

John Jacob
Boutwell
1870

OUTLAWS OF THE BORDER.

A COMPLETE AND AUTHENTIC HISTORY

OF THE LIVES OF

FRANK AND JESSE JAMES

THE

YOUNGER BROTHERS,

AND THEIR ROBBER COMPANIONS, INCLUDING

QUANTRELL AND HIS NOTED GUERRILLAS,

THE GREATEST BANDITS THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN.

A WONDERFUL RECORD OF CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES, DRAWN
WITH GREAT CARE FROM RELIABLE SOURCES. A THRILLING
NARRATIVE, VIVIDLY WRITTEN,

By JAY DONALD.

Fully Illustrated.

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PREFACE.

In placing this book before the public, we offer neither excuse nor apology; we have tried to so write it that it would not need them. The subject it treats has long occupied a place in polite literature, and had for its champions the masters of every language. These sung its praise; we come with its requiem: Brigandage is dead. Never again, unless the world staggers back into barbarism, can that institution be revived. The meager remnant of its votaries are fast being hunted to death. It follows chivalry to the grave, and in the sunny land that nurtured both, they sleep together. Coming ages will shed a luster over its cruelties, and poetry hang garlands on its tomb, but ere these gentle mourners have wrapped in oblivion all its hideous features, an outraged people ask to see it as it is. These we undertake to satisfy. To truthfully portray the lives and characters of the boldest bandits that ever plagued the world; to strip from them the false robes in which romancers have clothed them; to lay them bare in all their brutality, is the object of this book. We do not claim to have discovered the whole truth; much is still shrouded in mystery which never will be revealed, but all that care and labor could effect in this we have accomplished, and with the request that the reader will look only for the moral its pages teach, and be not

“Like those bees of Trebizond,
Which from the sunniest flowers that glad
With their sweet smile the gardens round,
Draw venom forth that drives men mad,”

we respectfully dedicate this volume to the world.

JAY DONALD.

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

IN undertaking to issue "THE OUTLAWS OF THE BORDER," the Publishers feel that their motives may be misunderstood, and that "the dollar" may appear to be the only consideration. While in common with all business men they are willing in every legitimate way to increase their fortune, they respectfully claim for this enterprise a higher motive. There have been issued several publications representing these outlaws as heroes, and clothing them in a garb of romance likely to mislead the minds of youth, who feeling the first promptings of the valor inherent in the race, naturally conclude that persons who appear chivalrous and brave, must necessarily have many virtues, and that these outlaws may possibly have been "more sinned against than sinning." Observing the bad influences of such books, the publishers determined to issue a work that would reveal the true character of these brigands, and show to the youthful mind that an evil course of action is always sure to bring its own reward, and that the glamor of apparent success cannot compensate for the bad results of a vicious career. Mainly in the hope of contributing something toward the correction of the tendency referred to, this work is respectfully presented to the public.

THE PUBLISHERS.

CHICAGO, June 15, 1882.



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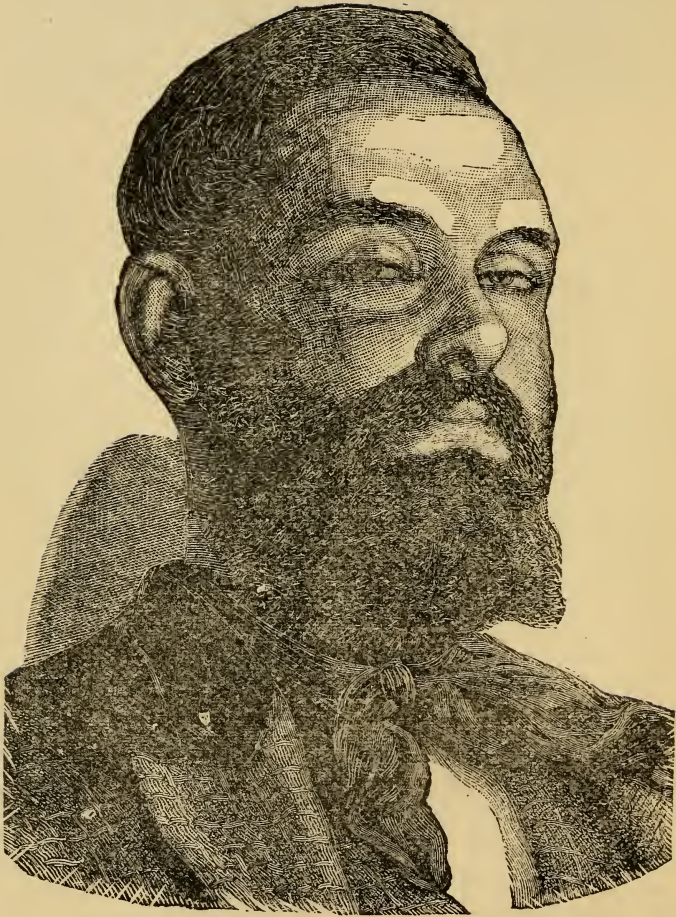
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JESSE JAMES.

CHAPTER I.

“But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison house
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine;
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.”

—*Shakespeare.*

INTRODUCTION.

TORIES of outlawry and adventure have ever possessed a peculiar fascination for the mind. The best talent in the literary world has found pleasure and fame in this questionable field of romance, and has succeeded in clothing the most repulsive characters in garbs of such splendid hues that honesty looks poor and humble beside proud piracy and radiant murder.

The veil of mystery thrown round the lives of Rob Roy and Claude Duval by the genius of Scott and Bulwer—like the cloud of shining hair loosed over the form of a Circassian girl, reveals through its misty glory glimpses of charms that catch a heightened beauty from being half concealed.

Confronted with such pictures, ambitious youth inclines a little toward the gallant ruffian with the deep voice and the

terrible look, and tastes and sympathies so formed have given direction to many a life.

Ordinarily the book of adventure is pernicious in its influence, and nearly as potent in filling jails and graves as rum. Written with a romantic glitter calculated to unsettle the mind, the lives of its characters are made to possess so much of freedom and gallant daring that we are enchanted, and fail to detect the real brutality of the men we are invited to admire, or the hardships they are compelled to endure, and the almost certain fate which awaits them. The halter and the black cap are carefully kept out of sight by the fastidious hand of art, and the reader is not allowed to see his hero roughly strangled into submission to the law he has wantonly outraged, and the body, limp and lifeless, laid in the ground—unknelled, unhonored, and unsung.

Such has been the romance of the past, and in that form we have had the tales of Robin Hood, Dick Turpin, and a score of the terrible men of all countries and times. But these must yield the palm at last; their daring deeds and reckless valor have been eclipsed; the maudlin idolatry they have enjoyed so long belongs to others. They were great when it was easy to excel; terrible when it was not dangerous to dare. There were no telegraph, no railroads, no skillful detectives then; caves and deep forests and thinly settled country offered security to these enemies of men which is not to be found in civilized lands to-day. But here, in the midst of a great commonwealth, surrounded by every trap the law's avengers have devised, tracked by day and hunted by night, the James Brothers have robbed and murdered for twenty

years, ever eluding or slaying their pursuers, boldly defying society and the power of a great country. Nothing approaching their cunning, courage, skill and cruelty as slayers of their race has ever been known. Compared with the career of these two backwoods boys, the most ingenious fiction is tame and commonplace.

The existence of such characters within the boundaries of a peaceful land, preying upon their fellow-beings like wild beasts, and successfully hiding from their hunters where it would seem no hiding place could be found, has naturally awakened much surprise and speculation. To thoughtful minds it appears strange that men endowed with the cunning, energy and courage exhibited in the tamest exploits of these highwaymen, should voluntarily select a life so fraught with hardship and peril, and offering so little in return, when those attributes directed in any other channel could not fail to win honor and riches, without the restriction upon the enjoyment of them which a career of crime incurs.

In view of this, men have refused to believe that the course adopted by Frank and Jesse James was one of choice, and have looked around for the cause which could have driven them into such a vortex of viciousness.

Various reasons and excuses have been assigned them, but with these we have nothing to do. It is ours to relate the facts. We leave the cause with Him who makes men as they are—with hearts of love and hearts of hate, with the intellects of gods and the instincts of beasts, with all the grades of passion, hope and fear—no two alike, all different—and sends them upon the stage of life to play their parts, may be in the cease-

less presence of an awful audience, catching their roles from their environments, or from the promptings of unseen lips. Who knows?

But to attribute to the civil war, its cruelties and horrors, the cause of the desperate career of the James Boys, is as unreasonable as to trace that cause still farther back, and say if they had never been born they would never have been bad.

The war was not especially kind to any one; millions suffered from its ravages, but few became marauders. The truth is, these men were cruel by nature, and the war merely supplied them with a field in which to indulge their brutal tastes. Had the confederacy succeeded the guerillas would have been honored as important partizans in the retinue that ushered her to victory, and their names had been remembered with something like the reverence we pay to men like Marion. But defeat dealt a quieting blow to all her adherents, consigned to oblivion many a dream of fame, and snatched from crime its cloak of patriotism. Then "guerillas" were no longer heroes, but criminals; and "freebooting" again took on its old name—robbery.



CHAPTER II.

BEGINNING OF THE WAR.—CHARACTER OF THE GUERRILLAS.—THEIR CODE OF LAWS AND MORALS.—WATCHING FOR THEIR PREY.

In the spring of 1861 the boom of cannon at Fort Sumter announced to the world that the Great Civil War, which had so long been brooding, had begun. The entire country, North and South, sprang to arms. In the border States, especially, the greatest excitement prevailed, as there were mingled most closely the two opposing elements, which being so mingled, at once came into conflict.

Families were torn asunder by warring sentiments. Brothers fought against each other. Fathers and sons met in deadly strife. The young men of the North were prompt in responding to the bloody challenge, and Southern youth, fired by supposed wrongs, came eagerly to the fray. The circumstances out of which it grew, and the relations connecting the different factions engaged against each other, rendered the American Rebellion one of the cruelest of conflicts, even where it maintained an organized form; but where it became partizan, untrammelled by the rules that govern civilized warfare; free to kill and plunder wherever it found a victim; where it assumed this form, the civil war of America was horrible in the extreme, and in expiring it left a legacy of

feuds and hatred which all the subsequent years have not been sufficient to extinguish.

During these trying times Missouri and Kansas were mercilessly scourged. The borders of these States were infested with as wild and wicked a horde of guerillas as ever cast a darker stain on war's black scroll of death. It was the band that followed the sable banner of the terrible Quantrell, whose dread name, screamed above the battle's noise, shook many an arm with fear, and drove the blood from swarthy cheeks flushed with the fever of the fight. This lawless horde, whose ostensible object was the success of the Confederate army, espoused that cause as the vulture espouses the cause of all armies.

Above all, these men were plunderers, and everything being equal they would have been as likely to attach themselves to one side as to the other, though it is presumable that even then the nature of the Confederate cause would have appealed more strongly through its very unfairness, to men like these, than the more liberal principles of the North. But be that as it may, the guerillas were Southern born, and had already imbibed that rancorous hatred for the Union and its sympathizers, North and South, which past generations had faithfully handed down as a birthright to the true Southerner.

All that is necessary to describe these free-lance warriors is briefly told. They were brave, cunning, merciless. Picked from the most desperate characters which that awful era of horror developed and revealed, these grim followers of Quantrell were well calculated to fill a land with dread. Perhaps never has there been gathered under one flag a band so

uniformly cruel and pitiless. Accustomed to no restrictions and little order, their laws were few and brief.

They recognized no crime but cowardice, no virtue but courage. With them life was too worthless to be spared or considered. They killed as remorselessly as they robbed. The follower of "Quantrell's Black Banner" had taken his life into his hand, and he rode side by side with death, and did not shudder. He asked no quarter; he gave none. When his turn came he met it with dumb lips, and sunk in that grim embrace without a groan. To this Spartan-like stoicism was added cunning and tireless patience. The tiger crouching by the spring where his prey must come to drink, is not more patient, more tireless in his lonely vigil. Through days and nights these stealthy watchers have lain beside a house, a road, a shadowy pass, and waited—like the tiger—for their prey. They knew it would come, and they waited. The rain might beat upon them, the heat might consume them, but still they waited. At last it came—it always did; then their task was light: one shot was all; they never missed their mark.

It was a strange, irregular life; feasting to-day, starving to-morrow; now merry and free, laughing or singing their wild songs as they rode over the quiet hills and valleys in that sunny land, or picked their way through shady forests; in an hour dashing like demons where swords flashed and bullets whistled their low warning as they flew on their errand of death, or riding for life before the hot pursuit of outnumbering foes. Such was the career of Quantrell's bloody band.

CHAPTER III.

QUANTRELL.—HIS EARLY LIFE AND CHARACTER.—JOURNEY TO CALIFORNIA.—THE MURDEROUS ATTACK.—THE TURNING POINT IN QUANTRELL'S HISTORY.—TRANSFORMED IN A NIGHT.

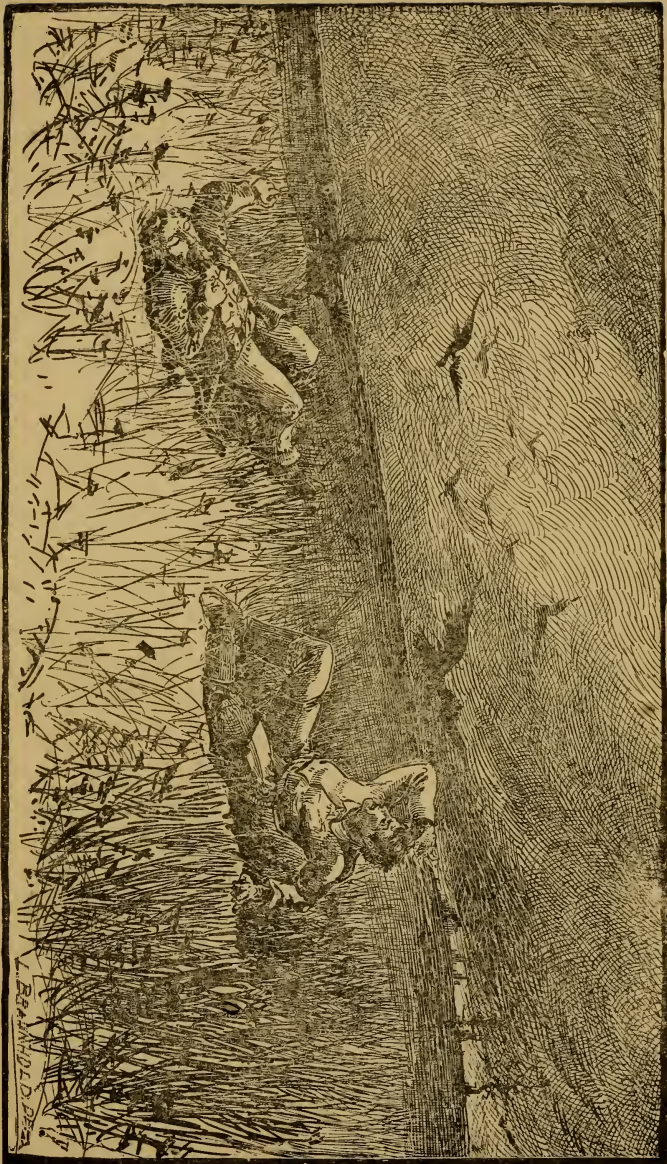
Charles William Quantrell, the bloodthirsty chief of this wild horde, had faithfully earned his terrible renown; and yet so apparently was that dark course the result of circumstance, that while we turn with a shudder from the record of his unnatural deeds, we leave to a higher tribunal the responsibility of judging this man, who but for a crime by which he suffered, would doubtless have continued in the civil life he had so well begun, and might now condemn with us such cruelty in others.

