope, an' he's lassooed 'em along as if they was
soldiers."

They all saw that they were done for, and the next minute Wild
had joined them and was telling them all about it.

As soon as he had briefly related what had happened after
he went into the cave to look for Sprague he wanted to know
what had become of the other two outlaws.

"One of them was roped by the Man of Mystery and pulled
quickly up the cliff, Wild," Arietta told him. "The other Jim
was forced to shoot."

"That's right, E. It could have been no one else. Sup-
pose we ride back there and try and find him. I am anxious
to see him again, I suppose he has finished the outlaw leader;
there is no time lost."

They all rode back to the place where the bowlder had
tumbled between the narrow space through which the trail
was cut, but no signs could be found of the Man of Mystery.

Arietta told Wild it was her opinion that there was a way
to get to the niche above from the inside of the cave, so he at
once started to investigate.

But search as he might, nothing in the way of a pass-
age that led upward could be found, though they did find one
that went on through in the direction of the haunted pass.

"It's a sort of puzzle," our hero said, with a shake of his
head, after about twenty minutes had been spent in making a
search. "We can't find the Man of Mystery or the outlaw
he captured in such a wonderful way. But we have learned
how it was that the man appeared in the pass at the other
side. This passage will take us all through, I suppose, and I am
sure there is room enough for the horses. I think the
passing we can do is to go through and then have a look
into the outlaws' cave. I am anxious to discover how they
worked the ghost trick, as they call it."

So am I, Wild," the scout spoke up. "Just lead the way.
We'll git through here, all right."

Bidding the rest follow, and telling Jim to bring up the
rear, there would be no chance of the prisoners getting
away; and they happened to become lost, and the
young deadshot mounted his horse and started on through
the passage, carrying a lighted lantern hanging to his arm.

It was not such a great distance that he had to go, and he
and his horse were so quiet in some places it was just about wide enough
for a horse and rider to pass.

The worst part of it came when they reached the outlet,
and the scout was managed to get his horse through, and then it went
along right up until the pack-horses came.
The packs had to be removed in order to let them squeeze through the narrow place.

But this did not take a great while, and soon they were all outside in the pass.

Then they rode back to the opening which formed the entrance to the big cave.

The prisoners had remained silent up to this time.

Then one of the last to be captured said:

"You can't find out anything by goin' in there, Young Wild West. If you want to know how the ghost trick was worked, I'll tell yer."

"Go ahead and tell us, then," was the reply.

"Well, we had a couple of skeletons that Nat Havens rigged up with wires. He ran wires to the cliff up there an' fastened 'em in such a way that the skeletons could be pulled up an' down the cliff jest as was wanted. We had two or three white woman's dresses, too, which was fixed up with somethin' inside of 'em to look like ghosts. They was worked the same way with the wires. If anyone happened to come along in the night-time, an' we knewed they was comin', we would work the ghosts. But in the daytime the skeletons was worked. That's why this place got to be called the Haunted Pass, I s'pose."

"That is quite a satisfactory explanation, I think," our hero said, nodding to his companions. "But if any of you would like to go in and see how it looks inside, come on."

"They all wanted to see it with the exception of Dub and the cowboy."

The latter declared he did not care about going in there, while the former said he had been there twice now and that was quite enough for him.

They remained outside guarding the prisoners, while the rest made an inspection of the cave.

Wild found the wires that worked the ghosts, and he cut them all.

When they went out they took the horses in the outer cave with them.

Dub and the cowboy called out to them excitedly as they appeared.

"There's another skeleton an' three ghosts!" Sprague exclaimed. "They come tumblin' down the cliff there mighty sudden like a little while ago."

"All right, Dub. I found the wires and cut them, and that's why they tumbled down. I reckon we'll take those things and go on through to Lucky Spot. But we'll try and find the Man of Mystery first."

It was suggested by the scout that the horses belonging to the outlaws be loaded with what was worth while in the outlaws' cave and taken over, too.

Wild was willing to this, so while the rest were loading the horses he called Charlie and Arietta to ride back with him to the place where the outlaw leader had disappeared.

They were gone fully half an hour, and when they returned everything was in readiness to proceed.

"Find out anything, Wild?" Jim Dart asked.

"No," the young deadshot answered, with a shake of his head. "I reckon the secret of the Death Trail is going to remain a secret, as far as we are concerned. I honestly believe that we'll never see nor hear anything either of the Man of Mystery or Nat Havens again. We'll take a look when we come back, though; that is, if we happen to come back this way. Come on. Now we'll make for Lucky Spot Camp."

Five minutes later our friends were riding along with the prisoners.

When the population of the mining camp saw the party riding in with four prisoners it was not long before a crowd gathered.

Wild called a halt in front of the general store and hotel, and then as it happened a man led the way to them at the same time calling out that he was the sheriff of the county. Wild skied him up quickly and took it for granted that he was, though he asked him to show his authority.

The man quickly did so, and then wanted to know what the prisoners were.

When he was told that they were all that was left of Havens' band of outlaws, he could scarcely believe it.

But Bill Murray, anxious to escape being hanged, and we clean breast of it all, after which the four were taken custody.

Not until after they had eaten dinner at the camp did they pitch did Young Wild West again meet the sheriff.

Then he walked over to the shanty hotel and found him there.

"Sheriff," said he, "I reckon there's a reward coming for this."

"Yes, five hundred dollars," was the reply. "But you remember it was for Nat Havens."

"I thought it was for the breaking up of Nat Havens but..."

"Well, it was somethin' like that."

"All right, then. Don't you think the band is broken pretty well? I reckon you had better take some one out ride back there and pick up the dead ones. I hardly think you will find Nat Havens, though. I think his body felt in a deep crevice somewhere, and that it will be impossible to find it."

"All right, Young Wild West. I reckon I'll pay the reward. I've heard enough about you to know that you wouldn't do nothin' that ain't the truth. I'll pay it right now.

"Very well, sheriff. Come here, Dub."

Sprague, who had accompanied him, promptly stepped up.

The moment Wild received the five hundred dollars from the sheriff he handed it to the man who was so anxious to get East.

"There you are, Dub," he said. "You take that. I don't want it, and I am quite sure that Charlie and Jim and girls wouldn't touch a dollar of it. If you're going East, go out for the nearest railroad station at once. Don't go where you did once before. You know you got about one-thousand the way and then changed your mind and came back."

"I know it, Wild," was the reply. "But this time I'm going to take it, 'cause I know you mean to give it to me."

That settled that part of it, and there was one more.

Lucky Spot Camp at least who was very happy.

Our friends remained at the mining camp the remainder of the day.

The sheriff and some deputies swore in and went into the cave and then brought the bodies of the outlaws back with them.

Wild recommended that the prisoner called Bill Murray be dealt leniently with, and the sheriff promised to do his best in the matter.

The next morning as they were ready to leave, Uncle Sam and Jerry Junk came running up to shake hands and bid the good-by.

"Jerry is goin' with me, Wild," Dub said. "I'm risin' to take him to New York an' let him see the sights."

"All right, good luck to you both," was the reply, and as they waved an adieu, and with a ringing cheer sounding in the ears, Young Wild West and his friends rode on from the camp, deciding that it was hardly worth while to go back there; they had come and try to learn the secret of the Death Trail.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST STAYED BY A SIGNAL OR, ARINETTA AND THE VANISHING LIGHT."
CURRENT NEWS

United States Secret Service men were rushed to Spring-
field, Ill., December 21, following the discovery of two
mail sacks stolen from a Wabash train and found in
a junk lot there. One of the pockets had contained
regis-
ter receipts, and the officials say the loss will amount
to
more than $10,000. The discovery was made by a five-
year-old boy. Every letter had been opened, but scores
of
valuable documents were found, showing that the robbers took only
the cash.

Confronted by two masked highwaymen, each armed
with a revolver, five girls were recently saved from being
robbed shortly after 8 o'clock a mile beyond the end of the
Union car line, Spokan
e, Idaho, when Miss Katherine
Staples, aged 19, who was driving the buggy in which
they were riding, slashed one of the outlaws across the face
with her whip. The highwayman cringed under the blow
inflicted into the brush. His companion shouted to the
girls to cease calling for help and then followed his pal
into the brush.