Born in Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1836, his early life prophesied nothing of his subsequent terrible career. A kind, obedient, affectionate son, betraying no sign of the revengeful spirit which in later years was to make him feared and dreaded like a pestilence. All his young tastes and education seemed to point in the direction of a gentle manhood and peaceful life. But circumstances, or that

“Destiny which shapes all our ends,
Rough hew them as we may,”

at last broke over him and in a night transformed this unoffending boy into a demon.

A PREY FOR BUZZARDS.



L. BRAMHOLD DEL.

It was in 1856, while he was yet a youth. He had received a liberal education at college in Cleveland, Ohio, where he was sent at the age of sixteen by his elder brother, upon whom the care of the family had fallen by the death of the father. He joined his brother at the home of the latter in Kansas City, and together they started to California, to try their fortune in that strange land of which men told wonderful stories then. They went by wagon, and with no companions, no attendant but a negro servant, they journeyed joyously on toward the land of gold.

At that time the border was harassed by bands of marauders called Jay-hawkers, who under the pretense of desiring freedom in Kansas, and claiming to be Abolitionists, rode about murdering and plundering in an atrocious manner.

The little company of gold hunters had reached the Cottonwood River, and pitched their tent beside the stream. The evening meal was over, and the brothers were sitting together on the bank, talking of their dreams of wealth in that rich country they were soon to reach, when suddenly a band of these Jay-hawkers dashed down upon them, shot the elder brother dead, and left young Charles riddled with bullets. Then they took everything—money, jewelry, supplies, wagon and horses, and with the terrified servant rode away, leaving their victims to the mercy of jackals and buzzards.

But young Quantrell had not been killed. Wounded and bleeding he lay unconscious till dawn broke in silence on the scene. Then consciousness returned. Bewildered, he raised himself and looked around; he saw the brother he loved more than all else in the world, stretched stiff and cold be-

side him ; their wagon, horses, all they owned, was gone; the dreams of wealth they had nursed together faded away like a desert mirage, and as the awful reality forced itself upon his disordered mind, he sank back with a desolate moan, and forgot it all. A fever set in. The summer sun burned its way across a cloudless sky and sunk behind a wall of hills ; the moon crept up above the trees, the dew fell noiselessly on leaf and grass and face and hair, and through it all—under the burning sun and under the quiet stars, wounded, with no companion but the dead, the fever patient raved and writhed—how long he never knew, but when he woke a buzzard's wing had brushed his face, a wolf howled dismally across the marsh, and a terrible thirst consumed him.

Painfully he crawled to his brother's side, and all that night he fought away the birds and beasts of prey till, faint and weak, he at last was rescued by an old Indian who happened to pass that way. The old man brought water to the boy, dug a grave and buried the dead, then kindly took young Quantrell to his hut and nursed him back to health.

But the tenderest care could not restore the gentle spirit of the happy boy who sat with his brother on the river bank that night before the tragedy that parted them so cruelly. All that was kind and loving in his nature expired in the agonies of that horrible experience. He was another man, revengeful, desperate, merciless. He resolved to avenge that outrage, and how well he did it, our country's history tells.

Years have passed. We find Quantrell at the head of a band of guerillas, murdering, robbing, keeping the border States in constant fear and turmoil ; surrounded by such men

as Anderson, Todd, Gregg, Scott, the Younger Brothers, and Frank and Jesse James.

Quantrell was their king; the chief of all the guerilla bands. His word was law—unquestioned, absolute—to these wild spirits. They followed the “Black Banner of Death”—no one asked where.



CHAPTER IV.

THE JAMES FAMILY—THE FATHER'S REPUTATION—EARLY LIFE IN MISSOURI—CHARACTER OF THE MOTHER—DEATH OF MR. JAMES—CHILDHOOD OF THE BROTHERS.

Frank and Jesse James were the sons of respectable parents. Their father, the Rev. Robert James, was a native of Kentucky. He was a Baptist minister of some celebrity in the region of his labors, and was respected and loved by many. It is claimed that he was a man of much learning and culture, a graduate of Georgetown College, while there are those who remember him only as a plain, outspoken, honest man, with a genius for making the most of a limited education, and a fund of good sense. But whether he was a scholar or not, concerns us not. It is agreed by all that he was an earnest, God-fearing laborer in the holy cause, an eloquent preacher and a dutiful pastor, and men still tell of the generous acts and persuasive eloquence of that noble pioneer minister. These deeds and words that survive their beloved author, contrast most strangely with those of his unnatural offspring.

In 1841, Rev. Robert James, with his young wife and their first child Frank, then an infant, left their home in Kentucky and settled in Clay County, Missouri, at that time a new State. Here he organized and established the church of New Hope, and it was here that his most earnest labors were performed.

The mother of these boys, Mrs. Zerelda James, formerly Miss Cole, was unlike her husband in every particular. She had an ungovernable will, was a woman of masculine appearance and character, endowed with a violent temper and an unrelenting sternness not especially admirable in man, but deplorable when developed in the sex to which we look for gentleness and amiability. Her form was tall and angular, her countenance forbidding; a being to inspire fear—not confidence.

They were, from all accounts, an ill-assorted pair. The mild-mannered pastor found meager companionship in this unsympathetic partner of his home, and sought in his religious duties, and the fellowship of his flock, the happiness his own fireside denied him.

In consequence, the redoubtable Mrs. James was allowed to conduct the domestic affairs of her family without much interference from the peaceable clergyman, and through her undisputed authority she succeeded in stamping more or less of her own remarkable character upon the children, of whom there were four, two boys and two girls. The elder of the latter died at the threshold of womanhood, and from all accounts was esteemed and loved by all who knew her, which is usually the case with people who die; but those of the children of this strange family with whom the country has become better acquainted, will hardly answer as models from which to draw any such conclusions.

In 1850, won by the encouraging reports of a brother who had preceded him, the Rev. Robert James bade farewell to his family and his flock, and went to California on a prospecting tour, from which he never returned. Overtaken by

death soon after his arrival there, he was laid to rest by strange hands, where the warm sun leaves her good-night kiss as she sinks in the western sea. No graven stone points upward from his grave. Peacefully he sleeps where the dismal tidings of his sons' dark deeds cannot disturb his calm repose.

This calamity, however, did not leave the family in any way destitute, as Mr. James had always been prudent and industrious; but the children were still very young, and the responsibilities of the widow were greatly increased. She now assumed by right the position of authority she had held so long by force, and it is greatly to the credit of this courageous and industrious woman that the children all received a good common school education and suitable preparation for respectable positions in life.

During this time, in spite of her domineering manner and violent temper, Mrs. James appears to have possessed sufficient charms to draw around her a number of admirers with matrimonial intentions, and finally, after six years of loneliness, the widow accepted the gallant offer of one Dr. Reuben Samuels, a man of respectability and some means. They were married in 1857, near Kearney, Clay County, Missouri, and the bold Doctor was installed as the step-father of that promising brood, which, it is said, had already commenced to exhibit signs of those rebellious tendencies which afterward made them the terror and disgrace of the sunny South.

Illustrative of the cruelty and viciousness of these embryo brigands marvelous stories are told, of which it is difficult to ascertain the truth. In these they are declared to have tortured dumb animals, cut off the ears and tails of dogs and

cats, and indulged in promiscuous wickedness of appalling character and extent.

When a genius bursts from obscurity everybody suddenly remembers that he was always a genius. His commonest acts are all recalled and found to have portended a glorious future. When a Nero or a Borgia stands unmasked before the world, it is promptly remembered that they were always wicked. Their childhood is reviewed, and they are found to have killed more birds and flies when they were infants, than they could possibly have had any use for. Such things are usually very much exaggerated, but one story concerning our heroes which seems to contain the elements of truth, informs us that while they were mere boys of thirteen and nine, they committed an act which indicated a degree of depravity hardly credible in such youth.

A neighbor lad named Smithers, of about Frank's age, had at some time given these boys offense. They waited long for revenge, at last it came. They met the young offender one morning in the woods and proceeded to chastise him in a most inhuman manner. They beat him with clubs till he was completely helpless; then bound his hands and feet with thongs of bark, and threw him repeatedly into a stream near by, which was swollen by the cold Spring floods. When they had nearly drowned their victim, they tied him to a tree and left him to his fate, whatever it might be. It was night when a chance passer found the terrified lad and released him. Weeks of illness which nearly ended in death, followed the poor boy's escapade with these young ruffians.

CHAPTER V.

JOINING THE GUERILLAS—THE BOYS' SKILL WITH PISTOLS
—FRANK BECOMES A FOLLOWER OF QUANTRELL—THE
FEDERAL RAID ON THE FAMILY—DR. SAMUELS HUNG
—JESSE THREATENED AND CHASTISED—THE WOMEN
ARRESTED—JESSE FOLLOWS HIS BROTHER AND BECOMES
A GUERILLA.

At an early age Frank and Jesse became familiar with the use of firearms. Dr. Samuels presented them each with a small shot gun, and possessing keen taste for that kind of sport, they soon became successful hunters. But the boys had heard and read of the exploits of the border scouts and their unerring skill with pistols. They soon obtained a pair of these, and commenced a lively and continuous practice, in which they gave early promise of that skill which afterward made of them such formidable foes, and secured them escape from perils which nothing but lightning quickness and faultless accuracy with these weapons, could have averted.

They became expert in shooting with either hand, and used to amuse themselves by riding at a gallop around a tree, the bridles between their teeth and a pistol in each hand, girdling the trunk with bullets.

So did these boys, whose deadly skill in after years sent many a fellow-creature reeling into the presence of his God, practice their hands in sport. Such were the tastes and char-

acters of Frank and Jesse James when the cry of war broke in wild utterance from lip to lip, and thrilled the land from Sumpter to the Golden Gate.

The early incidents of that sad era are familiar to all. At last Quantrell appeared upon the scene. The stories of his daring deeds and strange adventures awoke wild fancies in many a youthful rebel. To young Frank James this reckless life had a peculiar charm. Would Quantrell have him? Yes. That crafty fox had use for wolves and tigers. The hand that could send a bullet through heart or brain without a tremor, was welcome to a home with him, whose home was the broad plain, the swamp, the brake and the forest. And so one night in the spring of 1862 Frank James left the old farm and rode away to take his place under the Black Banner.

It has often been urged that the ill-treatment of the family by the Federals impelled the James boys to their lawless course, but there is no evidence that the militia in any way interfered with these people previous to the step taken by Frank, and the subsequent disloyal actions of the others. On the contrary it was this step, coupled with the aid and sympathy received through this family by the guerillas, which led to the summary treatment referred to.

The Samuels were intensely in sympathy with the South. They openly reviled the institutions of the Government, and did not hesitate to express their hatred of the Federal soldiers. Their house had been the scene of many a secret conference of Quantrell and his men, who found in Mrs. Samuels a powerful and trusty ally.

At last, tiring of this, and resolving to put an end to it,



PORTRAITS OF FRANK AND JESSE JAMES, IN YOUTH.

a detachment of soldiers called at the house, and finding the Doctor in, they hung him to a tree near by, and not being able or anxious to find Mrs. S., they proceeded to where Jesse, then a lad of about sixteen, was plowing in a field.

Jesse had often at the dead of night rode to the camp of Quantrell with the news of Federal plans and movements, and these soldiers came to request him not to do so again. This they did in a very impressive way, emphasizing their warning with oaths and threats of a sanguinary kind, and supposing they had impressed their wishes deeply enough upon the minds of the family, they departed.

In the meantime Mrs. Samuels had stolen to where the unfortunate Doctor was hanging, and with some difficulty succeeded in cutting him down and carrying him back to the house, where with much labor and care he was finally restored to consciousness.

Jesse, not intimidated by the warning he had received, continued to take his midnight rides to the guerilla camp. Not long, however. Hearing of this and of the Doctor's recovery, the militia made another raid on the Kearney farm. This time neither Jesse nor the Doctor could be found, but Mrs. Samuels and her daughter Susie were at home; these were put under arrest and conveyed to the jail at St. Joseph.

This decided the fate of the James Brothers. Henceforth they were outlaws. Deliberately from the first they had followed a course which led to this result, and now the gates of civil life were closed against them, yet, it is in keeping with the inconsistency of their sympathizers, that they point to those acts of the militia as the cause of the desperate career of these boys.

This can only arise from a determination to defend outlawry in the very face of truth and justice. Frank had openly become a guerilla before they had been molested by the soldiers, and then the "outrage" in question was provoked by the family, and came after—not before—the boys had declared their lawless intentions. Jesse had already asked admittance to the camp of the Confederate freebooters, but was refused because of his youth. The steps taken by the soldiers were the natural result of the violent opposition received from the family. To suppress the enemies of the Union was the object and duty of the Federal troops, and their treatment of these people was as gentle as their offenses merited. What their own side would have done is easy to imagine; what the guerillas always did in such cases is well known.

The die was cast. His brother was a robber; his mother and sister in jail; their old home watched by armed foes; nothing was left young Jesse but the life he had longed to lead. He could share that with his brother; Quantrell would not refuse him now; he was an outlaw, and Quantrell wanted outlaws. So in June—not long after Frank's departure—Jesse became a volunteer to that grim band, where at his brother's side he began the adventurous career which fills the pages of this book with such romantic interest.

At this time Jesse was about sixteen years old, inclined to be tall and of slender frame. His eyes were dark brown; complexion fair. His face was round and jovial, with rather a pleasant expression. He was inclined to be merry, always loved a jest, and was free in conversation. Frank was the

reverse in nearly every particular. He was older by four years; not so tall as Jesse, nor his face so engaging. His complexion was light; his eyes deep gray, wicked and restless. He was always a silent man, seldom smiled, and never jested. Later in life they both wore full beards, which concealed their identity from those who had formerly known them.



CHAPTER VI.

THE BLACK OATH.

THE CEREMONY WHICH ACCOMPANIED IT.

“ Blood! Blood will soothe my feelings; blood—
The blood of man! And in its flow I care
Not who shall fall, how many, nor how great!”