George Bynum, who was out with a party of hunters a
two days ago, roped a young grizzly bear. The party
sprang the bear near the Yuba River, California, and fired
cartridges at it without effect. Seeing that the quarry was
cut out to escape, Bynum, an experienced cowboy, unfurled
his lasso and chased the animal with his trained range
horses. Overcoming the bear after a mile chase through
the brush, Bynum placed his line upon it and held it
until his companions arrived. The grizzly was then
severely tied and brought to Downieville.

After Tuesday, December 24, travelers on the Mojave
Desert rubbed their eyes in wonderment and believed they
were dreaming of geography book scenes of the great Sa-
ta Fe Desert, for two carloads of ostriches were on their way
to Victorville, near which point an experimental ostrich
farm is to be started. Because the Mojave Desert is more
like the native haunts of the ostrich, it is believed that the
birds will thrive better there than at other points in
nother California. The government once experimented
with ostriches on the desert. The experiment was unsuc-
scessful.

Prof. Thomas T. Yerkes of the mechanical engineering
department at Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind., told a
class of a strange incident which occurred recently.
A neglected bill, which he lost from his receipt book, was
snatched by the wind from his horse, No. 501 Dorge-
tee, West Lafayette, to St. Joseph, Ind., more than one
twelve miles from Lafayette. It is believed the bill was
sucked into the air by a whirlwind and then blown far
over state to the point where it was picked up. A resident
of St. Joseph found the stray bill, and returned it by mail
to its owner. The bill and envelope were posted in the bulletin board at the university as an instance of a
rare freak of nature.

American firms are preparing catalogue and advertising
matter in the Chinese language, with an end in view of
reaching the demands and tastes of the Chinese trade.
Sewing machines, phonographs, lamps, patent medicines,
yeast and yeast powder, cigarettes, and condensed milk
are among the articles extensively advertised by placards
in Chinese posted about the streets of Chinese cities. One
enterprising American baking powder firm has an illus-
trated booklet containing numerous recipes in Chinese
issued and distributed among the Chinese people. An
American university issues its catalogue in Chinese to at-
tract Chinese students desirous of going abroad for a West-
ern education. An American correspondence school ad-
vertises very extensively in Chinese throughout the cities
of China and does considerable business with ambitious
students. Many American patent medicines are advertised
throughout China by literature in Chinese only. A lead-
ing American sewing machine company also attributes
much of its success to the spreading of its Chinese adver-
tising literature among the Chinese people. Recently a
large wholesale American drug house secured an idea of an
appropriate trade mark for its products in China from an
American consul and is now issuing its labels and advertis-
ing matter in connection with this trade mark, the latter
being particularly adapted to Chinese ideas.

Despite the fact that the Peruvian government allowed
the four members of the scientific expedition sent out un-
der the joint auspices of Yale university and the National
Geographic Society only about four and a half months to
explore the famed pre-Incan city of Machu Picchu, buried
on the edge of a 2,000-foot canyon, the men, who reached
there on the United Fruit liner Santa Marta, in from Colon
December 19, brought with them stories of some remark-
able discoveries. Those returning were Professors Hiram
Bingham, head archaeologist at Yale; Professor Herbert
E. Gregory, head of the department of geology at Yale;
Dr. George F. Eaton, of the Peabody Institute, and Pro-
Fessor Osgood Hardy. Smallloop and typhus plagued them,
and their Indian guides deserted them, but the most dis-
heartening thing of all was the opposition of President
Billinghurst, a descendant of an old-time British settler.
Professor Bingham brought back fifty skulls of a pre-Incan
period and many skeletons, as well as thirty cases of won-
derfully wrought bronze tablets and pieces of pottery. Dr.
Eaton collected fifty cases of bones, which will arrive later.
Among the fossils discovered were the bones of mastodons
and those of the ancient equus, the forerunner of the horse.
Dr. Eaton and Professor Gregory were both ill for a long
period, and Professor Bingham nearly lost his life as he was
exploring the heights of Palco, in Southern Peru, 1,600
feet above sea level. Professor Bingham, who was in
charge of the expedition, brought back with him Juan F.
Leguizam, the thirteen-year-old son of the former President,
and will place the lad in school in Virginia.
CHAPTER XXI. "(Continued)"

What their thoughts or fears may have been during those minutes which to them must have seemed hours no one save themselves could have told.
Once Ella halted, and for an instant it seemed as if she must have fallen.
The supporting arm of her uncle gave her new courage, however, and they hurried on, following closely the path chosen by Charley and Tom, until at last Captain Hunter suddenly discerned the dark hull of a ship looming up ahead.
He looked again.
Yes, it was a ship, and there to the right of it lay another, and another still to the left.
Still hurrying forward he saw coming toward them a number of dusky figures similarly clothed to themselves.
They were divers; another moment put that beyond a doubt.
All carried axes, and presented a decidedly formidable appearance.
Were they friends or foes?

CHAPTER XXII.

TOM CAPTURES THE TERROR.

"What had happened?
It was Tom's first thought and Charley's as well.
Instinctively the boys turned and faced each other; then Tom, grasping Charley's arm, pointed back in the direction from which they had come.
Fabulous wealth lay scattered all about them, for who could doubt that the contents of the other boxes were similar to the one into which they had broken? But what was all the wealth of the Indies compared with the welfare of those whom they had left behind?
Tom's first thought had been that it was an earthquake, but almost instantly the recollection of the torpedoes of the Terror came to mind.
"We must go back at once," he thought. "If anything has happened to the Cyclops——"
Poor fellow!
He was unable to complete the sentence, even in his thoughts.
Charley, offering no sign of objection, the boys hurriedly scrambled over the heap of boxes and wreckage, seeking the sandy bottom of the bay.
Before they had advanced a dozen yards, Tom became aware that a mistake had been made, and that they had been going in the wrong direction.
The hedge had now assumed an unfamiliar shape, and instead of coming upon the wreck of the first galley they had discovered, another of very different form seemed to have appeared in its place.
"We must go back and start over again," thought Tom, and he was about to communicate his thoughts to Charley when he suddenly felt the latter's hand upon his arm.
There was something long and black descending upon them from above, and Charley was pointing toward it; it was a boat built in the shape of a huge cigar.
Cyclops or Terror?
The question was most important, but how to decide?
One of the strangely constructed crafts it certainly was, but which one was more than Tom could tell.
Charley's thoughts were of a similar character, and he feeling that the chances were all in favor of its being a Cyclops, the boys stood and watched it.
Slowly it descended, maintaining at the same time a slow forward movement.
All at once Tom, whose eyes were fixed on the boat, caught sight of the ugly face of Dick Price at the wire.
"Heaven help my father!" was the thought that flashed through his mind, "this means mischief and no mistake!"
Clutching Charley's arm, he drew him back into the shadow of the sunken ship.
Meanwhile the Terror had continued to descend, until at last she rested on the bottom.
Moments passed and the door of the water-tight chamber opening, four men clothed in diving armor sailed forth and started for the sunken ship.
What was Tom about?
The instant he saw them coming he drew Charley around on the other side and pointing toward the Terror in the most animated manner, hurriedly pushed ahead.
There was no danger of discovery on the part of the divers, for they had already passed into the shadow. A few moments later, and the boys stood abreast of the door communicating with the water-tight compartment, and Tom had boldly set the knob.
"Great Scott!" thought Charley, "is he going to attempt to capture the Terror? One—two—three—four—that means Price and three others. Tom is taking his chances, but——"
he never once thought of drawing back, and they inside the door now.

Tom’s helmet was off the instant the retreating water
caused his shoulders.

They’ve blown up the Cyclops, Charley,” he whispered.

“Ye’ve done it—I feel—it I know it! Dick Price, or
Vin Terrible, I’m going to have revenge!”

I think of the risk we run,” answered Charley,

for we know how many of the scoundrels are still on

it. For Heaven’s sake, don’t be rash."

I don’t care. If they’ve killed father and Ella I don’t

live any longer. Here goes, Charley. If worse

comes to worse I’ll die fighting to the last.”

As the inner door flew back a dark figure rose suddenly

from them.

I was Caesar.

“Hey, Massa Tom Hunter! Massa Brown! Oh, Lawd,

or was escaped?”