The brutality of border warfare will live and speak hereafter in tradition, though history were too proud to give it room upon her pages. To die in the front rank of a Gettysburg, a Bull Run, or a Waterloo, is deemed the bravest act, the noblest deed in the story of the world; to fall in a minor battle is something less of an honor; but to be shot down as a border sentinel, guarding his lonely post under the stars is the consummation of an ill-starred destiny, fitting only for a poet's song. And the baseness of ambushed assassins, who feed a passion for blood and revenge, or wreak an individual spite under the pretext of “patriotism;” the conduct of those sunken specimens of men, whose generic name were better spelled “gorilla” than “guerilla,” can never be properly portrayed—it must be imagined.

Missouri was the home and hot-bed of this class through many years, before and after the war. Their hatred, enmity and ignorant superstition, were mingled with a chaos of opposing governmental ideas, a mass of conflicting political notions, which at last took shape in arms. It was truly “The

Dark and Bloody Ground of the West." There, riding from daylight till dark, from midnight till noonday, and on into midnight again, shooting right and left at public and private enemies, the guerilla bands plundered the dead, taunted the dying, and murdered opposition wherever it rose up. Stopping only to demand meals and horse feed, they often rode and fought till nature's check, fatigue, compelled a halt.

The common ground of these parasites of war was along the Kansas border and in the Missouri counties of Johnson, Henry, Lafayette, Jackson, Platte and Clay. From these districts their raids and stopping places reached to Mexico and the Gulf, and east to Virginia.

As has been said, Quantrell was their chief. He was a cool, sagacious ruler of men. His cunning, bravery and military tact were soon recognized, and as if by instinct, these desperate spirits acknowledged allegiance to the King of Robbers. In his management of them his methods were brief and direct. He knew that to be successful a leader must lead—and his followers *must follow*. To control such characters rigid laws were necessary, and to make these as impressive and binding as possible, he framed them into an *oath*, which finally came to be known as "The Black Oath," and to whatever may be said in ridicule of this means of binding lawless men, there is but one answer: No man ever broke the Black Oath. Its terrible words, together with the solemn rites with which it was always administered, seemed to sink deep enough into the hardened souls of those men to reach that germ of honor which it is said is never wholly destroyed, even in the most depraved.

It was never administered except when the light of day had faded from earth and sky. Then, in the presence of armed witnesses, and surrounded by every emblem of danger and death that could be brought to deck the dismal ceremony, the candidate for membership to those grim ranks was led forth and sworn in as follows:

“In the name of God and the Devil, the one to punish and the other to reward, and by the powers of light and darkness, good and evil, here under the black arch of Heaven’s avenging symbol, I pledge and consecrate my heart, my brain, my body and my limbs, and swear by all the powers of hell and heaven, to devote my life to obedience to my superiors; that no danger or peril shall deter me from executing their orders; that I will exert every possible means in my power for the extermination of Federals, Jay-hawkers and their abettors; that in fighting those whose serpent trail has winnowed the fair fields and possessions of our allies and sympathizers, I will show no mercy, but strike with an avenging arm, so long as breath remains.

“ I further pledge my heart, my brain, my body and my limbs, never to betray a comrade; that I will submit to all the tortures cunning mankind can inflict, and suffer the most horrible death, rather than reveal a single secret of this organization, or a single word of this, my oath.

“ I further pledge my heart, my brain, my body and my limbs, never to forsake a comrade when there is hope, even at the risk of great peril, of saving him from falling into the hands of our enemies; that I will sustain Quantrell’s guerillas with my might and defend them with my blood, and, if need



THE BLACK FLAG.

be, die with them; in every extremity I will never withhold my aid, nor abandon the cause with which I now cast my fortunes, my honor, and my life. Before violating a single clause or implied pledge of this obligation, I will pray to an avenging God and an unmerciful devil to tear out my heart and roast it over the flames of sulphur; that my head may be split open and my brains scattered over the earth; that my body may be ripped up and my bowels torn out and fed to carrion birds; that each of my limbs may be broken with stones, and then cut off, by inches, that they may feed the foulest birds of the air; and, lastly, may my soul be given unto torment, that it may be submerged in melted metal and be stifled by the fumes of hell, and may this punishment be meted out to me through all eternity, in the name of God and devil. Amen."

At the conclusion the new guerilla was turned successively to the East, West, North and South; four masked men in black came forward and presented swords at his head, heart and feet, while other weird exercises were performed around him. A salute of pistol shots closed the strange ceremony, and the elected was declared a member, and admitted to the fellowship of a company whose manners and customs may be imagined from the character of the oath which bound them.

With that oath graven deep upon their young minds, Frank and Jesse James entered upon their dark careers.

CHAPTER VII.

ACTIVE SERVICE — THE FIRST FIGHT — CAPTURE OF THE RICHFIELD GARRISON — FRANK AND JESSE IN THE FIELD — A MIDNIGHT VISIT TO THE OLD HOME — THE MOTHER'S RECEPTION — "ON TO PLATTSBURG" — ANOTHER VICTORY — TWELVE THOUSAND DOLLARS CAPTURED — FRANK'S SHARE OF THE SPOILS — A GROTESQUE ENDING TO AN EXCITING DAY.

It was not long after Jesse joined the guerillas that he got a taste of active service. Up to this time there seems to have been no serious encounter between the guerillas and the Federals. At last Quantrell sent a detachment of twelve men under Captain Scott to attack Richfield, a small Federal station on the north side of the Missouri River.

Frank and Jesse were among the ones selected to go with Scott. At this time Frank seems to have already distinguished himself among his companions, for we find that he was chosen by the Captain to lead the attack.

Richfield was garrisoned by about thirty soldiers, under command of Captain Sessions of the Federal State Militia. A desperate fight ensued, but the courage and unerring skill of the assailants made short work of it. Captain Sessions and Lieutenant Graffenstein were killed by the first volley, and soon the little garrison fell into the hands of these intrepid warriors of the bush. Twelve in all of the Federals were

killed; the balance, numbering about eighteen, surrendered and were paroled. The guerillas did not lose a man; the surprise was complete. This was the initial contest between the Federal troops and the partizans on the Missouri border, and the greatest excitement followed that bold sortie.

That same day Scott moved back into Clay county. Here Jesse was detailed as a scout, and the performance of his duty in that capacity allowed him to visit his old home again. It was not yet day when, after a long ride through wood and swamp, he rapped at the door of his mother's house. She was at home, and welcomed her son as the Spartan mothers welcomed their soldier sons; not to a life of peace and safety, but only to applaud their valiant deeds and send them back to victory or gory graves.

Mrs. Samuels was proud of her brave boy. She had rather seen him laid lifeless at her feet, a hero, than have known him safe, a refugee from danger. Besides, she had information of an important character which must be taken to Quantrell. She had learned, no one knew how, that the Federals were preparing a surprise for the guerillas. Infuriated by the attack on Richfield, the militia had determined to end partizan warfare in that section, and were concentrating forces for that purpose. The garrison at Plattsburg had been withdrawn, and detailed to hunt the guerillas, leaving that post for the time defenceless. It was this the redoubtable mother wanted conveyed to the guerilla camp.

Stealthily as he came, young Jesse retraced his way to the hiding place of Scott and his men; the information was joyfully recited and received. "On to Plattsburg!" was the

cry of all. Here was a chance for the guerillas to capture a Federal stronghold while its defenders were out on a fruitless search for them. The little band at once broke camp, and cautiously took their way to the deserted post.

Long before daylight, the third morning after the raid on Richfield, Scott and his followers halted within four miles of Plattsburg. Here, in the shadow of a deep forest, they lay concealed till evening, when the scouts returned with information confirming that given by Mrs. Samuels. Capt. Rodgers had gone out to capture Scott, and only a small guard remained in charge at the court house. The officer left in command was a lieutenant, and, at the time the guerillas rode yelling into the square, he was out in town, and had not time to rejoin his men. In his attempt to do this, he was intercepted by Frank James, who promptly took him prisoner, and conducted him to Captain Scott.

In the meantime the raiders were not having it all their own way. The guard on duty at the court house immediately fortified themselves in the building, and were vigorously defending their position, when Frank arrived with his prisoner. Taking in the situation at a glance, he pointed to the captured lieutenant, and called out to Scott, "Captain, shoot that man unless he gives up the court house!"

With an oath the captain swore he would do it, and proceeded toward making his word good, when the prisoner yielded, and commanded his men to surrender, which, owing to the situation of the lieutenant, they consented to do.

Two hundred muskets were captured at this victory, and considerable money and property stolen and de-

stroyed. The citizens fled or concealed themselves at sight of these wild fellows, and left them to pillage the town at pleasure. This of course they cheerfully did, securing twelve thousand dollars in Union Defense Warrants, besides a large quantity of clothing, and other valuable property, which, according to the rules of these freebooters, was divided among the band.

Frank's share of this was one thousand dollars; his first reprisal. It was more than he had ever dreamed of possessing. If nothing else had fired his heart with love for this free life, the spoils it promised now to its bold votaries was enough.

That day of victory closed with a festive night. The bandits, whose precarious life gave meager opportunity for the enjoyment of necessaries and less for luxuries, now decided to "live high" for a little while. They ordered a banquet spread at the hotel; the prisoners were paroled and invited to the board, and shared the festivities with some show of good humor. Supper over, the convivial party mounted their horses and disappeared with their booty.



CHAPTER VIII.

A CARNIVAL OF CRIME — QUANTRELL ORDERS A CHANGE OF POSITION — KEEPING IN PRACTICE — THE COUNCIL— QUANTRELL'S SPEECH—THE MARCH TO LAWRENCE.

On the return of Scott and his men to camp, Quantrell ordered a change of position. It was a principle of his to move often, no matter what appearance of safety his position might have. This time he moved to the southward, and made a brief stay in the Blackwater Valley, a region where a most deplorable state of affairs existed. The scene of numerous conflicts, it had been from the first exposed to the ravages of both armies; and now had little to offer to freebooters. So after a short stay here they began to cast about for fatter fields, where valor could secure them something more tangible than "revenge." They wanted revenge, but they couldn't afford to be paid entirely in that; so they decided to go where they could get at least half cash. However, the time had not been vainly spent. The boys had kept their hands in practice. The crack of the pistol could be heard at all hours; every day yielded victims to the faultless aim of these fine marksmen. Of course the James boys were busy; such work for them had all the charms of sport. They shot men down *for fun*. A reign of the most abject terror prevailed. The possession of money was a passport to the grave; the country was under guerilla rule; the rule was: "Your money and

ON TO LAWRENCE.



L. BRAUNHOLD. sc.

your life." So when the order to move again was received, there was not a man among this lawless band who was not fitted for desperate service in any form. Single handed murder or wholesale slaughter, it mattered not; they were prepared for it. If possible they were more daring, more brutal, more desperate than before, and now the announcement that they were about to enter upon a campaign of more activity, was hailed with universal joy.

They were to capture and sack the city of Lawrence and massacre its male inhabitants. The enterprise was a perilous one. Even Quantrell paused before such a risk of life. He called a council of his boldest men, and candidly laid before them all the dangers that threatened the attempt, and these he did not try to underestimate. The worst was unflinchingly considered and discussed. It was a strange conference held there that night in that gloomy Southern forest, with wild beasts for sentinels and the camp-fire painting its ghastly tints on faces thoughtful with their weight of crime. It was important, too. Many lives and the fate of a city hung on the decision of these grim councillors. Among those present were George and Oll Shepherd, Cole Younger and Frank James.

The council agreed with Quantrell in the resolve to attack Lawrence, a thriving little city on the Kaw River. But before deciding the question fully, Quantrell called all his followers together and announced his intention to them, laid before them all the obstacles likely to impede their progress, explained that the country through which they must march was full of enemies, through whom they would have to literally carve their way.

“And now,” said Quantrell, “I know that not a man among you fears a foe. Your past is proof enough of this; but you have never experienced such danger before, and it is without impugning your courage that I warn you of the perils that beset this step, and I respectfully say to you, that all who would rather not take the risk which this expedition must impose, may honorably withdraw from it now.”

The only response which greeted this speech was, “On to Lawrence!” The cry burst simultaneously from every lip, and echoed away into the silent night, till hill and cave and rocky glen woke from their slumber at the startling sound, and muttered o’er those ominous words, “On to Lawrence!”

At daybreak on the following morning two hundred guerillas, under the boldest of leaders, rode gaily away to the darkest, cruelest, bloodiest deeds the records of warfare can show. Away they rode on a mission which in success or failure must bring sorrow to many an innocent heart.

The history of the next few days is appalling. The route to Lawrence was marked with every description of outrage. When within about twenty miles of the city they came upon three men at work on a house which had been partially destroyed. It was the work of soldiers. Stock and provender had all been taken; nothing had been spared but the lives of the family, and at what cost these were saved, only they could tell. A woman sat in the doorway nursing a sick child; the whole place, which bore some traces of having once been a pleasant home for a once happy family, was now a picture of desolation.

But the guerillas had learned to laugh at sorrow. They

had cultivated a power over natural sympathies by which they could look upon ruin, and add to it, without remorse. They compelled these men to leave their plague-stricken home and go with them as guides. In vain they begged their captors to permit one of them to remain with the mother and child. They explained that they were destitute, and would suffer severely unless some one was left to take care of them. They were told that the mother and child would be taken care of, and with no other alternative but to obey, the three men left their ruined home and its frightened occupants in charge of two of the company detailed to remain there as guards against possible followers, and led the way for that heartless horde toward the fated city.

When the company had got out of sight, the two "guards" who had been left in charge of the family came forward and shot the child and its mother, and hurried on after their companions. It was a principle of Quantrell's to leave no person alive with information which could possibly be used to his injury, and the knowledge of the direction taken by the guerillas, marked that poor woman for the common fate of all who crossed the path of Quantrell.

The three men faithfully led the band to within seven or eight miles of Lawrence, and supposing their task completed, asked to be allowed to return. But the guerillas were not done with them yet. They were in possession of some of Quantrell's designs, and they could not go back with these; so they were taken aside into a thicket and shot down, with their prayers and entreaties on their lips, because, as Quantrell said, "Dead men tell no tales."

Two of the party were brothers; the other their father. The boys were killed first and fell at the old man's feet. He plead piteously for his life: "Only," he said, "that he might go back and take care of his poor boy's wife and child." But they silenced him with bullets and left him with the rest, to keep their secret.

Up to this time they had met with none of the resistance which Quantrell had predicted, and which they all had expected. No obstacle had checked their steps since they started; no foe had yet thrust a barrier in their way; not an enemy had appeared along the route. True, they had avoided roads and public places as much as possible, had cut across through fields and byways, and there they left no one to tell the direction they took; no one had passed them; they killed every one they met.



CHAPTER IX.

DESTRUCTION OF LAWRENCE—A DAY OF RUIN AND DEATH
—THE GUERILLAS AT WORK WITH SWORD AND TORCH—
A MINISTER'S REMINISCENCE OF THE DREADFUL DAY.

The next morning, just as Lawrence was waking from the sleep of a summer night, before the sun had cast a beam on spire or tree, with a yell that might have woke the dead, the guerillas dashed into the silent streets. Men started from their beds bewildered and confused, and met death at the threshold unannounced. The crack of pistols, the groans of dying men, the screams of frightened women and children, mingled with the oaths and yells of fiends, were the only sounds to be heard. The beautiful city of Lawrence had become a pandemonium, an arena where wild beasts were unloosed among men and women and children. The "Black Flag" unfurled its sombre coils, and darted here and there along the streets like a great bird of ill omen. The people saw it and read their doom in that dark ensign of the grave.

There had long been an understanding in Lawrence that the fire bell should be rung as an alarm at the approach of enemies, but the raid of Quantrell was a complete surprise, and when the bell pealed out its tardy warning the arsenal was captured and in flames.

There was little resistance; it was too late. On they came, a resistless tide, with horrible yells and frightful oaths,

and shots that never missed. Men sank down at every turn—at every door—before their deadly aim. Women and children who tried to escape through alleys and by-ways were shot like quails by the howling pack. Some, wounded, crept back to their homes for shelter, only to perish in the flames when the ruthless fiends applied the torch.

They shot every man they found, robbed wherever they found anything worth taking, and destroyed what they could not carry away. Saloons yielded their share of the spoils, and many of the pillagers drank without restraint, and when night came and spread her mantle over the ghastly scene, that band of robbers had become a mob of drunken roysterers. Quantrell saw this, and realized their danger. His head was always cool. He let no

“Thief into his mouth
To steal away his brains.”

Quantrell never drank, and now carefully he gathered his scattered band together, and ordered a retreat. Those lawless spirits, who wore no other check upon their will, ever gave blind obedience to Quantrell's commands, no matter when nor where, and even now through their deadened senses and clouded intellects, the sound of his voice broke with an authority they dared not disregard. As tigers crouch at the word of their keeper, those bloodthirsty creatures obeyed the beck and call of their chief, and by the light of the burning city, with no music but the piteous cries and groans of their helpless victims, the band of rollicking savages rode carelessly away, leaving the flames to consume what they had not stolen or destroyed.

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It was a terrible day's work. How many lives were lost in that brief space of time has never been ascertained, but when morning came again the beautiful city of Lawrence had been swept from the earth. Only a few stray buildings and a desert of smoking ruins marked the spot where yesterday was life, and industry, and happiness.

All through that work of desolation and death the James Brothers held conspicuous places. Their hands never faltered; their aim never failed. How many lives they took that day they never knew; *they took all they found.*

REV. DR. FISHER'S EXPERIENCE.

The following from the Cincinnati *Gazette* was related by Rev. Dr. Fisher, at a Methodist Preachers' meeting in that city:

"I was always an anti-slavery man of the most 'anti' kind, and after I moved to Kansas, without any prominence having been given to my sentiments by myself, I found myself the object of the most vindictive hatred of the pro-slavery party of the region where I resided. My life was unsuccessfully sought several times. When the war broke out I went as a chaplain. Most of the male members of my church went to the war, and I went as one of Jim Lane's chaplains.

"The news of my connection with the army, and of my being put in charge of contrabands who were sent to Kansas, got abroad, and the rebels hated me worse than ever. They got my photograph and distributed it throughout the country, and it was fixed among them that I was to be shot whenever met. Once when I was sent up the river with a body of con-

trabands, not being well, I went home for a little rest. I was living at Lawrence. The town had a few guns in the armory, and there was an understanding with the farmers of the surrounding country that upon the ringing of an alarm, they should come in and defend the town, but the coming of Quantrell and his men was a complete surprise. When the alarm was rung the arsenal was already captured and on fire. I was in bed, and heard, about 3 o'clock in the morning, horses galloping very rapidly away, and woke my wife, telling her that it was singular that horses should be galloping so fast so early in the morning; but she said she guessed it was some farmers who had been to a railroad meeting the evening before, and were hurrying back to their work. We lay and talked for some time. The children were going out that morning to get some grapes, and my wife thought she would call them earlier than usual, and herein, brethren, I see the hand of Providence. It was not yet daylight, but day was dawning. Having called the children, she went and looked out of the front door, and instantly called me: 'Pa, the Rebels are in town.' I said that could not be; but nevertheless, I sprang from the bed and ran to the door.

"There they were just across the green, and just then they shot the United Brethren preacher, as he was milking his cow in his barn-yard. I rushed back into the house; my wife caught up her babe; I have four boys; one was on my wife's breast, another was by her side, and the two oldest were twelve and fourteen years old. We all rushed up the lot in which our house stood. Then I left my wife, and with the two oldest boys ran up the hill, but something seemed to tell

me that I was running away from safety. So I told the boys to run on, and I would go back to mother. It was then in the gray light of morning, and the Rebels had divided into little squads and were ransacking the town, killing every man they found, and burning houses. My boys separated, the oldest getting with a neighbor's boy, Robert Winton, and while the two were running for life the soldiers saw them and fired a volley, killing poor Bobby, and frightening my boy almost to death. He ran in and hid among some graves in the graveyard. My younger son ran off on the prairie.

"In fixing my cellar I had thrown up a bank of earth near the entrance, and I crept down there and laid myself between the mound of earth and the wall in such a way that the earth would partially screen me. I lay up close to the kitchen floor. I had not been there long, when four of Quantrell's men rode up to the house and demanded admittance. My wife went to the front door and let them in. They demanded whether I was not in the house or in the cellar. She replied: 'My husband and two oldest boys ran off as soon as the firing began.' The leader swore that he knew I was in the cellar. My wife replied that she had two young children by her, and that she did not want any more oaths uttered before them. 'You have doubted my word,' she replied, 'you can look for yourselves.' I lay so near the floor that I could hear every word that was said. The men called for a candle.

"My wife replied that we did not burn candles. Then they wanted a lantern, but she said we hadn't any. They asked then with an oath, what we did for a light. She replied that we burned kerosene in a lamp. Then they called for a lamp,

and my wife had to get it, but the men in their eagerness to light it, turned the wick down in the oil. Failing to light it themselves, they called on my wife to light it.

“‘Why, you’ve ruined the lamp,’ said she; ‘it can’t be lighted with the wick down in the oil.’”

“‘Haven’t you another lamp?’ said they.

“‘Yes, there’s one up stairs,’ said she, and they then ordered her to go and get it.

“‘Gentlemen,’ said she, ‘I can’t do it. Your rudeness has so frightened me that I can scarcely hold my babe.’”

“One of the men then offered to hold it for her, and took it from her arms. My poor wife then went and got the lamp, which they lighted, and started on their search. They all cocked their revolvers and passed the word to kill me at sight, and started for the cellar. I laid myself as flat as I could, and turned my face toward the wall, for I knew my face was thinnest from ear to ear. The light came to the door.

“I tell you, brethren, I just quit living. You have heard it said that when a man is drowning all his past life comes up before him.”

The speaker’s voice trembled; his eyes became suffused, and his whole frame shook with suppressed emotion, as he continued: “I stood then before the judgment seat. I was a dead man. My heart ceased to beat. I already stood before my Judge. Brethren, what could I do, but just trust myself to the Lord?”

“The man who carried the light was tall, and providentially stooped so low in entering the cellar that the light shin-

ing against the bank of earth, threw a shadow over me. They searched the cellar, but did not find me, and went back up stairs. My wife afterward told me that when the men went down in the cellar, she took her babe and went into the parlor, and stood there holding her hand against one ear, and her babe against the other, expecting every moment to hear the report of the revolvers in the cellar, announcing the death of her husband.

“The soldiers set fire to the house in several places, and leaving one of their number to prevent my wife from putting it out, departed. The man seemed to be touched with pity, and told her that if she wanted to save some furniture he would help her. My wife thinks that holding the babe in his arms touched his heart. She pleaded with him if he had any consideration for her helpless children to leave the house and let her put out the fire. He consented and left.

“My wife then came to me and asked whether it was all right between me and God. ‘I am afraid they will come back and kill you yet, and it will be the greatest comfort to know that you felt prepared to die.’

“I told her that I felt that I was prepared to die.

“Telling me to pray, she left me. It was not long before another party of Quantrell’s men came, and in drunken tones—for the marauders had become intoxicated by this time—demanded whether I was in the house.

“‘Do you suppose,’ said my wife, confidently, ‘that he would stay here, and you shooting and burning all over town? No; he left this morning as soon as the firing commenced, and unless some of you have shot him and killed him outside,

he is safe. Some of your men were here this morning and searched the house. However, you may look for yourselves.'

"In this way she bluffed them. They set fire to the house, and left one, who drew his revolver on my wife, and said he would kill her if she tried to put it out. He staid till the house was so far consumed that there was no possibility of saving it. My wife pulled up a carpet, and, taking it to the yard, dropped it accidentally by the door.

"My wife was afraid, and so was I, that I would be burned alive, for I had now no thought of doing anything but what my wife told me. The floor was on fire almost over me, and the flames were creeping nearer. My wife stood and threw water, pail after pail, on the floor, and was doing this when a neighbor, a Catholic woman, came and said: " 'Why, Mrs. Fisher, what are you doing? What good will it be to save that floor? Besides, you can't save it.'

" 'I don't care what good it will do,' replied my wife, 'I am going to keep on wetting that floor.'

"But finally, when she saw she could not save it, she asked the neighbor whether she could keep a secret. She then swore her by the Virgin Mary never to reveal it.

" 'Well, then,' said my wife, 'my husband is under that floor.'

"The soldiers were still everywhere, shooting and burning, and the air was filled with the shrieks of wounded and dying men, the wailings of widows and orphans, and the sound of falling buildings. My wife then called me to come out, and threw a dress over my shoulders. The two women picked up the carpet, and I crawled under it between them, and so

we proceeded to a small bush about four feet high, out in the yard.

“There my wife saw four soldiers ready to fire. They were not a hundred yards off. Then, for the first time, the poor woman despaired. A pang then shot to her heart, and she gave up all for lost. Nevertheless, I slunk under the bush, and they threw the carpet over me.

“‘Save the chairs!’ cried my wife; and they rushed to where the chairs were piled, close to the burning building, and ran with them and flung them carelessly upon me, and piled up all that was saved of our household goods about me. The soldiers evidently thought the pile only a lot of household furniture, and left it unmolested.

“I staid there till two hours after they left, and then gathered my wife and my four children—for the two boys had come back—and in the garden we knelt and thanked God for deliverance. Brethren, you don’t know what it is to be thankful.”



CHAPTER X.

THE RETREAT—A RECORD OF HARDSHIP AND DANGER —GENERAL EWING'S ORDER.

The prime motive for the attack on Lawrence is now admitted by many who took part in it to have been to secure some of the wealth which was known to be stored there by its industrious and thrifty inhabitants. It is asserted that over a million and a half dollars in money and valuables were taken away by the guerillas in their retreat from that place.

But what a retreat it was! Foes harassed them at every step, villagers and militiamen met them wherever they turned. For six long days and nights they rode and fought with no rest, and little food. The news of their terrible work soon spread over the country. General Ewing promptly issued an order commanding all male citizens over eighteen years old, in the counties of Bates, Vernon, and Cass, to leave everything and report immediately for service to the nearest military post. In consequence the Federal force in those localities soon swelled, and Quantrell found as he had prophesied, a wall of enemies hedging him in. The situation was truly desperate; nothing but ceaseless vigilance and exhaustless cunning and endurance could have saved the band from total destruction; only Quantrell could have led them from the grasp of the myriad-handed monster which threatened hourly to crush them.

Before they had gone more than fifteen miles they were compelled to make a stand and defend themselves against their pursuers. They took refuge in a large barn which offered them temporary protection, and from this position stubbornly resisted the most determined efforts to dislodge them. After repeated assaults had been vainly made the assailants prepared to burn the barn, but discovering this in time Quantrell ranged his men in order and made a sudden and desperate charge, in which about seventy militiamen were killed and wounded, and the rest thrown into disorder, from which they did not rally until the guerillas had reached their horses and got well away on their retreat.

Time was too precious to follow up temporary advantages. The neighborhood was becoming rapidly unhealthful; militiamen were hourly swarming closer and closer upon their track, and minutes had grown too valuable to waste in revenge; they abandoned that now in their race for life.

Further on near Spring Hill they encountered a company of about three hundred men mounted and armed, awaiting their approach. But the name of Quantrell, or the sight of his rough looking followers, discouraged the valiant company, and they promptly got out of the way and let the guerillas pass on. Had they staid and contested the field with the fatigued and shattered band whom they greatly outnumbered, they could either have beaten them or held them at bay till reinforcements arrived. But they were not sure they could do it, and refused to experiment, so Quantrell, like the famous knight of whom it is said:

“ Men went down before his spear
At the mere motion of the man
Knowing 'twas Lancelot,”

continued his perilous retreat.

It was as Quantrell had said, they had to carve their way through a wall of enemies, and many who went so gaily to the work of slaughter, were left on the way the prey of wolves and carrion birds. At last, finding the coils of destruction gathering closer about them, the guerillas disbanded as the safest means of escaping their pursuers, each taking the way he thought best, and relying upon his own cunning and prowess to bear him through the dangers that hedged them in. This rendered a general pursuit impossible, and finally, after many hardships and perils, the survivors reached their old haunts in Missouri, and once more were gathered under the old flag, again pursuing their work of ruin and death. But the spoils of that terrible day had rapidly melted; some was left with those who fell in their desperate retreat and much was abandoned by the others when hardest pressed, so that when they arrived at the appointed rendezvous the total of their booty amounted to less than \$200,000.

Thus perished the city of Lawrence, and ended the pursuit of her desolators, and in the incidents of that dark crime the thoughtful may find matter for reflection. Here is evidence which contradicts the ancient theory that vice and cruelty are the insignia of cowardice. The theory is wrong. We wish it were not; it is always so gratifying to think of wickedness as being cowardly, and virtue as being brave, but it is an error, and the world was never benefited by worship-

ing its errors, no matter what morals they may appear to teach. Those men were not deceived into the dangers they faced; they had weighed them all before, and expecting the worst, rode out to meet it. Yet they were murderers and incendiaries. On the other hand, the three hundred militiamen they met at Spring Hill were good men; they were recruited from respectable positions, and may have all belonged to Sunday-school, but they were afraid. Virtue is not always valiant; vice is sometimes brave; there should be something more than cowardice to condemn a man, and more than bravery to recommend him. When this is universally understood there will be less hero worship and false sentiment; and even women will look beyond a gallant swagger in judging men.



CHAPTER XI.

The frequent and unexpected disbandments of the guerillas taught them a self-reliance and independence which inspired fear wherever their names were sounded.

Coming out from their hiding places in the early part of July, 1863, they followed Captain George Todd, a notorious guerilla chief, galloping down the Blue Springs Road from Pleasant Hill. Frank and Jesse James had often fought with Todd, and were now bent upon another bloody rampage. They were well rested up and were returning to their old sport, seeking whom they might slay, like a hungry wolf after unsuspecting sheep. They did not ride far before they ran into a Federal cavalry force under Major Ransom. An immediate and intense battle was the only possible result, for on the one side were patriotic and fearless cavalry riders, and on the other mounted guerillas, sworn in body and soul, numbers and mind, to

“*Strike—till the last armed foe expires!*”

And the straight aim of the James Boys and their comrades who were not far below them in marksmanship, was dreadfully fatal to the Federal ranks. The guerillas never shot without taking aim, and seldom missed, if their weapons were true. In this collision Jesse James killed seven men and Frank eight—they kept an accurate count, to see who could

slay the most men; or, in a savage way, to see who could have the fullest tent of scalps.