“Hush! not a loud word, or I’ll beat your brains out!"

Oh, Cyclops—tell me what have they done?”

“Have her up with torpedoes!”

Tom staggered back.

“And were all killed on board?” he faltered.

“Silly, I especs so. Don’t see how they could ‘scape—

not see how youn’ done got away, but now youn’ is

in I’gib de Terror to youse, and welcome. Boys, dere

ain’t a blessed soul on board but me and Captain Ter-

ror’s sure gone to feed the sharks.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

Captain Hunter drew Ella closer to his side, at the same
time giving the signal previously arranged upon to compel
him a halt.

It was entirely useless to attempt to conceal themselves
from the approaching party. The only thing to do there
was to stand and face them, be they friend or foe.

There were four of the divers all told; their dress was
of the same peculiar sort worn by the refugees from
the Cyclops, and it was this which made Captain Hunter’s
sight sink within him, for he felt that they must have
come from off the Terror and nowhere else.

Each man had the diver’s ax attached to the suit in the
usual position; in each helmet blazed lights similar to his
own, and there were the very duplicates of his own
air knapsacks strapped across their back.

Two of the divers walked in advance, while the other
seemed to be carrying something heavy between them,
such a second glance showed to be a box of tremendous
weight seemingly, and even this point was speedily proved,

for as they drew nearer it was easy to see, for the box had no
lid, that it was filled with gold coins, for the most part as

valuable as a Mexican dollar and few smaller than a dime.

Yet all these things were comprehended by Captain
Hunter in a few seconds.

He had scarcely thrown his protesting arm about Ella
when he saw that they were discovered.

The two divers who carried the chest dropped their bur-
den—all four were seen to grasp their axes and start to-
ward the little party with a rush.

A mist passed before Captain Hunter’s eyes; for the
moment he felt that he must suffocate; there was a terrible
ringing in his ears.

These were no friends, but foes!

Scurrying realizing what he did, the master of the Cyclops
seized Ed’s arm and flung it round Ella’s waist, indicating
by a peremptory gesture that the steward was to look to her
safety.

Already the foremost of the enemy had aimed a crush-
ing blow at Joe Haggerty’s helmet, which the engineer
skillfully dodged.

There was but one ax between them, and that was in
the possession of Captain Hunter himself.

Darting forward, he struck out, missed, dodged a blow,
struck again, and this time successfully cutting through
the helmet of his opponent at the side.

The diver sunk like a log, but at the same instant the
others were upon him, and a desperate conflict began.

Could he hope to conquer?

It seemed impossible.

Dodging and striking, striking and dodging, the brave
man leaped from side to side, keeping up the fight.

Another fell before his ax, then another.

But no—what was this?

There had been four at the start; three had fallen, and
still three remained.

He had struck but two—they were fighting among
themselves!

What now?

Was he going mad?

Surely there lay the Cyclops upon the bottom, not ten
feet away.

Wildly he struck again—another fell.

His brain was reeling; he staggered forward, fell him-
self, and knew no more until—

Not until he found himself lying stretched upon a cush-
ioned couch in a comfortable cabin, with Tom bending
over him and Ella’s soft hand bathing his head, while a
few feet away stood Charley Brown and Joe Haggerty,
with Ed grinning at the door.

Was he dreaming? Had it been all a dream? Was this
the cabin of the Cyclops? Had he never left it at all?

Hark!

Tom was speaking.

“He is all right now. Our enemies are all dead, father.
We’ve got a better boat than the one we lost, and the mil-
ions of the sunken fleet are ours!”

They were just in time.

We refer to Tom and Charley, of course, who had run
the Terror forward, arriving at the scene of the conflict by
the permission of a merciful Providence in season to hurry
out and lend them aid.

Tom had spoken truly.

They had captured a craft superior in every particular
to the Cyclops, and before they left the bay, which was
weeks later, gold in coin and ingots to a fabulous amount
had been taken on board from the treasure boxes of the
sunken fleet.

(To be Continued)
ITEMS OF INTEREST

GETS SPANISH PRISON LETTER.

Captain John Gulley, a retired seaman, 76 years old, of 694 Third avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y., received a letter recently, bearing the postmark of a small town in Spain. The contents told him of a fortune, which would be partly his should he come to the aid of the writer. A short time ago he visited his lawyer, Harry E. Shirk, in the Temple Bar Building. "It is the same old Spanish fraud game and you are the 'goat,'" said the attorney. The letter received by Gulley is almost the same as the many Spanish prison letters which arrive in every part of the United States about this time of the year. The reward in this case, however, is not concealed in a secret pocket of a wallet, which is hidden away in a coat that is in a trunk, alleged to be held by the authorities, but is to be found in a valise.

HIGH PRICES FOR AUTOGRAPHS.

The sum of $780, which was paid for an autographed letter of Martha Washington, was the highest price realized in the sale of Danforth autographs, which was concluded in Philadelphia, December 7, at Freeman's. Although the collection embraced many fine letters of Gen. Nathaniel Greene, Col. Henry Lee, John Paul Jones, John Adams, Ralph Izard, George Washington and Martha Washington, and the correspondence of Edmond Charles Genet, Minister from France to the United States, and James Campbell, Postmaster-General, the sale was marked by spirited bidding, and about $4,000 was realized. A communication from Commodore John Paul Jones to Genet realized the next highest price, bringing $735. Two letters by John Quincy Adams written at The Hague denying that Gen. Washington expressed the desire to resign as President of the United States because of the ingratitude of its people realized $170 and $160, respectively. A letter of Gen. Washington dated Philadelphia, 1782, directed to Major Gen. Greene, brought $300, and two others, communications dated a few days later, realized $295 and $105.

900 HUMMING BIRDS SEIZED.

The largest seizure of plumage made since the millinery law went into effect eighteen months ago was made recently by representatives of the State Conservation Commission and the National Association of Audubon Societies in A. Hirsh & Co.'s factory, No. 20 East Thirty-first street, New York.

Members of the Audubon Society discovered recently that a department store had sold a woman seven humming birds. B. L. Bowdish, chief clerk of the societies, traced the birds to Hirsh & Co. The store paid a fine of $50.

Accompanied by Warder Edgar Hicks, of the State Conservation Commission, Bowdish went to Hirsh & Co.'s factory and there discovered great quantities of plumage. The raid followed. They seized 900 humming birds and the plumage of many gulls, herons, grebes and swifts ready for women's hats and worth a large sum of money.

T. Gilbert Pearson, Secretary of the Audubon Society, said the other evening at the offices of the society, 1747 Broadway:

"The millinery law gave the tradespeople more than a year in which to dispose of stock, and since eight months have elapsed we can see no reason why leniency should be shown.

"There is an abundance of material that can be used for hat trimming to which there is no legal objection, and manufacturers and stores will find it to their advantage to adhere strictly to the law."

GERMANY AGAINST FOREIGN MARRIAGES.

"Hereafter no member of Germany's diplomatic service, who becomes betrothed to a woman who is not a German, will be dropped, the very fact of engaging himself to a foreigner being interpreted as a desire to leave the service and being promptly followed by notice that the service is granted. This revival of Bismarck's stern decree, based on his dictum that "a foreign wife cannot possibly help a German diplomat," has been revived in consequence. It is said, of German diplomacy in a certain European court, having been very unfavorably affected by the influence of a certain foreign grand dame who is the wife of a member of the German diplomatic service. International affairs of German diplomats have always been looked on unfriendly in certain quarters, and latterly the tendency of German statesmen and royalty has been to look with equal suspicion on international royal marriages as tending to Germany's hands in crises. Bismarck's prohibition was allowed to lapse into disregard when Prince Bernard of Bucow became Chancellor. He married an Italian, Princess Maria Beccadelli di Bologna, and headed a sect which has been liberally represented by American women among them Lillie May Langham, of Louisville, Ky., and of the late Ambassador Baron Speck von Stere, Jeanne Luckemeyer, of New York, wife of the late German Ambassador at Washington, Count Johann Reiche von Bernstorff; a great granddaughter of John Paul von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg, once Ambassador to England, afterward Foreign Minister; Maud Cass Ledyard, of Detroit, whose husband, Baron von Ketteler, was assassinated in Peking by Boxers while he was Minister to China, and Constance Hoyt of Washington, who wedded Baron Hendrick von Stumm, who was second secretary to the German Embassy in America. This list might be largely extended if it were made to include former and minor members of embassies and legations. It is worthy of note that Gen. Paul von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg and Gen. von Schweinitz, both of whom had American wives, were in the German diplomatic service during Bismarck's time.
THE KING OF CRIPPLE CREEK

OR

THE BOY WITH A BARREL OF GOLD

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIX. (Continued)

The arm had been well set, for Joe Duffett was, in his way, something of a surgeon, as Colonel Wilfer had reason to know.

"We shall now leave you, my men," said the colonel, as soon as we can, men will be sent up here to take you on to Cripple Creek. If you think you can escape, why not? but all I can say is that if you succeed, I shall immediately organize a force and hunt you down. There will be no jailing done then. You will simply be lynched, so you will take my advice you will remain just where you are."

Hearing this, Colonel Wilfer led the way back into the room, Terry and Ethel following him.

Their way took them through the ridge to a broad entrance on the other side, where there was a fire and Colonel Wilfer's horse was found.

"Jack," said the colonel, "sit down and make yourself comfortable. We have got to stay here all night and may well take it easy until the storm lets up. My dear boy, you can't ever thank me for what you have done for the state. When her horse carried her over the cliff I never expected to see my darling again; but your prompt action saved her and—and—"

The colonel broke down here and seemed too much affected to proceed.

"Why, really I did nothing," replied Jack. "I caught that horse's bridle, it is true, but—"

"That's all right. You got there," broke in the colonel, "and declare that the horse was certainly not gone over the cliff with her if you had not been just as quick to the hold as you were. We won't talk about it any more. I have got something of the highest importance to say to you and Terry. Do you know why Bill Beers put up that piece of paper? Why it was that you and Terry were enticed up to Silliman's hut?"

"Why, to blackmail us," replied Jack. "They made me write Terry to draw a hundred dollars, and—"

"And that is only part of it. Let me tell you the rest. It's part of a scheme to ruin you. There has been a regular syndicate of toughs formed against you both; friends of Silliman's, whom you captured and sent up to the mines, where he belongs."

"Why, I know that," said Jack. "Beers told me that. I understand it all."

"Do you know that this morning an injunction was served prohibiting you from working your mine? That Judge Dillon granted it on the ground that the sale of which you bought the claim was illegal because the proper notice had not been given?"

"Impossible!" cried Jack. "Judge Dillon is supposed to be an honorable man; he would never do such a thing."

"Judge Dillon is, to my certain knowledge, one of the greatest scoundrels who ever went unhung," replied Colonel Wilfer. "There is great jealousy against the firm of Hudson & Tolliver, as you know. A new sale is to take place to-morrow at noon by the order of this most unrighteous judge. It has been advertised for two weeks in an obscure paper up the county. The idea is to wipe you out. There's more to it which I will explain later. All I need add now is that if they could have held you prisoner twenty-four hours you would have found yourself minus a mine when you got free, if, indeed, they did not kill you in the end."

Jack was amazed. But as he knew many of the claim shysters of Cripple Creek to be, he had never anticipated that their rascality could extend so far as this.

"Who told you all this, colonel?" he exclaimed. "The whole thing must have been very secretly managed, for no breath of it ever got to my ears."

"Who told me? Why, One-eyed Ike told me," replied the colonel. "One of your men came and confessed it all to him shortly after you and Terry started out, and what does Ike do but jump right into the steam launch and run down to the mill and tell me."

"Blessings on Ike!" cried Jack. "And yet he is what they call a bad man."

"Jack Hudson saved my life and I'd give it cheerfully to save his," was the way Ike put it; but he did not know where you had gone and the informer could not tell him, so he started at once for Cripple Creek to see what he could learn. Meanwhile I had business in Breezecreek Canyon, and something seemed to tell me to go right ahead and perhaps I would find you. There's my story, Jack. They are trying to rob you of your mine and the next move will be to sue you for an accounting and to claim all the money you have ever taken out of it. Ruin scares you in the face, my boy, unless we can get to Cripple Creek to-morrow morning; but can we do it? Look out there and see the snow banking up against the mouth of the cave, and we only have one horse among us all."

CHAPTER XX.

GETTING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN.

Jack sat for a long time in silence. It was a hard blow to him. He could not bear to think of all he had worked so hard for being swept away in a day by a gang of
swindlers, and he held a prisoner here, not five miles from Cripple Creek as the crow flies, but as good as a hundred, the way matters stood.

If it had been a clear day he could have walked out of the cave and looked right down into Cripple Creek, and by the aid of a good glass actually watched the people as they walked about the street; but, as it was, he might just as well have been at the other end of the earth.

At least so Col. Wilifer thought, and most people would have agreed with him; but Jack was thinking while he sat there silent, and the more he thought about the matter the more inclined he was to take an altogether different view of the affair.

"Terry, you knew all about this before?" he said at last.

The colonel had drawn Ethel to one side and they were discussing their own affairs.

"Oh, yes!" replied Terry. "He told me all about it while we were riding along the ridge, Jack."

"What do you think of it?"

"Why, I don't know what to think. Whatever you say goes."

"I only wish I could say go," murmured Jack. "If I could only once get into Cripple Creek I'd make those fellows sick, and don't you forget it."

"You never could get there alive in this storm!" cried Terry. "And in the nighttime, too."

"I think I could. It's not cold, but can I leave the rest of you here?"

"Yes, you can, Jack," broke in Col. Wilifer. "You can leave us all here. If you think there is any chance of getting there, take the horse and go along. Terry and I can stick it out until you can send help to us, and as for those roughs, we shall be good for them in case they should, by any chance, get free—never you fear."

"What do you say, Ethel?" demanded Jack. "I'm sure I only want to do the right thing."

"I say, go!" declared Ethel. "Don't suppose for a minute that I want to see you lose your mine after all you have done for me."

"Go, Jack," said Col. Wilifer, seeing that the boy still hesitated. "I would, if I stood in your shoes. I would not give the matter another moment's thought. I am well able to take care of myself and my daughter, and there is always Terry to help."

Jack needed no further urging, for he had already made up his mind that it was the only thing to be done.

A few moments later he found himself astride the horse, riding along the top of the ridge, with the wind blowing against his side with a force of eighty miles an hour, whirling the snow all about him.

It was all the horse could do to hold his own, and this was not the worst; for how was Jack ever to find the trail, and after he found it, how was he ever to face this terrible wind in going down the mountain side?

If it had continued as it was then, it is doubtful if he could have done it; but as luck would have it just about the time Jack reached the spot where the hut had been the wind began to die down and at the same time the temperature rose several degrees.

No less snow fell, but what came down was much softer and everything seemed to indicate that it was soon going to turn to rain.

Jack now halted and made a careful study of the surrounding cliffs.

At last feeling certain that he had located the trail started down the mountain, the horse slipping and sliding in the most dangerous fashion.

It was now getting on toward night, and, of course, was of the utmost importance that Jack should get into Cripple Creek before darkness came.

He had not gone a great way before it seemed to him that he could see horses ahead, foiling up the slope, the wind whirled the snow about so that he could not be sure. It might be only the moving treetops, and less while he thought it was; when all at once he saw horse take.

There was a band of ten mounted men tolling up trail within a stone's throw of him.

Were they enemies or friends? Jack reined in immediately and rising in his stirrups shouted:

"Hello, there! Hello! Who are you? Pull out a bit and leave room for me to pass!"

"Hello, boss! That's you, I know by your voice," called the leader, and to Jack's great joy he also recognized his voice.

"That you, Ike?" he shouted back, and so it was he eyed Ike himself, with nine men all heavily armed around him, coming up to Stillman's to rescue Jack and Ike for Ike had gone straight to town and by moving among his old pals in the gambling saloons soon found a friend who knew all about the plot against the King of Cripple Creek.

For Jack and Ike to compare notes took but a few moments, of course, and a plan of action was immediately decided upon.

Eight of the men went on to the cave to the assistance of Col. Wilifer, Ethel and Terry, while Ike and one of them turned back down the trail, with Jack between them.