Four or five miles east of Wellington, in Lafayette county, was a lecherous den much frequented by militiamen. One night Frank James and half a dozen of his comrades were sent to destroy the place and make short work of the militiamen. The company proceeded, Frank James scouting along in advance of the rest. Creeping up to the window he saw eleven men in the house, and immediately returned to make his report. A pistol shot served as a quick summons for the militiamen to come out into the yard. The guerillas rode up and a double round of bullets from their guns dispatched ten of the men. They fell to the earth and their bodies were counted in death. But the eleventh man was nowhere to be seen, and the closest search failed to reveal him. But surely he could not be far away, for Frank James had taken an accurate memorandum and he certainly saw eleven men in the house not long before.

Another careful investigation revealed the fact that there was one more woman in the camp than formerly. But which one of the women was the extra one, was the question. Each of them had feminine features and long hair. Finally a candle was procured, and Frank James discovered the eleventh man clothed in feminine attire. He was a youth of about sixteen, with bright blue eyes and a clear skin, while his dark brown hair hung to his shoulders, and in the proper dress, with his regular features, he would pass for a young country girl very easily at night, in the hazy moonlight, or even under the flickering rays of a candle, ordinarily.

But the guerillas were not to be fooled with, and with a unanimous consent of the band the leader said, "Here, Frank, take him,—finders are keepers. You discovered him; he's yours to deal with."

The boy realized his situation, but was almost speechless with fear. In dread and anguish, and wailing, the women pleaded for his life. Were not ten dead faces upturned to the sky enough to complete the ghastly picture? No! They must have the face of the girlish youth for a keystone to the arch!

"Come along here, young man," said Frank James, starting down the road. "Come along here and be shot, and when you get to the other world, tell them that you had the honor to be sent there by the weapon of Frank James."

"Oh, spare me for my mother's sake!" cried the boy, falling on his knees, while the tears streamed down his cheeks.

"Come, march on," said James, with an oath; "I've not time to waste on such spring chickens as you!"

The fate of the lad was inevitable; and coming, too, before he had scarcely begun to realize that he existed. He was in the vigor of youth, healthy but not robust, at that period of life when longevity is most cherished, and death is most terrible. His short life had been spent without any achievements; and he vividly realized that he was to meet a quick and unmerciful end, without remembrance, and to have been born to no purpose. Alas! ill-fated youth! He thought of home and mother, of every one who thought of him; of all he had, or all he hoped to be, and then of home and mother again.

All this came upon him with the quickness of thought.

Trembling in every nerve, he suffered many deaths from fright, in a very brief space. So weak was he that he could hardly walk. But Frank James aided him down the steps, and hurried him past the ghostly pile of his comrades, into the darkness down the road. They soon came to a bushy-topped scrub oak, which trees are plentiful in that part of Missouri, and the outlines of the place sternly pointed out to the youth that this would be the spot where the beasts and birds of prey would peck and tear his flesh on the morrow, and where his bones would bleach in the noonday sun thereafter.

"Had you no mother, Mr. James?" he wailed again. "Oh, spare me for my mother's sake!"

"Here we are far enough," said Frank James. "You are free to go. I give you your life. You are outside of the pickets—outside of danger. Go, and be quick about it!" And the boy *went*. And with the last word James fired his pistol heavenward and made a dent in the wayside tree, to count one for the shot, instead of nicking his revolver handle, to note the departure of a human life. That one was witnessed by the stars.

But what was the temperament of the heart and mind of the youthful soldier boy at that time? Words of gratitude fail to tell. He had been spared by the young desperado; to let a mother once more smooth back the locks from his fair forehead; and that was all.

But what a different sound that pistol shot had to the various listening ears! To the soldier boy it fell upon a grateful ear; to James it was the report of a deed well done; while

for the other guerillas it was music—the death knell in which they gloried.

Frank James returned immediately, with a solemn and sober expression, conscious that he had done one thing well; but only to continue in his terrible pursuit.

“Quick work,” said a comrade.

“Yes,” said James; “babies are not hard to kill, and boys are as easily *disposed of*,” giving to the “disposed of” a peculiar emphasis which the hearers were not listening for, and did not credit.

And so the warfare of the border went on, and society in Missouri and Southeastern Kansas was cut to the core. Partners in business, whose every other interest was in common, took issue in arms over the general question. The feeling was most intense. Men belonged radically to one side or the other—to the “bloodthirsty and far-reaching North,” or “the impassioned and defiant South.” Commerce was prostrated, the church stagnated, and women wished they were men, that they might rush into battle, while children fought with neighbor children, to follow the example of the older heads. And it was well that one-half the human race are so constituted that they cannot go to war; for the entire population of the border might have been extinguished.

And the James Boys were in the thickest of the strife. The tales and talk of tragedy failed to satisfy—they must be the *tragedians*. Emerging from their shelter in the Sni hills and bottom lands along the Blue, they rode far and fast, dealing death at every blow—now with Quantrell, now with Todd and Poole, then with John Jarrette and Bill Anderson.

and in his turn with Arch Clements. First charging Blunt's bodyguard in Kansas, they would then surprise a moving column of Federal militia in Jackson or Lafayette counties, Missouri. Felling their victims among the autumn leaves of Texas, they would return to the playgrounds of their youth, and slay the Federal farmer at his plow in the bright days of spring.

One Monday, on the road west of Warrensburg, they riddle Lieut. Nash's command, and on the next Wednesday a company of Union militia is successively ambushed by them on the banks of the Little Blue. Then they join Todd in a raid from Independence toward Harrisonville, seven miles from which they are brought to a stand by Captain Wagner, with the Second Colorado cavalry, but whom Jesse James lays out in death with seven others, while Frank, too, scores eight. And shortly afterward Frank holds at bay, with the level of his pistols, a lot of soldier gamblers at Camden.

And so passed the spring and summer of 1864. Late in July four men were gathering apples in an orchard by the roadside one evening—two in one tree and two in another. Presently Jesse James and Arch Clements came riding by. They selected a tree apiece, shot down the men, and galloped along as if nothing had happened, or jesting as if they had been shooting at a mark.

And shortly after this it was Frank's turn again to play the part of a hero in a thrilling adventure. The guerillas had come to be a large element of the Confederate troops in Missouri; and the Federal forces were being concentrated in Jackson and Cass counties for the extermination of all loose

THE COUNCIL.



Confederates, irregular soldiers, bandits and outlaws, and carry on somewhat of a decent war. The guerillas were sensible of this, and were possessed of some uneasiness; but they scouted sharply, and longed for the time when the expected conflict would be the hottest. The greater the peril the greater was the honor; and Frank James was selected to find out the position and movements of the Federal militiamen and Jayhawkers, and the Colorado cavalry. He struck the Harrisonville and Independence road about half way between the two towns, and as he passed through the fields and farms he found that a squad of Federal infantry and cavalry were encamped a few miles from the road, but just how many he failed to ascertain. Taking an unfrequented path down over the hills, he resolved to investigate the situation, and he let his horse speed along toward the enemy's camp. He examined every crook and turn of the road, and took careful notes of the country. A mile or two on he came to a sharp turn in the road. Here was an old log cabin, apparently deserted. As he turned the corner two militiamen, who were acting as sentinels, stepped into the road, and presenting their guns, commanded him to halt. Instantly his hand jerked a revolver from his belt, from the force of habit, and a bullet penetrated one of the men's brains before his musket trigger could be pulled. Frank wheeled his horse and put the spurs to him, firing as he turned, at the other guard, who fell with a mortal wound. A bullet from the guard's rifle whizzed past his ear, but he sped away unharmed. And well it was that he turned, for not far up the road were one hundred infantry and fifty Colorado cavalry taking dinner. The firing brought the cav-

alry immediately, and they pressed on in quick pursuit; but Frank James' horse was fleet and trusty, and he escaped them.

Ray county, Missouri, was the scene of the next conflict. Frank and Jesse James were again together, in company with Bill Anderson and Todd, and their other comrades. On the 12th of August they came into deadly combat with their foes, and the James Boys killed seven men between them.

In the next struggle Jesse James was so wounded that he concluded his time had come. The guerilla band proceeded to Flat Rock Ford, on the Grand River, and on the 14th engaged some Federal militia and volunteers in a hand-to-hand fight. In the thickest part of the set-to a bullet tore through Jesse James' breast and left lung, and he fell. But he was soon picked up and carried out of the affray, to Captain John A. Rudd's residence. His wound was bleeding, and he breathed hard. Medical aid was procured, but it did not seem to be aid, only in name; for the scientific and surgical being who superintended the affair, was skilled only in practice upon the horses of the band—to keep them well and sure of foot. He began to grow weak, and felt that his end was near.

“Here,” he said to his friends; “take these to my sister Susie”—removing a ring from his finger and handing out the following message:

“DEAR SISTER SUSIE:—I am fatally shot. Here is my ring; keep it to remember me by. I have no regret. I've done what I thought was right. I die contented.”

But more careful attendance was procured, and in just

three weeks Jesse James was able to mount his horse and strike for the guerilla camp. He found Frank James and Lieut. George Shepherd at Judge Gray's house, near Bone Hill, Jackson county, which was always a safe rendezvous for the guerillas; and the whole party made off for a raid into Clay county. This was on the 12th of September, 1864.

Jesse made a flying visit to his mother at this time. He was now able to act as scout, and his mother filled him with important news concerning the Jayhawkers, Federal militiamen and Abolitionists. The whole county was teeming with militiamen and their allies, and a general massacre of the guerillas was expected very soon; so that it behooved the latter element to act immediately, and prepare to make themselves felt.

Four days later—Sept. 16th—Jesse James appeared at Keytesville, Chariton county, Mo., where three militiamen bit the dust at the instance of his pistol; and on the next night he rode twenty-nine miles through a dangerous country, to give Todd some necessary information about the Federal movements.

During the night of the 19th the whole of Quantrell's combination was massed for assistance at the battle of Fayette. Bill Anderson, Poole, Clements, and all the other chiefs were there. Quantrell was to have led, and on the following forenoon he made a desperate assault on the stockade. In the heat of this encounter Lee McMurtry, a close comrade of Jesse James, was fearfully wounded and fell near the Federal lines. The bullets were now flying sharply into the guerilla ranks, and there scarcely seemed space enough be-

tween the bullet lines for a human body, nor time enough between the volleys to take a single step. But Jesse James was not to be checked—he was as sincere in friendship as he was dauntless in encounter, and through the hot fire he ran up, shouldered McMurtry, and rushed back without an injury. The battle wore on some time; but the guerillas were not drilled for any organized engagement, and so they could not long sustain the regularity of the Federal fire, and were driven off.

Though Quantrell had some considerable military knowledge and discipline, and was more skillful and wary than many a far greater and more famous general, he failed to secure a co-operation of the tiger-like ferocity in each individual guerilla, and he was compelled to face a failure in the attempt to flatten the stockade. The consequence was that confidence in him began to lessen. Bill Anderson, who has been well-called the most savage guerilla that ever trod the soil of Missouri, grew in favor among the numerous bands, and was soon honored as the bearer of the black banner. Quantrell would not follow him, and retired to Howard county.

Anderson arranged his guerillas immediately for a raid into the northeastern portion of Boone county, and on the 27th of September they rode into Centralia, almost frothing at the mouth for revenge.

Pringle, the scalper, rode with him, and Todd and Poole, the James Brothers, Arch Clements, the two Hills, and the rest of the savage gang, followed close in the rear, one hundred and fifty in all, each one as eager as their leader for the terrible butchery that was about to take place.

Centralia is a village on the St. Louis, Kansas City & Northern Railroad, ordinarily quiet, but as the guerillas, with the black and deadly auspices of their flag, drew rein in the streets, the citizens were terror-struck. The fear that the guerillas inspired gave them easy possession of the place, and they soon plundered and pillaged every house.

About the time their ravages were concluded, a train of cars, loaded with soldiers and citizens, pulled into the depot; but there were only twenty-eight soldiers, and they, too, were for the most part without arms. And what could they do with one hundred and fifty almost savage guerillas armed to the teeth? Nothing but yield, and throw themselves on the mercy of a band of heartless, fiendish human beings.

“Away with them, boys! Make way with the blue-coats!” yelled Bill Anderson, as the soldiers and citizens formed in a line.

But the latter soon separated from the former, and four men with blue blouses on were marched out and slaughtered like so many sheep.

And the sun had not yet dried the blood on the bodies of the fallen Federals before one hundred Iowa cavalymen came thundering along

“Into the jaws of death,
Into the gates of hell,”

and the bloody tragedy went on.

But the impetus of the bold riders from the North was not to be checked until blood was drawn, and life was lost; and with Major Johnson at the head they crashed straight

forward into the guerilla ranks. But these were now two hundred, and, when George Todd commanded them to "close in," they swallowed the Iowans almost entire. Mercy did not exist in the make-up of the guerillas—appeals for it were as vain as talking to the wind. The bigger the stream of blood, the greater the guerillas' glory. Jesse James spurred his horse straight for Major Johnson, and one aim of his revolver tumbled the Major from his saddle. It was all over. The cavalrymen became confused, and almost bodily

"Dropped down into the dark abyss of death."

Few got away to tell of the horrible massacre. The revolver of Frank James dealt death to eight that day. That fatal 27th of September, 1864, will ever hold a bloody place in the Missouri records of the war.

The next few days after the Centralia slaughter the guerillas were not so active. For once it seemed their thirst had been satisfied. And then a sickening reaction set in, while the militiamen grew more and more bold; and in one of their fights a noted guerilla by the name of Dick Kinney was mortally wounded. Fifty notches marred the handle of his revolver, and each was the *epitaph of a man!* Fifty human beings had found the cause of death in that pistol barrel. By a common law the gun fell to his nearest friend. This friend was Frank James, who probably has the revolver still.

The next adventures of the James Brothers was in the guise of Colorado soldiers. They were alone this time, and bent on a special mission. Report had come to them that an old man named Banes, a radical Union man, who lived in a

corner of Clay county, was most bitter in his opposition to the Confederate cause, had slandered the guerillas particularly, and was very special in his abuse of their mother, Mrs. Samuels.

One night the James Boys knocked at Banes' door and the old gentleman appeared, with spectacles on and paper in hand. Supposing the boys to be Federal troopers he received them very cordially, and began to talk freely about the war, first discussing the general confusion and peril of the government, then the State, and lastly, but sincerely enough, the danger in his own vicinity. Poor old man! He little dreamed that only a short hour more

“ And thee

The all-beholding sun shall see no more

In all his course.”