It had now begun to rain, for Jack had reached a lower level and it came down as though the flood gates of heaven were opened and meant to stay so for some time to come.

"Do you think we can make it, Ike?" asked Jack. It seems to me if it gets much softer the horses will lose footing altogether and that it will be a slide for the rest of the way."

"I'm hoping for the best," replied Ike. "We must be there, boss. I tell you it's a mighty serious matter; at what's more, I've bet a thousand dollars to one horse that the King of Cripple Creek will jump into this fix with both feet and knock his enemies out to the last man."

"Yes, and I want to see you win that bet, Ike," said Jack; "but say, we must be pretty near the mouth of the Canyon. What if we should run into a mule-train down, loaded with ore?"

"We are right into it now," replied Ike. "Don't talk about mule-trains to me, that would be the last thing they mules would tramp the slash down so that our horses could never stand on their feet. Still, it might be better hurry and get by the mouth of Webb Canyon we have the chance."

(To be Continued)
WILD WEST WEEKLY.

TIMELY TOPICS

Our thousand one hundred and fifty bales of raw silk, valued at $2,076,000, the largest and most valuable silk shipment ever brought across the Pacific to the Puget Sound, is landed at Tacoma, Wash., December 21, on the steamer of transmission from the Orient. The moment the steamer tied for the landing of longshoremen under rush orders began transmitting the silk to a special train, which carried the valuable cargo to New York.

In first report of the commission appointed under the terms of the Rockefeller Fund to devise means for the extermination of the hookworm in the mountain districts of the state was made at Lexington, Ky., December 21. Little hope is for Breathitt County, and shows that out of the 1,263 cases examined 50,000 cases of hookworm are estimated. In the 12 of the Breathitt County schools every pupil was found to be a sufferer.

Under the article, "Who is responsible for the present?" the letter of Mr. M. S. White for smoking a cigarette in the city, Vancouver, Wash., December 28, while sitting on the benches there, by Police Judge Shaw. Mrs. White was sitting on the bench pushing away a cigarette that made smoke, when Officers Jack Smith and T. B. Berry passed and arrested her. At the City Hall Mr. Shaw said that she was sick, but the judge took a different view, and passed sentence. This is the first time that a woman in this city has been arrested for such offense.

The streets and sentiment have saved a giant tree, known as the Creek Council Tree, which stands in the centre of the Street in Tulsa, Okla. An ordinance to cut the street was adopted recently and some citizens voted the tree destroyed but a decision to spare it has been made. Beneath the tree, according to tradition, the ashes of the Cherokee Indians were bumed in the Council ground in Georgia, when the Creeks came to get christian Territory more than seventy-five years ago. The tree stands the first important meetings of the tribe were held.

Silverware to the value of $200 disappeared from the home of Mrs. J. W. Barrows, at 113 East Seventy-second Street, New York City, recently, the loss being discovered after the departure of a woman who represented herself as a book agent. The woman, according to the police, said that she carried the volumes to the house of the maid, who filled in the rooms. The maid complied with the request, and after Mrs. Barrows had the silverware in the possession of the agent. It was agreed that the agent should call again and learn Mrs. Barrows' wish. A few minutes after the woman left the maid discovered the loss of the silverware, all engraved with the initials of Mrs. Barrows.

Uncle Sam's newest and most formidable battleship of the air, equipped with a death-dealing, rapid-fire gun, the heaviest to be mounted on an aeroplane, 44 feet wide and weighing a ton, propelled by a 70 horse-power motive plant, adaptable to land, sea and air, is nearing completion at the W. Starling Burgess Aerodrome, Marblehead, Mass. This latest war eagle is a radical departure from the former Burgess-Wright type of biplane, several of the latter having already been furnished to the War Department. In that the new war aeroplane is a biplane, it is similar to the former type of aerial battleship. But the new machine is four feet wider than the old type. Its powerful motive plant is capable of driving it through the heavens at more than a mile-a-minute clip. For sea landings the machine will be equipped with a large single pontoon instead of two, as hitherto. From the front center of the lower plane an outrigger has been erected, upon which the rapid-fire gun will be mounted. There will also be a seat for the gunner in the aeroplane. He will use the standard Wright dual control, one lever for elevation and the other for warping, to maintain lateral stability or balance. It is planned to equip the war aeroplane with wireless.

Among the remarkable antiquarian finds at Pompeii some of those recently made possess the greatest of interest. Instead of showing signs of exhaustion the wonderful mine of antiquities beneath Vesuvius retains its richness unabated. The street of Abundance, once the rich Roman's paradise, has recently been investigated in part of its extent upon a new system of excavation. The street of Abundance, only recently laid open, has perhaps not more than begun to yield its spoil. The ground there is being subjected to a newly devised system of excavation and restoration. By means of his methods Prof. Spinazzola, the originator of the new system, hopes to reproduce parts, seemingly destroyed, of the line of houses on the old street in their entirety. Nothing is thrown away in the new style of excavation. The effort is made to locate the exact place and definite purpose of each nameless fragment. The fragments of the roofs and upper parts of houses have made it possible to reconstruct sometimes in great detail the top stories of the houses, the cencula windows and even balconies. One of the most imposing of these houses front frescoes is that representing the Pompeian Venus. She is pictured a noble figure divinely tall and slender, standing with her offspring Cupid in a glistening chariot drawn by lithe and swaying elephants. On the one side of her stands the Genius of Fortune, beloved of the prosperous Pompeians, and on the other a tutelary genius. The elephants, with their well-poised bulk of muscle, look as if drawn from life. It must have demanded no small skill to sketch them in the rapid medium of fresco.
GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

When the Rev. R. F. Kirkpatrick, a Presbyterian minister of Memphis, Tenn., discovered that a negro burglar was attempting to get into his home early, the other day, he telephoned the police, armed himself with a revolver and took up a position at the head of a stairway. Before the police arrived the negro gained the entrance and the minister fired, killing him instantly.

An ingenious automatic parachute for aeroplanes was demonstrated from the Eiffel Tower, Paris, December 22. The contrivance, which consists of a vast umbrella, forty feet in diameter, is spread by a system of springs, operating instantaneously and automatically the fall begins. The parachute was dropped to-day from the first platform of the tower, with a sandbag to represent an aviator. The apparatus opened fully before it had fallen sixty feet. It landed gently, taking sixteen seconds to drop 190 feet.

The piling for the great dike which is being built on the eastern side of the Panama entrance on the Pacific, extending from the main land for three and one-third miles, is nearing completion, and before long all of the rockwork will have been filled in. There has been much settlement necessitating large additional dumping of rock. The total vertical settlement in one section during the period July 1, 1911, to June 30, 1912, aggregated 125 feet, and in some cases the movement of the mud has carried the trestle laterally as much as 300 feet, but the fill is now stable, and a carriage way will be built along its surface giving access to Naos Island. This dike prevents the carrying of sediment by the current which sets across the axis of the canal entrance from the east.

Clothes without shearing the sheep or plucking the cotton plant are now ready for us whenever we get ready for them. Stone, iron, glass and paper supply the materials, soft and pliable as woollens, cottons and silks, some of them washable by putting them in the fire, some of them unwearoutable and others so cheap they may be thrown away when soiled. Glass makes beautiful dress goods, colors to please and sheen and sparkle all their own. The Russians are manufacturing a fabric of "a filamentous stone from the Siberian mines," flexible as any product of the mills, practically indestructible, for which the fabric is the laundry. Iron cloth is in common use, that last hair-looking material used in stiffening coat collars. "Limestone wool" is made in the electric furnace. Clothing of this material cannot be damaged by fire or grease, and as flexible as clothing made of sheep's wool. An English manufacturer is making a fabric of old ropes, Japanerry, during the war with Russia, proved that these clothes are serviceable and warmer than those of similar English, French and German manufacturers are turning out paper dressing gowns and bathrobes. Even gowns which may be cleaned many times, are made of paper.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

"What is your idea of a silent partner?" "He's a fellow that puts his money into a firm and keeps his mouth shut while it is being spent."

Tom—Did Maui tell you the truth when you asked her age? Dick—Yes. Tom—What did she say? Dick—She said it was none of my business.

She—Take care, Alfred; that isn't the remedy for sickness. Don't you see the bottle is marked "poison." He (groaning)—That's the one I want.

Mabel—I would never marry a man I did not love. Maui—But suppose a really wealthy man should propose? Mabel—I should love him, of course.

Small Boy (leading in a tramp)—Oh, mother, this old gentleman says he hasn't had a thing to eat for two months, so I've just invited him home to me to eat with us.

Daughter—Oh, papa, I've just got the most lovely tunic you ever saw. Papa (busily)—I'm glad you like it. Daughter—It's too sweet for anything. Now we're both as rich as a yacht.

Dorothy—I do wish we were rich, father. Her father—How rich would you like to be? Dorothy—Oh, not rich; rich enough to snub other people and still be agreeable.

"So this is your dull season, eh?" observed the vis-
"When is the busiest period of your factory?" The
the whistle blows for the men to quit work," answered the manufacturer.

Mother—Now, if you take three from ten, how long will you remain? (No answer.) Mother—Well, suppose you take away three of your fingers, what would you have then?
Johnnie—No music lessons.

Angry Wife—It seems to me we've been married a tor-ture. I can't even remember when or where we first met.

Husband (emphatically)—I can. It was at a dinner party where there were thirteen at table.
CAPTURED BY PIRATES.

By Kit Clyde.

On the morning of September 16, 1738, with the sun way up to the zenith, the trim schooner Dolphin lay out of sight to the southward. A gentle southerly breeze rippled the calm Caribbean waters, and St. Thomas, her port, lay twenty-four hours sail away. Here she was to discharge her cargo, and thence shape her homeward course toward Boston.

Tall Archibald Knowlton walked his quarter deck, for he was beginning to enjoy the sight of an armament that would make his name known in the history of the sea. Torpedoes and hurricanes were to be reckoned with, but his crew was well trained. The master knew well that the capture of his ship by the pirates meant that those of his company taken alive would not be allowed to return to England.

The Yankee skipper whistled cheerfully as he looked seaward, where a long, sharp-rigged schooner was making all sail toward the Dolphin. From her course and appearance the Yankee knew she was a trader from some American port. The Yankee's crew was larger and faster than her own, and the Yankee's skipper decided to take her under weather quarter.

The Yankee's crew was on the starboard tack, and the Yankee's skipper was on the weather side of the Dolphin. Five or six sailors and an officer in plain clothes were on deck, ready to make their move.

"What do you make her out to be, Abel?" said Captain Archibald.

"She's a schooner, sir, with a cargo of rum," replied Abel Forbes. "I've seen her before, Captain. She's a fast ship, and not many craft can equal her."

The Yankee's crew saw the signal and prepared to attack. The Yankee's skipper gave the order to the crew, and the Yankee's crew moved to the gunwale to prepare for battle.

"Come out of there, two of you," they called; whereas Abe and Jack Dutton, the ship's boy, climbed the ladder to the deck. The pirates pointed to the fore hatchway.

"Get down and break out that cask of rum, and be quick about it," they commanded.

Abe and Jack went below and tried to pull aside the barrels of beef and pork stored about the cask. The pirates rigged a fall and the cask was hoisted up and the barrels were swung aside until the head of the cask was visible. The barrels were tilted and the pirates ran to and fro, pouring the rum into the cask. The pirates dipped their hands into the rum and began to drink. The sailors were surprised to see the pirates drinking the rum they had been trying to steal. The sailors realized that the pirates were not their enemies and began to cooperate with them.

The pirates then loaded the rum into barrels and took them to Boston. The sailors were paid for their services and were allowed to continue their voyage. The Yankee's skipper and crew were relieved to have escaped the pirates and continued their voyage to England.
he sucked up greedily until his eager companions clamored that he come on deck and allow them their turn.

Once started to drinking the pirates continued it at a lively rate. The man at the wheel, missing his comrades, gruffly called Jack aft.

"What are my mates doing forward?" he inquired.

They tapped the barrel of rum in the forecastle," said Jack.

"That's pretty work for 'em to be at, with the craft to sail and prisoners to guard," growled the pirate. "Here, you, catch hold of the wheel and watch your steering!"

With cutlass in hand he ran forward to the hatchway and shouted to his comrades to come on deck; but, recklessly drunken, they replied only by inviting him to join their carouse or go to a place warmer than Havana.

While they exchanged threats and curses, Abel, standing by the forecastle, saw that the vessel, through lack of skillful handling, had fallen fully a mile behind the pirate craft. He perceived a chance to make a bold stroke for the lives of himself and his comrades, and knowing that as matters stood, their doom was sealed in any event, he acted promptly and resolutely.

As the ruffian standing at the hatchway alternately cursed his comrades and implored them to come on deck, Abel, under pretense of pulling in the slack of the jib sheet, contrived to get near him. The pirate heard his movement, turned, and instantly raised his cutlass.

"So you were trying to steal on me," he snarled. "I'll put you out of the way!"

The steel flashed down as he spoke. Abel instinctively dodged back at the motion, but that would not have saved him had it not been for the dangling tackle that had been used in moving the barrels in the hold. It swung in the way of the falling blade, catching and turning the blow, so that the edge of the cutlass sank deep into the wooden block.

Before his enemy could disengage it the mate sprang forward, and with his heavy fist landing squarely upon the jaw, knocked the pirate backward into the hold.

With a strength and quickness he could not have shown in a lesser emergency, he flung the hatch down into place.

He forced the clamp on the staple and secured it, then sprang to the forecastle and opened the door.

"Come out, come out, Captain Knowton. I've got the pirates under hatches."

"Steady," he shouted to the imprisoned crew, eager to rush out. "One at a time, and only two of you. If too many of us are about the deck we'll arouse the suspicions of that fellow ahead, and if we do we're worse off than ever."

Captain Knowton with two men handled the ropes, and with Abel at the wheel, still keeping the Dolphin headed for the pirate craft, they contrived to spell so much wind and so to steer that the vessel should make the least headway possible. The distance between the two schooners steadily increased until they were two miles apart. Then the wind fell, leaving the Dolphin rolling on the swell with flapping sails. The last puff dying away to leeward, carried the Piroqua along some distance further, and the three vessels lay becalmed at equal distances apart.

In anxious suspense the Dolphin's crew waited for the next rise of wind, for upon its direction would depend their fate. At four bells in the afternoon the captain, his mate still stood anxiously at the wheel, their gazing from the pirate on the east to the western wind, smooth and glassy, to the horizon line.

At last a little cat's-paw from the west ruffled the face and coming after it, growing and deepening the ripple showed that there was wind behind. Haste swelled out and there came beneath the bows the gush of water cut by the Dolphin's prow.

"All hands on deck!" cried Captain Knowton. He leapt the sheets. Head her southwest by south, Abel!"

The schooner rounded up into the breeze and the calmed pirates saw their prize drawing off with ease and headway. Would the Piroqua leave her chase too late to pursue her when the wind came? This was revealed. With his spyglass Captain Knowton could see commotion on her decks, and as the breeze raced past the pirate and gave her steerage way, she headed closer toward the escaping schooner. But the Dolphin was the first pull of the freshening wind, and drew farther away from her pursuer.

The merchant schooner had gained a fine start, and the wind became steady the Piroqua, hanging in the quarter, held her own and began to creep close to change or falling of the wind might again throw the Dolphin into her cruel enemy's clutches.

As the pirate, crawling up into the wind, drew nearer and nearer, a sail far ahead gradually lifting its great spread of canvas, a Union Jack fluttered on the peak and the black and white port holde of the man-of-war. The pirate quickly recognized the colors of the coming vessel and wanted no closer acquaintance. Tacking, she spread her sails free and went off into the beam of the wind and was soon hull down in distance.

At Captain Knowton's signal of distress there came to him from his majesty's cruiser Terror a blow of fire by a dozen bluejackets in command of a lieutenant.

The situation was quickly explained, the packet ship off, and the pirates, at the sight of the man-of-war, surrendered without a struggle.

Justice in those days was swift for freebooters on sea, and before the Dolphin left St. Thomas all the pirates lay under sentence in prison, awaiting the day of their execution.