Presently he turned his conversation upon the guerillas:

“ And thar,” he said, handing out his paper, “ is the piece about them terribul gurrillers killin' so many people up heer in Boone county. Wa'n't that *tarribal!* Wal, sir, if I was superstishius as some o' them *Sutheners*, I'd think them guerillas had hair on 'em—they're so tarrible beast-like. And the James Boys wuz in it, too. And thar's that old mother o' their'n—she's a regular old she-devil. And she raised two boys 'ut's bigger devils 'n she is.”

The James Boys agreed to everything the old gentleman had to say, and apparently grew very much interested, and finally proposed to him to start immediately on the trail of the young dare-devils. The old man accepted, took his gun and

pistols from their shelf and rode away from his pleasant fire-side into eternity.

When they were a few hundred yards of the house, Frank James turned his horse, drew his revolver, and said: "You have spoken your last word against us — we are *the James Brothers!* Be careful how you talk next time!" Two pistol shots played the accompaniment to the last two words, and Banes was no more; and Jesse and Frank rode on to the Blackwater where the guerilla camp was.

But the reign of the guerillas was now beginning to decline. The very desperation with which they carried on things seemed to be a no less disastrous factor in their downfall than the determination and ceaseless warning of the Federal militiamen. They were the avowed opponents of all society and were met on every hand by the Union troopers, who showed them as little mercy as they themselves were accustomed to show. Two such elements in the opposite extremes could not long occupy the same space; their existence must soon end in the destruction of one or both; and the guerillas seemed to fare the worst, for their numbers gradually dropped off one by one.

Shortly after the trip of Frank and Jesse James to the Banes' house, the band of guerillas to which they belonged left their rendezvous on the Blackwater for a raid, but were astride of a militia ambuscade. The surprise was complete, and many of the guerillas received death wounds. Jesse James received a shot through the leg, while his horse was killed from under him.

And a little later than this—just after the battle of the

Little Osage (Oct. 25), in the last invasion of Missouri—General Price began his retreat into Arkansas. The Federals crowded him closely, and George Todd was put in the rear-guard to keep them back. Wherever there was any check in the march of the retreating Confederates, wherever a stream was crossed, or a steep hill climbed, occurred a battle. And the Autumn hills and the seared woods echoed the roar of cannon and the clash of arms.

“The fading summer was almost gone,
The tinted leaf was coming on;
And the smoky wind, with a southward sun,
Told the death o’ the passing year ’d begun.”

And in one of these fights Todd was killed. He had been faithful to his guerilla oath, and was especially esteemed by the James Brothers. About midnight, Frank and Jesse with a few others, stole his body from the Federals and carried it to a lonely oak not yet stripped of its leaves. They dug a neat grave, and before the body was covered with earth, they pointed their pistols heavenward and swore to avenge the death of their friend.

And this was near the end for the guerillas. The protecting arm of the Confederates was no longer thrown around them, and it was plain that they must seek a pretext and pursuit in other fields. The most desperate of the band had met violent deaths. Todd had just fallen; Bill Anderson had been shot down while crossing the Missouri River into Howard County, fighting desperately; John Poole, Dick Kinney, and Fernando Scott, had met an inevitable fate, and

scores of other daring guerillas had fallen victims of the war in the brush.

Most of the numbers who had sworn themselves sternly into Quantrell's band were now scattered—after Price's retreat—just as had been done after their early raids; but death was the reaper now; their bones were strewn far and near, to stiffen in the rains and frosts of winter, and bleach in the sunlight of summer.

Other bands still held together, but their impulse and strength were gone, and they were left to the mercy of the Federals, who were still increasing.

Quantrell and his band were fair examples of the men who carried on guerilla warfare, and their deeds, however base and barbarous, will ever remain a tragic part in the annals of the war in Missouri.

When Price went south into Kansas Jesse James and Frank separated and left the army, Jesse going with George Shepherd into Texas, while Frank went with Quantrell into Kentucky. Cole Younger and John Jarrette had slipped away some time before, and were far to the south.

And then followed the saddest period of the war for the guerillas. Most of the old bands had been cut to pieces—seldom dissolved. The "reaper of life's harvest" had been busy in their ranks, rewarding them severally for their good deeds, and checking them from the bad. But as long as the organizations existed the individual guerillas staid by to the end, and when their bands were scattered they fought alone to the extremity of death, compelling their foes to shoot them down like beasts, before they would be taken. But they

were all killed or driven out, and soon the Federals held full sway.

While on the march to Texas with Shepherd, Jesse James performed, on the 22d of November, another of the daring but very unenviable feats which characterized his life. In the Indian Territory his party crossed the path of a band of Union militia, headed by Emmett Goss, a captain who had achieved as great a reputation for baseness and excess in his pursuit as the guerillas had in their would-be conquest of Missouri. The meeting of these utterly hostile elements meant an immediate battle.

"T was Greek with Greek, and steel with steel;
And bitter curse and vain appeal."

Goss would rather fight than eat. The battle occurred on Cabin Creek, in the wilds of the Cherokee country.

When the action was at its hottest, Jesse James, as at the Centralia affair, darted straight for the leader of the enemy, and in an exchange of shots, Goss' head was the receptacle for Jesse's first bullet, while his heart stiffened at the next fire of the unerring guerilla, and he fell to the ground dead.

The Rev. U. P. Gardiner was the next unfortunate. He was chaplain of the Thirteenth Kansas regiment, and was on his way back with Goss from a marauding excursion. Jesse rode up by the side of Mr. Gardiner, and placed a pistol close to his head. The chaplain begged in true ministerial style, and said:

"I am Rev. U. P. Gardiner, a chaplain in the army."

"Yes! a black Abolitionist is what *you* are!" said James.

“And even if you wasn’t, I take special delight in shootin’ chaplains,” and a pull of the trigger counted the minister among the number of Jesse’s victims for that day.

When the battle was over the guerillas coursed along on their southward way. Jesse James and a comrade scouted for the party, watching for more militiamen.

On the second day the scouts parted, and Jesse found himself alone on an open prairie, somewhat rugged, not far from a stream in front, while to the left the surface gently lowered and was covered with some heavy timber and the usual amount of undergrowth common to many of the Western streams. He had not ridden far before a savage war-whoop sounded from the timber, and a half a dozen or more Piu Indians darted out and made for him with all speed. The Pius belonged to the Cherokees, and were most friendly to Union militia, but fatal to the guerillas. They had been trained to gain their livelihood by “drawing the bead,” and their long-range guns were anything but pleasant to face. This was one period in Jesse James’ life when he did not feel like a whole army.

On came the war-whoop—something must be done. James lifted the reins, and his horse, which seemed to realize the danger, strained every nerve in flight. As he neared the stream the banks grew higher. A broad prairie stretched off to the right, but the Indians were *gaining!* The only thing was to leap the high banks. The horse hesitated, but a kick of the spur sent the snorting steed down the steep precipice and landed him on a pile of brush that was floating down stream. For a wonder neither horse nor rider was hurt. It

was a repetition of the famous Revolutionary escape of Gen. Israel Putnam by riding down the steps at Stamford, Conn., when the British were after him. The Indians rode up to the stream, but were baffled and amazed at the daring feat; while Jesse rode down the stream along the bank and escaped.

This was about the last adventure of importance that occurred on the trip; and Jesse spent the winter ('64-5) in Texas. Nothing of unusual note among the guerillas marred the dreamland for that time, except a few hunts; and Jesse availed himself of the quiet for a season of rest, to let nature recuperate his wounded body.

But in the balmy days of spring the Texas air seemed to become unfit for the Northern gentlemen, and the memory of their old haunts in Missouri was too strong and pleasant an invitation for Lieutenant Shepherd's guerillas to disregard. So their horses were curried, guns cleaned and knives sharpened, and they trotted off on their return journey. The way they had come down was about the shortest and best, and they retraced their track through the Indian country. The Pines were still radical loyalists, and wherever the guerillas met the Indians they were treated with the most savage hostility.

But the horses of the guerillas were fresh, and the Indians did not trouble them long; and by the 1st of May all of Quantrell's guerillas who were left in Shepherd's band had returned to their old range. Jesse James, Arch Clements and two comrades rode hence into Benton county, where, they had learned, lived a Union militiaman by the name of Harkness, who was but little less crusty, in his

remarks about the Confederate cause, than Banes, of Clay county, had been the year before. And he was treated to a similar fate, but in a more cowardly way. The four guerillas rode up to his house and called him out. After they hitched their horses, the other three held him, while Arch Clements cut his throat, and then they gathered rein for the woods, leaving his dead body lying in his own dooryard.

Another similar portion was meted out to an old man named Duncan, who lived at Kingsville, Johnson county, Mo. But Jesse did this by himself. Duncan had been a militiaman, and had said some pretty hard things about the people who sympathized with Southern notions. And his remarks were especially without compliment to the guerillas, so that Jesse felt it his special duty to put Duncan out of the way. This he did unceremoniously a few days after he helped to murder Harkness; and that was all there was of it. He felt no more remorse than he would after shooting a dog that had barked at him.

Before the close of May Jesse James had one exploit, which was the last in his career as a guerilla. The Confederate armies all over the country were surrendering, and the soldiers were returning to peaceful pursuits. The echoes of war were traveling the valleys for the last time. Peace had come; and they who were enemies a short time before could *now* grasp each other with the friendly hand of fellow-citizenship and sing:

“No more we’ll hoist the flag in war—
No more our country’s banner mar!
The smoke of battle has blown past,
Of bloody war we’ve fought our last;

“ We'll watch the dawning sun of peace,
And trust its light — our foes release —
And praise the day that now is come:
Sweet blessed thought — ‘ We're going home.’ ”

Missouri drew a breath of relief; gave a sigh for the dead; accepted the result, and shouted *vive la Republique!* There was a general formality of surrendering, and the sight of truce flags was common. The guerillas marched up with the Confederate soldiers with some hesitation, and finally surrendered — except a few bands who were thoroughly imbued with hostility to the government. One of these bands was composed of Jesse James, Arch Clements and six others. But they accompanied their old comrades to Lexington, where the surrender took place, bade them farewell, and made off into Johnson county. On their way they were suddenly confronted by a returning band of Federal scouts, and a desperate struggle followed. Jesse's horse was shot from under him; but this did not retard him — he kept on fighting with the ferocity of an enraged tiger. A shot through the leg compelled him to flee to the woods; but another was sent through his lungs by a pursuing Federal. That Federal was John E. Jones, of the Second Wisconsin cavalry, Company E. And strangely enough the guerilla and the scout met sometime afterward, and became warm friends! Still James kept on — no surrender for Jesse James — and finally escaped.

But he was in a sad condition, indeed! He managed to crawl to a stream and there he lay two days rolling in a fever, with his wounds yet uncared for. When he was able to go farther, he got out of the woods, and came into a field,

where a farmer was putting in his crop. As the circumstances had it, the farmer was his friend, and nursed him until he could visit his mother, who was now in Nebraska. After the last feeble bands of organized hostility in Missouri had dropped to pieces — which was not many weeks — Jesse returned to Kearney, Clay county, Mo., with her. Jesse was very low for some time, and it was only by the most persistent determination that he survived. Mrs. Samuels nursed him as carefully then as in his babyhood, and he battled long and faithfully against the king to whom he had sent so many subjects; but it was many months before he could call his life his own.



CHAPTER XII.

THE LAST OF THE GUERILLAS—QUANTRELL'S DEATH— THE SURRENDER.

Quantrell's career in Missouri has been related. After he had lived in Howard county a short time, he became tired of a quiet life, and went to Waverly, in Lafayette county, to stir up his old band again, or as many of them as would follow, and fixed his lair at Wigginton's place, five miles west of the town. The Confederate armies had abandoned the State to the Union, so that the odds against the guerillas made it useless for them to continue their opposition there. Frank James and some thirty others of the old band accepted Quantrell's leadership again, and about the time Jesse was traveling south with Shepherd, Frank was riding with Quantrell for Maryland, where they expected to carry on their warfare.

On New Year's day, 1865, the band came to "Pacific Place," a crossing of the Mississippi sixteen miles above Memphis. This was under the control of Charlie Morris, who was a "middleman" between the hostile factions—"a friend to each, and a curse to both." He went to Memphis frequently, and was received very cordially by the Federals, whose favors he was careful to return; but when he was in the hands of the Confederates or guerillas, he was quite as "squashy" to them. Accordingly Quantrell affected an easy passage of the river, and rode on unmolested through Big

Creek, Portersville, Covington, Tabernacle, Brownsville, Bell's, Gadsen, Humboldt, McKenzie and Paris, Henry county, Tenn., and then on in a northeasterly course.

They had no trouble to speak of, except at Paris, where the Federal cavalry gave them such a warm reception that they were compelled to make a hasty flight. They crossed the Tennessee River at Birmingham, and the Cumberland at Canton, and then marched on to Hopkinsville, in Christian county, Kentucky.

As the guerillas were leaving this town they passed a house where there were a dozen cavalymen sitting around. They drew rein, and all but three of the brave cavaliers fled, leaving their horses in the stable. But these gallant three were *soldiers*. One assault after another was gallantly withstood for several hours. At last threats were made by the guerillas to burn the house, but were a waste of breath. Quantrell was enraged at this, and the fire was immediately kindled; but even then it had blazed some little time before the cavalymen surrendered. It is needless to say that Quantrell led off the horses.

And the next Satanic achievement of the guerilla chief was to play the part of a Federal captain in a most gigantic and cowardly tragedy which he then concocted. At Hartford, in Ohio county, Kentucky, a company of Federal militia was stationed, under the command of Captain Frank Bornette.

Quantrell opened communication with Bornette, and procured his aid to search out "the cursed Confederate guerillas" Bornette did not see the trap that was laid for him, and with

an eye for fame rode innocently out to his death, followed by his whole troop.

The plan was for each guerilla to choose his man, and when Quantrell should throw a handkerchief over his shoulder the terrible assassination should begin, be quick and complete. The guerilla-hunters rode rapidly on, and just as the sun was going down one evening in February came to a ford in an obscure stream. Frank James rode into the water with Captain Bornette, and when Quantrell gave the signal there was a flash from James' pistol, and the captain's body fell into the cold stream and floated off. At the same time the other guerillas played their part in the butchery, and then escaped speedily.

The news of this assassination but added to the bloody reputation Quantrell had already attained as an outrager of civilized war. He had now placed himself as boldly in opposition to the peace of Kentucky, as he had daringly defied the civil authorities of Missouri. But he and his followers could not last long. They were carrying on war in a peaceful country; they were feeding a passion for blood without cause or provocation; in a word, they were slaughtering men to see the blood flow.

The Federal cavalry commanders now realized that they were no longer fighting soldiers in Quantrell, Mundy and Marion, but that they were hunting human beasts, and must kill them in their own cowardly way. They commenced the hunt for Quantrell, and the search was not long in vain. About this time, as it happened, Frank James was away from that part of the State, visiting an uncle. Captain Terrell and

Major Bridgewater pushed the pursuit of Quantrell and his comrades with great vigor, and chased them from haunt to haunt, until they cornered them at the house of Mr. Wakefield, near Smiley, where the guerillas made their final stand. The fight was most desperate. The guerillas were fighting for their own dear lives now. They fought long and wickedly, until Quantrell received a fatal wound, and was carried into Wakefield's house. The guerillas were nearly annihilated; but those among them who were able to escape, now made a hasty flight.