The Rev. G. G. Rupert, aged sixty-five, a minister of Seventh Day Adventist Church, Oklahoma City, who had his vision restored after twenty-eight years of blindness. In 1884, while conducting service at Branson, O., Rupert suddenly became blind. Oculists pronounced his affliction incurable. Rupert came to Oklahoma, his wife died, leaving him with three small daughters, and two grew to womanhood and two married. Rupert married a young woman, and until three weeks ago he had seen his second wife. November 4, his little grand daughter fully flipped a piece of tin foil from a rubber tube on his eyes, and he realized his sight had partially returned. He went on to improve until today he can read the primer type.
NEWS OF THE DAY

A private bank which advertised to pay 100 per cent interest a year "on all deposits from one cent to $15,000,000," was closed in Chicago, December 21, with the consent of F. B. Carson, its promoter, on a charge of using its mails to defraud. Circulars were sent to principals of firms throughout the country asking for deposits, and Carson is said to have obtained many thousands of dollars.

Every outer garment and a suspenders button in the back of a bullet protected Joseph M. Day, a farmer, from behind as he drove from the Du Pont powder mill to Kennesaw, where he lived. The bullet went through a very far cost he wore and drove the suspenders button into a mall of his back, inflicting only a superficial wound. Day's assisitant fled when he found his shot had not taken affect. Day told the authorities he thought the man was gone. Robbery was supposed to have been the motive of the attack.

Farmers brought into Kingfisher, Okla., recently four eagles of a flock of seven that have their eyries in the 65 hills, thirty-five miles northwest of this place. The eagles had carried off so much stock that the farmers finally organized to exterminate them. Four of the same kind were captured and one was killed. They carried away lambs and pigs, and it is now believed the eagles, a deal of gypsies, carried away an infant child from that community several months ago. One of the captured eagles weighs sixteen pounds and has a sweep of wings of eighty feet.

A fearful battle between a Bengal tiger and an elephant took place in the municipal menagerie of Zanzibar, December 21. The lion and tiger occupied the same cage and were separated by strong, widely spaced wooden bars. "Othello," the lion, spied a watering-trough in the tiger's cage, close to the bars. The big beast succeeded in seizing its head through the bars, right above the water-trough, but at that moment the tiger sprang up and killed both the elephant's head in the lion's head. The lion was finally extricated himself and was held down in the water by the other animal until he was dead.

Robert Taft, son of the President, is one of nearly one hundred students of Harvard who have been robbed by a supposed "Raffles" for whom diligent search is being made by private detectives. Nearly every room in Craigie Hall, the dormitory in which Robert Taft lives, has been ransacked in the last two months. The thief evidently had false keys, and it is thought he entered the rooms while occupants were at their classes. Believing the thief was some person enrolled as a student, the university authorities sought to keep the robbers secret, but students failed to keep the secret after detectives had been put at work. It is said the President's son lost scarf pins, cuff links and clothing valued at $350. Among other victims were W. C. Striebling, of St. Louis, and Paul M. Hollister, of Grand Rapids. Altogether the losses of the students are said to aggregate $10,000.

On September 13, 1911, there was picked up on the beach at Cullivoe, Papa Tour, in the north of Scotland, a life buoy, battered and stained, bearing the inscription, "Passed by J. Guthrie, San Francisco, California, June 1, 1905." The vessel Stanley Dollar was wrecked off the west coast of Japan in August, 1905, and the buoy, whose history is bound up with that of the ship, must have been floating in the ocean currents for six years until it landed in Scotland. Whether it went around the Horn or through the Northwest Passage or down by Australasia and around the Cape of Good Hope into the Atlantic will, of course, always remain a matter of doubt and conjecture. This buoy is said to hold the "world's record" for drifting the longest distance. It was six years on the way from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic, and must have been washed into many a strange port before it was picked up on the Scotch island.

The death of Princess Agnes Salm-Salm at Karlsruhe, Germany, December 21, brought to an end a most romantic career. She was the daughter of an American colonel named Ledereq, and was born in Baltimore, Md., on Christmas Day, 1840. In her youth she gained some renown as an actress, and then she married Prince Felix Salm-Salm, in 1862. The prince was a soldier of fortune. He served first in the German and then in the Austrian army, on leaving which he went to the United States and joined the Union Army, during the Civil War, rising to the rank of brigadier general. After the conclusion of the war he went to Mexico and became aide de camp to the Emperor, Maximillian, but went back to Germany and joined the Prussian army on the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, in 1870. He was killed at the battle of Gravelotte. The Princess accompanied her husband through all his campaigns, and in the Franco-Prussian War served as a hospital nurse and was decorated with the Iron Cross for bravery. After the war she married Charles Hencage, in 1876.
THE UNION PACIFIC TO INSTALL WIRELESS.

The Union Pacific Railway made application recently to the Department of Commerce and Labor at Washington for a license to operate and maintain a wireless telegraph system along its lines. The company asks permission to install a technical experiment station, which, if granted, will be the second of the kind in the country. Several wireless stations, if announced, will be constructed when the license is issued.

LONG DRIFT FOR A BOTTLE.

A bottle containing a message purporting to have been cast overboard in mid-Atlantic by a passenger on the Hamburg liner Ruggia twenty-three years ago was picked up a few days ago near the mouth of Quillia Yute River, thirty miles south of Cape Flattery, by G. B. Hobucket of Mora, Wash. The note, which was yellow with age, said: "Passed overboard on the Hamburg-American line steamship Ruggia on the sixteenth of October on the way from Hamburg to New York. Whoever picks this up please report to the nearest newspaper and oblige the writer, October 15, 1899." The note was unsigned. Mr. Hobucket sent the message to a Seattle newspaper.

A QUEER WITNESS.

Detectives in Denver began a vigil the other night around the cloth draped cage of a parrot, in the hope that the bird would testify as the sole witness to the supposed murder and suicide of Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Johnson, whose bodies were found in a hotel room on December 10. The bird was found walking restlessly along the footboard of the bed, muttering to the bodies. It had belonged to the Johnsons for years. The police, believing there was a quarrel before the tragedy, called in an aviculturist to cross-examine the parrot. The bird refused to answer, and as a final resort it was suggested that the cage be covered and watched, as the bird might then croon some sharp ejaculations and exclamations that would have impressed it had a quarrel occurred before the tragedy.

A VICIOUS HORSE.

When Meyer Freedman, a farmer and tobacco raiser, entered the stall of one of his horses at Rockville, Conn., December 19, the animal attacked him with teeth and hoofs. Freedman was barely able to cry out for help before he became unconscious from his wounds. Jacob Cor, a neighbor, heard Freedman’s shrieks and attempted to overpower the horse. Breaking loose from its halter, the animal left Freedman and turned on Cor, who fought for his life in a corner of the barn. Cor finally contrived to get a slip noose about the horse’s neck, and after he made the animal fast, summoned aid to take Freedman to St. Francis’ Hospital, in Hartford. Cor’s skull was fractured and one of his shoulders broken. It was said in reports from the hospital that Cor, though terribly injured, would probably recover, but no hope was held out for Freedman.

FROM TUNIS TO SICILY BY AEROPLANE.

Rudolph G. Garros, the French aviator, made a special flight December 18 over the Mediterranean Sea from Tunis, Africa, to Sicily. He landed near Trapani, and covered a distance of about one hundred and sixty-six miles over water. This establishes an overseas record since that of Lieutenant Bagnis, who, on March 5, 1911, flew the Mediterranean from Antibes, France, to the island of Gorgona, off the Italian coast, a distance of 110 miles. In making the landing the gasoline tank of Garros’ aeroplane was damaged. Garros sent for his mechanic, who arrived from Tunis to repair the tank. The aviator then continued his flight to Naples and Garros recently established an altitude record of 25,000 feet at Tunis. Describing his flight, Garros said: "As soon as I left Tunis I caught sight of the French liners boats from Bizerta. They were cruising at equal distance across my path. That it was impossible for me to pass on the way the trip was agreeable. Although somewhat I was obliged to rise to a great height to avoid the shipping, and I was glad when I sighted the coast of Sicily found that all the population of Marsala (a little north of Trapani) had come out to welcome me. The boats dotted the roadstead and furnished a picturesque spectacle. The occupants cheered and waved to me flashed past overhead. I landed a little inshore an continued here."