When Frank James heard of Quantrell's low condition, he hastened to the bedside of him whom he had followed so faithfully, and whom he almost worshiped, to bid him the final farewell.

Quantrell's death-bed was an impressive scene. Pale and weak, he realized that he could not live. As he neared the end, the memory of parts of his life came upon him vividly, and though he had been through a course that would brazen any heart and purge it of all its sacred feelings, yet the few days' sickness that preceded his death cleared the battle smoke from his face, and he felt something of remorse.

Frank James was affected. The tears rolled down his cheeks with the ease of childhood. Whether he had ever tasted of any tender feelings or not, he could not now see his old chief take his final departure without being moved.

Quantrell turned his face to Frank James, and said: "Frank, don't you think the band had better surrender?"

"You are still the chief, Quantrell," said Frank James.

"Yes; but you see this is about the last hour for me. We

have fought against fate. For awhile we were successful, but the boys are nearly all gone now, and the old woods are silent. Ah, them cursed Jayhawkers—they killed my brother.” And this was the last of the alike famous and infamous guerilla chieftain.

Shortly afterward, on the 25th of July, 1865, Henry Porter and Frank James gathered the fugitive guerillas together, and made a formal surrender at Samuels’ Depot, Nelson county, Kentucky. And this was the end of the war in the brush, and the guerilla career of Frank James.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAGEDY OF BRANDENBURG—FOUR MEN ATTEMPT TO ARREST FRANK JAMES FOR A HORSE THIEF—THREE OF THEM KILLED—THE OTHER ESCAPES—FRANK WOUNDED IN THE LEFT HIP—CONCEALED BY HIS FRIENDS.

Quantrell was dead. The days of the guerillas were past. Soldiers and men of war had returned to peaceful pursuits. The members of the once formidable guerilla bands—too indolent for honest work, too cowardly for honest war—could no longer follow in the wake of battle and live by pillage and plundering those who could not rise up from death to defend themselves.

Frank James had been somewhat affected by Quantrell's death, and in accordance with the wish of his dying chief, and partly as his judgment dictated, surrendered with the rest. But what was he to do? He would lead a quiet life, leave off his old ways, and return to the farm. But no! His passions said no! His former habits said no; and the idea of hard farm work was equally negative. There was something better than hard work for Frank James. Just what it was he did not know—he seemed to be abandoned—to be an exile. He was now living a very proper life, but felt that he was out of place. He would return to the home of his youth, but no! His name was still on the proscription list on account of the Centralia affair; and then another deed committed in his

home county (Clay, Mo.), stood against his record. He had put two bullet holes through the head of Alvas Dailey about a year before, because Dailey had discussed the action of the confederates and guerillas with too much bitterness; and the people of his native vicinity had probably not forgotten how to apply the lynch law.

In this state of mind Frank James lingered for some months in Kentucky, not stopping in any one place very long, and there were many others in his same condition. Peace had thrown many men out of employment, and as one of the results, horse stealing, thieving of every kind, and highway robbery, were resorted to by a large number who allowed themselves to be used in most any other way than for honest labor. Such was the condition of society and the domestic life of the border—more especially in Kentucky, Southern Indiana, Missouri, and the border of Kansas. And these thugs and highwaymen plied their criminal vocations with more success in Northern Kentucky—in the blue grass and stock regions. In these parts it seemed that the slum of both Federal and Confederate armies had been turned loose. The followers of Quantrell, Magruder, Anderson, Marion, Mundy, and others, were keenly watched; but in the unsettled state of the country they evaded the law without much difficulty, and became very dangerous and annoying to stock-raisers. The bold cavalry riders of Kentucky had not forgotten much of the skill, nor lost much of the daring that they had acquired during the war, through some months had passed; and now that self-protection was the immediate question, vigilance bands came together without authority, and

punished without law or leniency. But they joined hands with the civil officers, and whom the finger of suspicion pointed out they dealt with without delay.

One afternoon, as Frank James was riding along the Ohio River northward, he came upon the town of Brandenburg, in Meade county. He rode leisurely into the place, and as it was near evening, stopped at a hotel for the night. Only a few days before that time a large number of horses had been stolen from La Rue county; and the whole country was up in arms. A careful search was made for the thieves, and they had been traced as far as Brandenburg. In the evening four officers and deputies came into town in hot haste. Riding up to the hotel they dismounted, and going in, found Frank James sitting in the office. Whether he was their man or not, he resembled the ideal thief of that time, and the conclusion was immediate. The leader was a burly fellow of twenty-two, and with a strong following for the circumstances, dreamed as little of the fate that awaited him as Frank James did of the surprise in store for him.

Stepping up and tapping Frank on the shoulder in an official but somewhat pleasant way, he said, "You are my prisoner—I arrest you as a horse thief."

Frank James was always prepared for such occasions, and was never without his brace of revolvers. And custom had so brazened him that the expression of a simple formal arrest was no more than an ordinary conversation. He realized at once the position he was in, and ever cool as he was, looked up at the officer, betraying no feeling of surprise, if he had any; and the officer repeated, "You may consider yourself under arrest."

“I will consider nothing of the kind,” said Frank, as he pulled the trigger of his revolver, which had come to its place as he spoke the last word. The officer fell backward against a deputy, and dropped dead. Two more shots brought the next two to the floor—one killed, the other fatally wounded, while the fourth fled for his life. But he did not escape without turning to fire, and one of his bullets buried itself in Frank James’ hip, close to the joint. The wound was sharp, and almost brought the guerilla to the floor. But Frank James was a fighting man, and as long as his body was in one piece his nerve did not fail him. The shooting soon brought an excited and violent mob.

“Down with him! Down with him! Down with the thief!” demanded the crowd, as Frank James stepped out on the street, while the excited mob came jamming up.

“Stand back!” said Frank James, as he presented his pistols in the very faces of the most excited. And they *stood back*. It was like a cannon ball fired into a water spout. The crowd wavered, the momentum was broken, and Frank James was master of ceremonies.

The pain of his wound was intense. The ball struck close to the sciatic nerve, and his whole nervous system seemed almost to be cut in two. His old guerilla passions boiled. But just then an old comrade rushed up to him, dragged him away a few yards, helped him to mount a horse and away they darted, leaving the mob dum-founded.

In every place where tragedies like the above occur, there is a certain class of persons generally averse to labor, who are ever ready to form a mob; and the leaders of these quite

as easily render themselves a constituency for high crime. And Brandenburg was no exception—rather a fine application of the rule. On the one hand was the bloodthirsty mob, and the other the persons who secrete criminals. The latter played the best game in this instance, though Frank and Jesse James never wanted for friends, wherever they went—such men never do.

Frank James was hurried to the house of one of these friends, and the most scientific surgeon in the city was summoned. The wound was a most dangerous one, and the pain almost unbearable, while a high fever gave him no rest for several days. But Frank James was under the care of warm hearts and willing hands, and in a few weeks the physician could give some encouragement for his recovery. He was then removed, in a very close and easy wagon, at an opportune time, to another friend's house in Nelson county, where he remained some time. But it was a number of years before he fully recovered from the wound, and he still remembers his experience at Brandenburg as a very narrow escape from death.



CHAPTER XIV.

LIBERTY, MO., BANK ROBBERY, AND WHAT FOLLOWED IT—
\$70,000 TAKEN FROM THE BANK ON ST. VALENTINE'S
DAY—THE JAMES BOYS BELIEVED THE INSTIGATORS—
JESSE JAMES DEFEATS A POSSE OF DETECTIVES.

Jesse James was no coward, in the usual meaning of that word. Though he was cautious and careful at all times, he never knew fear; and when cornered, would fight to the last. From two to six revolvers were always within reach—"handy to have about," as he expressed it; and though he was aware that there were often bold and sly men on his trail, he lived quietly. When not out on a raid, he seemed to enjoy a citizen's life; but still, the hot blood of passion flowed through his veins.

On St. Valentine's, Feb. 14th, 1866, the town of Liberty, Missouri, was aroused to an excitement over an event which thrilled the whole West. Nearly \$70,000 were taken from the Commercial Bank of that place, in a very bold and audacious way. It was the most open and daring robbery that had ever been made in that part of the country, though it did not rank with the later robberies of Russellville, Corydon or Columbia.

The James Boys had won something of a reputation for daring and desperate fighting in the late years of the war, when they were also accustomed to plunder for sustenance.

However, they had not been identified with any scheme as gigantic as the Liberty Bank affair—they had not made a record, as yet, in that special branch of outlawry—but, nevertheless, from their general bearing, and the suspicion held against them for similar engagements, the public were ready to believe, and many openly asserted, that the James Brothers were the instigators of the robbery, or had a very close hand in it. They had not lived in such a way that the people believed otherwise. And thus public sentiment hung for one year. Yet, whatever may be, or whatever has been, said by way of censure upon the James Brothers, it is no more than justice to state that no evidence has ever been secured.

And there were many strong denials of the charge. A visitor to the Stillwater penitentiary asked Cole Younger what he knew about the Liberty Bank robbery, and Younger said: "Well, I have always had my own opinion about that affair; and if the truth is ever told, the crimes that have been laid to me and my brother will be located where they belong.

Frank James was in Kentucky at the time of the Commercial Bank robbery, still suffering from the wound he had received at Brandenburg, in July of the previous year; and Jesse was at his home in Kearney, Clay county, Mo., confined to his bed by the shot through the lungs, just after the guerillas surrendered at Lexington. It was not known at the time just where Frank was; but the unanimous conclusion was that, wherever they were, Jesse and Frank both were enjoying a part of the piratical prize secured on St. Valentine's day. Even many persons who, not long since, had

been Jesse James' fast friends, thought that he was not altogether innocent of the affair.

The detectives were at work, and on the 18th of February, 1867,—one year after the deed was done—the climax was reached. It was a beautiful winter night, with just enough snow on the ground to lighten up the world under the clear, soft moon; and the evening was well spent, when five militiamen fastened their horses to the posts in the outer yard, and marched up to the house where Jesse James lay, burning with fever.

Dr. Samuels saw them coming up to the house, but soon they were on the piazza, demanding entrance. He hurried up stairs to consult Jesse about the matter. But the ex-guerilla, but little more than half alive, had no idea of surrender—no difference how many the besiegers numbered—and he said to his step-father, "Help me to the window." A glance out revealed to him the familiar saddles and steeds of the detested militiamen, and he was at once nerved for the situation.

"Don't let 'em in till I give you the word," he said.

"Very well," said Dr. Samuels, and he returned speedily to the door, which the militiamen had now commenced to hammer in.

"Hold on a minute—I can't get the thing unbolted," he said.

"Open this door," was the imperative demand from the leader. "We want Jesse James—we know he's here."

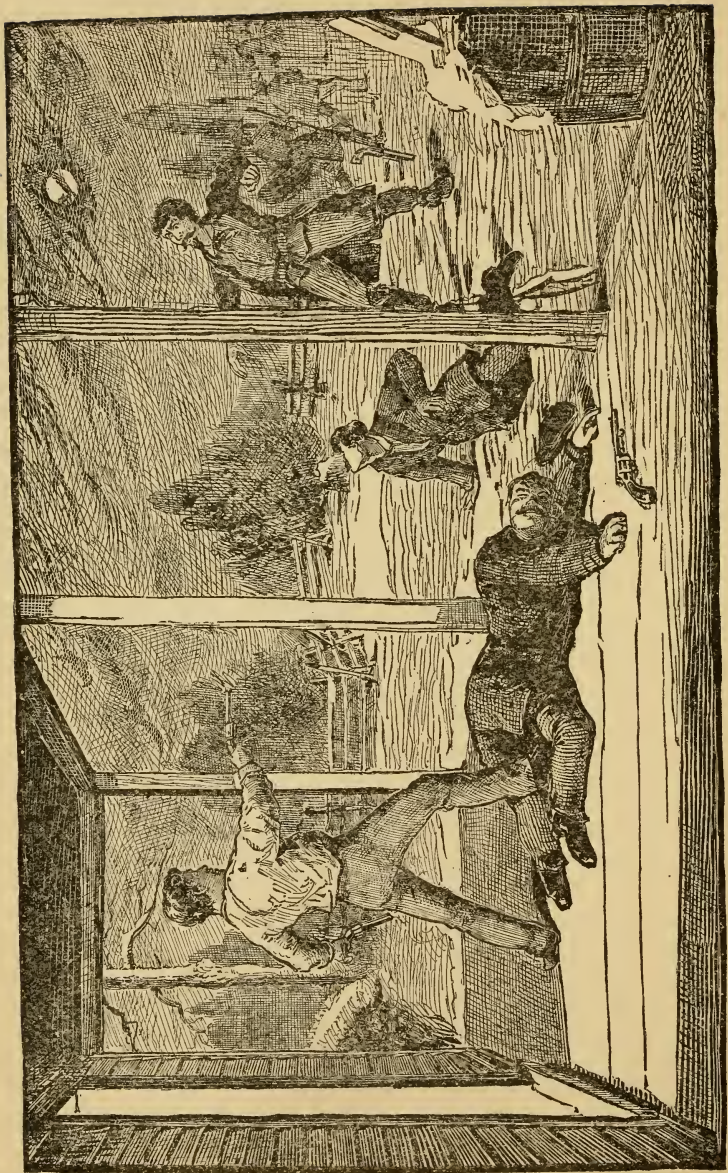
Whether they were downright certain of what they had said, or not, they soon found it to be true; for at that

moment Jesse came down stairs with two dragoon revolvers in his hands. He knew of the suspicions against him, and did not try to live them down; and to guard against any surprise, had kept two 45-caliber revolvers under his pillow during his whole sickness. Walking up to the door, and listening to the voices outside, a moment's attention told him that the militiamen were ready to rush in as soon as the door was opened. Placing one of his revolvers up to the door, he fired, and a heavy fall outside on the porch, was the result. The surprise was complete, and one man had been killed. Before the others could recover their astonished senses, the door was thrown open, and Jesse James was firing from both revolvers. Another one of the posse soon felt his deadly aim, and the pulsations of his heart were soon numbered; while two more were so seriously wounded that they gave up, and the fifth man beat a precipitate flight, leaving his comrades to welter in blood in the chill air of midnight.

The last of the militiamen put spurs to his horse and was soon hidden in the darkness—there was no one to follow him, as Jesse James was not able to ride, and thought that four was game enough for that time. The militiaman was truly thankful for his escape, and rode rapidly on,

“ Like one who, on a lonely road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head,
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.”

He left a ghastly scene behind. When the moon hung



JESSE'S RECEPTION.

low in the early hours of the morning, the weirdness was increased. Two of the men who had come to fill their duty as exponents of the law, were quiet in death now. Their glassy, absent of expression eyes, were turned upward; mouths partly open, and the blood had fled from their features, taking with it life's coloring. Two others were pale and unconscious, from the pain they had endured.