TO AID AMERICAN FARMERS.

The International Institute of Agriculture, which has been in existence seven years in Rome, Italy, is now thoroughly organized and in working order, and is endeavoring to demonstrate its usefulness to the world. It was held in America in particular.

The institute has collected and collated an immense quantity of facts and statistics in regard to the important question of the adaptability of the European co-operative credit systems to meet the needs of the American farmers. The subject is arousing widespread interest throughout America since President Taft’s message.

The co-operative rural banks in Italy have been a model for good and have contributed in no small measure to the present prosperity of the country. A course has been given here, having as its members many men of the movement in Italy. Prof. Luigi Luzzatti, Commander Wellenberg, and other experts, who are already running a program which will give the greatest amount of interest to the commission of farmers and others interested in agriculture, who will leave New York next April to study the different European systems of operative rural credit.

When it is realized that the average interest paid by American farmers is 8½ per cent, as against 3½ per cent in Germany and Italy, it is evidently desirable, therefore, that the co-operation, that the same advantages be obtained in America.
ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.—The base is made of bakelite, the center piece of black walnut, the whole being about 14 inches in diameter, with a metal knob on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Exposed to view your New Electric Bell, which when your friend will be button expecting to hear it ringing, will see some of peace lasting you ever more, steel and will be more charged and will not be a chance to get. Price 1sc, by mail, postpaid.

THE GERMAN OCARINO.
A handsome metal instrument, made in Germany, from the officers to the soldier, but sweet music can be produced. It comes in various shapes, which resemble a small whistle, will attract much attention and interest. Each instrument, as you blow, will play any tune and produce very much the same effect of a horse's bray. Price, .10c, by mail, postpaid.

REYNOLDS ARM & METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO. 29 Broadway, New York City.

DARING BICYCLES.

FABRIC PRINTING MACHINE.

PRING NIT.
A small musical instrument that produces very sweet musical notes by placing it between the lips with the tongue over the edge, and blowing gently into the instrument. The notes produced are not unlike those of the ocarina. We send full instructions in a trinket. Price includes shipping, $1.00.

THE SPRINGER.
Don't miss this brand new novelty. It is a little figure made in various shapes, perched on a spring and makes them go. You push down the spring, set it where you please, and in a few moments it leaps up and down, playing the part of a cat, and sending every one in the room into convulsions of laughter.

Price, 10c, each, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 2nd St., New York City.

THE AUTOPHONE.

THE SPRINGER.
A small musical instrument that produces very sweet musical notes by placing it between the lips with the tongue over the edge, and blowing gently into the instrument. The notes produced are not unlike those once the ocarina. We send full instructions in a trinket. Price includes shipping, $1.00.

C. BEHR, 150 2nd St., New York City.

Rapid Cigarette Maker.
This little article should be in the pockets of every smoker. With it you can make cigarettes to suit yourself, easy to roll, and you get a pipe or cigarette at pleasure. Price, 25c, for 40c, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO. 29 30th St., N.Y.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME.

DROP REGULAR TRICK AGE CARDS.
Tell the age of any person with 1.00, and you get them in color, filled with pictures of famous people. 1.00, by mail, postpaid.

A. LAKEN, 64 Union Street, Jersey City, N.J.

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MYSTERY, MAGIC AND FAX.

Mystery, Magic and Fun.
29 Jones and Hitchens, 72 Toms, 62 Parlor, 28 Toms, 2 Fortune Telling, 22 Money.-Making Secrets. 25 Pounds Readings. All 175.00, by mail, postpaid.

A. LAKEN, 64 Union Street, Jersey City, N.J.

TEN BOOKS FOR 10 CENTS.

PUBLISHERS' MISTAKES.

Sure Fire Accuracy.
Penetration.
The World's Record Holders.

Rearming-UMC 22 cal. Cartridges have broken two records in two years.

The present world's 160-shot gallery record, 2484 ex 2500, held by Arthur Hubalek was made with these hard hitting 22's.

They will help you too, to break your best shooting records.

Rearming-UMC 22's are made, too, with hollow point bullets. This interests their striking and killing power.

Rearming-UMC—the perfect shooting combination.

REYNOLDS ARM & METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO. 29 Broadway, New York City.

REARMS AND UNIFORMS METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO.
29 Broadway, New York City.
ELEVATION GOLD TEETH.

Gold plated teeth, shape made so that it will fit any teeth. Price, 3c, each.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MICROSCOPE.

By means of this beautiful little microscope you can magnify a drop of water and in it see hundreds of crawling insects; is also useful for inspecting the fruit and vegetables of the kitchen, and numerous other articles. This is a great little toy and does every bit as good work as the best microscopes cost. It is suitable for the household, is made of best metal brass; size, 3 inches. Price, 25c.

L. SENARES, 517 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

GET A LOCUST.

Goes like a telegraph sounder. The object is to entertain your friends or 12 Baseball Games, an interesting event. Just the noise. So small you would not think it was there. Price, 25c each, by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'lyn, N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.

The biggest hit of the season. A real cigar made of cardboard, but so realistic, the center of cigar is about one-half inch in diameter and is a fountain of sparkles. The moment you light it, hundreds of sparks of fire fly in all directions, to the astonishment of the smoker. The 5c cigar will burn the whole stick in length and breadth of the cigar. After the fireworks the victim can continue to smoke cigar to the end. Price, 10c each, for 25c; 1 dozen, 60c, mailed.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE CAMERA CIGAR HOLDER.

Instead of a real cigar holder that takes pictures. Every smoker who loves fun will want to own one. Send in order 25c, and it'll be sent to you. We furnish with each holder material, all prepared, for making an artistic photograph, and guarantee every paper to produce a completely finished photograph if directions are followed. Directions—Take holder apart at the joint. Set up one of the small blank papers (six furnished with each holder) in the holder. Put the holder together and smoke a cigar for one minute. When the finished photograph appears on the paper, which can be taken out and developed, you will know how to handle the holder. Price of kit, six blank pictures, 75c; for 25c, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHRE, 150 W. 63d St., New York City.

KANGAROO PAJAROLOCK.

A kangaroo pajaro, dropped out of a plane, 50c. It looks like a real kangaroo, is dropped down into the box, but the picture is unbreakable. You can instantly unlock it with the key, but no one in the secret can unlock it. You can slip the ramp through a friend's buttonhole and force his attention on it. The key is well hidden in the box. Price of kit, six blank pictures, 75c; for 25c, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

FALSE MUSTACHE AND BEARD.

This is a novelty whereby you can create a number of changes in your face. In fact, you can disguise yourself in a moment. Comes in a case of dressing, such as pomade, powder, short-brush, etc. You can fix the same to your face, which will stay on your face all day. A very valuable acquisition to your make-up when you are in a hurry. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c each; for 50c, one dozen, 30c, sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

ROUGH AND READY TINDER.

These are handy matches, rated with the flag and with quick light. Pop placing them on any flat surface and striking them, they will give a most wonderful performance, and burn over each other in every direction, as if being struck by the strongest wind. Your friends will love them from the spectators. They are very valuable when you have a secret that has to be kept, and you can keep it from your friend. Price, 100c, each.

M. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'lyn, N. Y.

THE HELLO PUZZLE.

Why can't this ring off?

This puzzle is the latest in the world, it is easily solved. Apparently it is the solution. Only one, 50c, to the ring from the box, but after due hours of study you will discover the trick, unless you know how it is done. Price, 25c, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

FALSE NOSES.

Change your face! Have a barrel of fun! They are life-like duplicates of human noses, made of shaped cloth, looks like your own. When pinched over your nose, they remain. Close inspection reveals that false nose changes under your nose, so it looks like your own. Price by mail, 10c each.

M. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'lyn, N. Y.

LAUGHING CAMERA.

Everybody grotesquely photographic look people look thin, and vice versa. Price, 25c, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE BUCO CIGAR.

The most remarkable tricking is to be had with this cigar, as the end gets smaller and smaller as the end gets hotter. Anyone can have a remarkable trick with this end. It is presence of a person who dislikes us to be seen. The cigar, and the smoke is so real that you will be sure to get a laugh. Price, 10c each.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.