The next day, the escaped militiaman returned with an increased force, to bear away his fallen comrades, and to capture the ex-guerilla at all hazards. Some of them carried off the dead in silent procession, and the others demanded the immediate surrender of Jesse James. In vain Dr. Samuels remonstrated against the officers searching his house, and they walked in, backed by the stern authority of the law.

But Jesse James was nowhere to be found! Though scarcely able to sit in a saddle, he had mounted a fleet horse, and was now many miles away.

And thus commenced a slight turn in the career of Jesse James, which made him one of the two most notorious outlaws ever in America. Large rewards began to be offered for their apprehension; but for nearly two decades, they defied law and society, and many a skilled detective gave up his life in pursuit of these men.

CHAPTER XV.

AN ERA OF REST—JESSE JAMES GOES TO CHAPLIN, KY., TO HEAL HIS WOUNDS, AND ENJOY THE HOSPITALITY OF HIS KENTUCKY FRIENDS—THENCE TO NASHVILLE—PLACES HIMSELF UNDER THE CARE OF DR. PAUL F. EVE—THE “FAT OF THE LAMB.”

It was “the evening of the first day.” The war was ended. Jesse James had fought long and hard, and felt “the worse for the wear.” And his ride from his home on the night of the 18th of February, had still more enfeebled him, so that he sadly felt the need of strict medical care. His life seemed to be declining. Constant pain and fever had left their marks, even on the ex-guerilla’s body. Something must be done—he must find shelter.

And then the State of Missouri did not desire his presence longer. Four years of war had been enough—they wanted no more. It was now a time of peace, and people wanted to live in peace. But could they do it? Not so long as they were compelled to fear the deadly aim of Jesse James’ revolver, and be thrilled with stories of innocent men being murdered in cold blood. The last bold murder must be accounted for! Jesse James must be captured, dead or alive! And this is what stimulated Jesse in his fever to ride from Western Missouri into Northern Kentucky.

There he had many admirers, relatives and friends, such

as the Samuels, Thomases, Russells, Sayers and McCloskeys. In fact, all that part of the State considered the guerillas as heroes, and delighted to entertain Quantrell, Mundy and Marion, and their followers. After a time, Jesse James arrived at Chaplin, Nelson county, where Frank was, still nursing his wound in the hip. Then came a gloomy period for the James Brothers. Both were laid up with wounds, and Jesse grew worse and worse, having been irritated by the long ride. Finally he concluded to go to Nashville, Tenn., and place himself under very careful surgical skill. Dr. Paul F. Eve's reputation was found to be satisfactory, and Jesse engaged him at once; but it was several months before any promise of complete restoration could be made. Jesse staid at Nashville nearly a year, and by sheer force of will, recovered his health so far that he was able to return to Chaplin. This was in January, 1868.

When he arrived at the house of a relative where Frank was stopping, a grand banquet took place. This was the first of a long series of festivals and feasts, given the James Brothers. Everything was made as pleasant as possible for them.

To be sure, the James Boys had killed many men, and could count game with whole companies of organized soldiers. But this had been "done in war." The war was right, and the object of each of the contending parties was to see who could kill the most men from the other side. Such was the philosophy of the one-sided enthusiasts and people who, both Federal and Confederate, cherished and nursed the guerillas and Jayhawkers, the half-soldiers, half-

bandits of the border. And on this ground, the nicks on the revolvers' handles of the James Brothers were perfectly excusable. The Confederate armies had long ago surrendered, but the Southern hearts of the guerillas still beat in unison, and the feeling for the lost cause was intense among the class who could not see but one side of a thing. The heroes that in any way fought for this cause, were heroes still, and whatever they did in that behalf, was creditable. Jesse and Frank James were such heroes, and their excesses were easily overlooked. They were feasted and cared for like kings by all of their relatives who were pecuniarily able. Fair hands gloried in entertaining them, and their "military honor" outshone all else for feminine eyes.

But the class of people who so admired the "heroic deeds" of the James Brothers, needs a wonderful restriction. They were not found in all the land, "from Florida to Oregon, and from Maine to Mexico," but scattered through Kentucky, along the Ohio, and in Missouri and Arkansas. Nor did they constitute any very great percentage of the population in those sections, except in limited districts, where they seemed to cluster. Nelson and Logan counties, in Kentucky, were such districts, as far as the James Boys were concerned. Here was every shade of combativeness and outlawry, from an ordinary patriotic soldier, down to the most notorious guerilla and bandit; so that it was not difficult for the James Boys to muster an abundance of accomplices. These accomplices, turned loose as they were from the war, were ever ready to embark in anything that promised amusement or money. They were composed, for the most part, of guer-

illas and professional scouts. Treated with supreme contempt by all honest soldiers, they were detested by the Federals, and shown much disrespect by the sincere Confederates. They were in such a state that they could sink into the lowest barbarism, or rise to peaceful citizenship, as circumstances might influence, or their own tastes dictate.

At first thought, this state of affairs, *i. e.*, so many men being foot-loose and driven to crime or other base occupation, may be considered one of the evil results of the war; but when the question is looked at in the proper way, the truth presents itself. Men of every shade of character and make-up, have entered all kinds of armies, fighting for various issues, and have risen or fallen in the scale of notoriety, according as they have been virtuous in private life, patriotic in peace, as well as war, and steadfast in battle; or as they have been vicious in self-hood, enemies of society, and skulking and cowardly in war. And to make a question of national issue a pretext for turning to banditism, however it may affect one's private interests, is descending to the depths of absurdity.

But such, it seems, was the case with the James Boys and a very large number of others. They were not made by the war, nor did they help to make it. They were simply pushed out of the ranks into a class by themselves, just as veterans, volunteers, militiamen and raw recruits are classified. Bound by no oath of any consequence, they were not obliged to surrender, but continued to be together after all hostilities had ceased, and to exercise only that part of the training which they had put upon themselves, by plundering, while the roar of cannon and the crash of armies almost rent the

bonds of government. When they could exist no longer as bands, they cliqued together and worked in separate fields, or each returned to the place he sprung from.

The home of many a brave soldier, Federal and Confederate, has been ransacked, and his family killed or made destitute, by the raids of the guerillas; and hence the growing hatred for them, which seemed to culminate at the close of the war. The guerillas were shunned by the people generally, though the people could find no open excuse for so doing; and so they separated into communities.

This coldness on the part of the citizens, has been assigned as the cause of many men being driven into outlawry, and no doubt had something to do with it; but it was not the cause, nor any great part of the cause, as has been shown.

And yet there were many charges laid to the door of the James Brothers that were widely misplaced; but on the other hand, the Jameses assisted in many a bold robbery, while others suffered the penalty. This will be exemplified in the next chapter.



CHAPTER XVI.

THE RUSSELLVILLE BANK ROBBERY.

Though many believed in the integrity of the James Brothers, and by a stretch of conscience, could excuse their past career, it was still thought that they were supported, during their feebleness of over a year, by some of the funds obtained at the Liberty Bank, and that Frank had been connected with horse-stealing in Kentucky. But now they had lived on the "fat of the lamb" for some time, among their friends, and were ready to prove that, and similar charges, false, or to take revenge, as they chose.

Jesse James felt the public pulse carefully, and found the feeling decidedly against the course he had pursued. This was a good excuse—or rather he made it an excuse—for his occupation the remainder of his life, in connection with his brother and a few others. One evening the brothers were talking over their past experiences, and rehearsing themselves in marksmanship. They talked along sometime over the pleasant business of killing men, when Jesse, growing angry, the conversation turned as follows:

See, Frank, it's no use fighting against all this—prejudice—we've *got the name*—we may as well have *name and the game*, as the name *without the game*."

"All right," said Frank, "we're in for it, and the devil take the hindmost."

And so the murderers concluded to continue, and accom-

plish in robbery and plunder what they could not in murder. Funds were getting pretty low with the boys, while they were feeling trim and ready for active work.

And the James Boys never went about a thing in a blind way. Their calculations were always accurate, and the time opportune. In the southern frontier of Kentucky, in Logan county, bordering on Tennessee, is a flourishing agricultural and stock region. The people who lived in that district were quiet, industrious, cultured, wealthy, refined. And the year of 1867 was an exceptionally prosperous one for that country; so that the national currency was loose, and the banks especially did a good business. The James Boys considered this, and hit upon Russellville as an apt place to scoop the money out of the vaults.

This village was a quiet place of three or four thousand inhabitants, and the county-seat of Logan county. It could well boast of its schools and colleges, and compare the quietude, pleasure and profit of its civil and social life with any town in the State.

The morning of March 20, 1868, promised a beautiful and peaceful day. Spring had burst forth in all its freshness—the birds sang, flowers turned up their heads to the morning sun, windows and doors were open for the morning air. Everybody welcomed the relief from the dullness of winter, and could sing with the poet,

“ In the spring a livelier iris
Comes upon the burnished dove;
In the spring a young man’s fancy
Gently turns to thoughts of love.”

The merry ring of the smith's hammer on the anvil caught up the sound of the school-bell, and prolonged it until nothing but the clink of the hammer was heard again. Nothing had disturbed the quiet of the town for years, and it was little prepared for the thrilling sensation which was about to reverberate in every echo. The clerks were chanting in happy song in the several stores; the cashier of the bank had thrown open the huge double doors, and sprinkled the floor for coolness, and was deliberately tending his accounts, and the school children were passing leisurely on, admiring the flowers in the neat gardens along the walks.

Presently the thunder of heavy hoofs was heard on the level roads. Loud curses followed, and soon a dozen men, glistening with arms, dashed into the town like a clap of thunder, in the clearness of a noonday sky. The cashier turned pale, as he saw two of them dismount at the bank. Clerks rushed to the front to see the trouble, only to be driven back by the other ten, who galloped up and down, and cleared the streets by shouts and threats. In a few minutes the town was as dead as at midnight. Meanwhile, the two who had stopped, rushed in to deplete the bank of its funds. Stepping up to the trembling cashier, one placed a revolver to his temple with the command: "Hold your tongue and make no noise, or your brains will be scattered in one second!"

The cashier held his peace, while the other bandit sacked the treasure from the vaults, amounting to several thousand dollars. The two mounted, gave one prolonged shout, and the dozen disappeared as suddenly as they had come, leaving the town deadened with fear and surprise.

What could be done? The dare-devils had darted in, plundered the bank and escaped—no one knew where. As soon as the citizens recovered from the surprise, they pressed on in quick pursuit. But the brigands practiced their old guerilla game, and were gone with the swiftness of the wind. They were tracked down through the northern part of Tennessee—retracing the route Quantrell had come—thence across the Mississippi into the hills of Southeast Missouri. Here the bandits dispersed to their old haunts, the trail was lost, and the pursuit was like tracking fish in a sea. The bandits pushed through to their friends in the border, and thus the race ended.

The town had been paralyzed, its bank plundered, and pursuit of the bold riders rendered futile. Who were the components of this impudent storm? Whence did they come? Whither did they go? Did the James Brothers have anything to do with it? Oh, no; it could not be! For Jesse James was at Chaplin, Nelson county, fifty miles away, when the Russellville bank was plundered; and Frank was in California. So claimed their friends, and so said a letter written by Jesse James himself to the Nashville (Tenn.) *American*. And then, if Frank had been there, he was not able to ride yet. However, Jesse omitted to account for the fact that both the boys had been seen riding back and forth from Nelson to Logan county for several weeks before. Was that for exercise; or were they simply visiting? Indeed,

“Truth crushed to earth will rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.”

But surely Jesse James was at the Marshall House in Chaplin on (or about) the morning of March 20, 1868, while the then unprecedented bold robbery was being done at Russellville. Yes, this was true; and it could be proven by the proprietor of the Marshall House. Jesse James was there that very morning, or the evening before, or *that evening*, or some other time. And then that fifty miles and back could not be made in such a short time!

The fact is, Jesse James did not appear at Chaplin till the *next evening*; so that the difference in chronology was just enough to allow Jesse James, Cole Younger, Jim White, George and Oll Shepherd, perhaps Frank James, and others who may have been along, to make way with the bank's funds—about \$100,000—get away and attend to the “divvy,” and each, with his comfortable little fortune, to shield himself properly before any one could tell what the brigands were about. Another fact is, that the roads were in the best condition, and as Jesse always rode the best blooded horses, it was not very difficult for him to ride fifty miles and attend to his business on this occasion. So that there is little doubt that Jesse and Frank James either carried out or plotted the Russellville bank robbery. And Jesse was slightly mistaken about Frank's exact location on the western hemisphere at that time, which accounts for that part of it. That gentleman did not go to California for some time afterward; and when he did go he went straight across the plains, and not by water around by New York, as was stated by Jesse in a published letter. This letter was only put out to deceive the public, and complicate the search.

But it was necessary for the peace and welfare of the country generally, and the community especially, to look into the Russellville robbery, and punish some one severely, even if the money and valuables could not be recovered, in order that further raids might be prevented. And on the other hand the citizens of Logan county demanded an immediate investigation, for their Kentucky blood was stirred, and they must have some kind of reckoning up for this thing. The friends of the Jameses protested and proclaimed the innocence of the boys, protesting that Frank was still in Nelson county, at Mr. Sayers', suffering sorely from his Brandenburg wound, and making most any excuse for Jesse that seemed plausible; but the stories did not fit well together, somehow or other, and justice, if nothing else, demanded a searching out of the truth.

But the plot had been laid by the James Brothers, and now that the climax had been reached and passed, and they had gracefully slipped away from the hottest of it, they did not propose to lie around in easy chairs near Russellville and be caught. There was a disappearance of a number of the old guerillas from that part of the State, and the other evidence implicating the brothers was not exactly pleasant to face; so that it behooved Frank and Jesse to be on the move. However, their agility did not forsake them now, and as most of the band were now sheltered in the old haunts and hills of Missouri, Jesse and Frank were free to play the fox with the detectives and whomsoever else might choose to place themselves on the scent.

Before the robbery at Russellville was accomplished, Dick

Maddox, one of the "b'hoys," a co-murderer with the Lawrence and Centralia fiends, and a follower of Quantrell in his bloody reign (or rain), met a violent death at the hands of a soft-stepping and ferocious Cherokee warrior. He left a widow as handsome and accomplished as the wife of a guerilla could be; and it may be well said here that, whatever the bandits and guerillas did, or however deep in barbarity they sunk, they still possessed the human feelings of alliance, and dread of social ban. George W. Shepherd had been a close comrade of Dick Maddox, and while the guerillas pretended to live in peace in Nelson county, Ky., they continued to be quite neighborly; so that Mr. Shepherd, at the time of Mr. Maddox' death, felt somewhat of a responsibility to see that no harm should come to Mrs. Maddox, and he may have been influenced by some personal motive, for aught that can be accounted for.

Anyhow, at no distant date from Mr. Maddox' decease, when George W. Shepherd had gone rudely through with what he thought was the proper length and kind of courtship, he offered to espouse Mrs. Maddox. And she thought about the best thing to do was to receive his protecting care; and so in her widowly and lovable way, accepted.

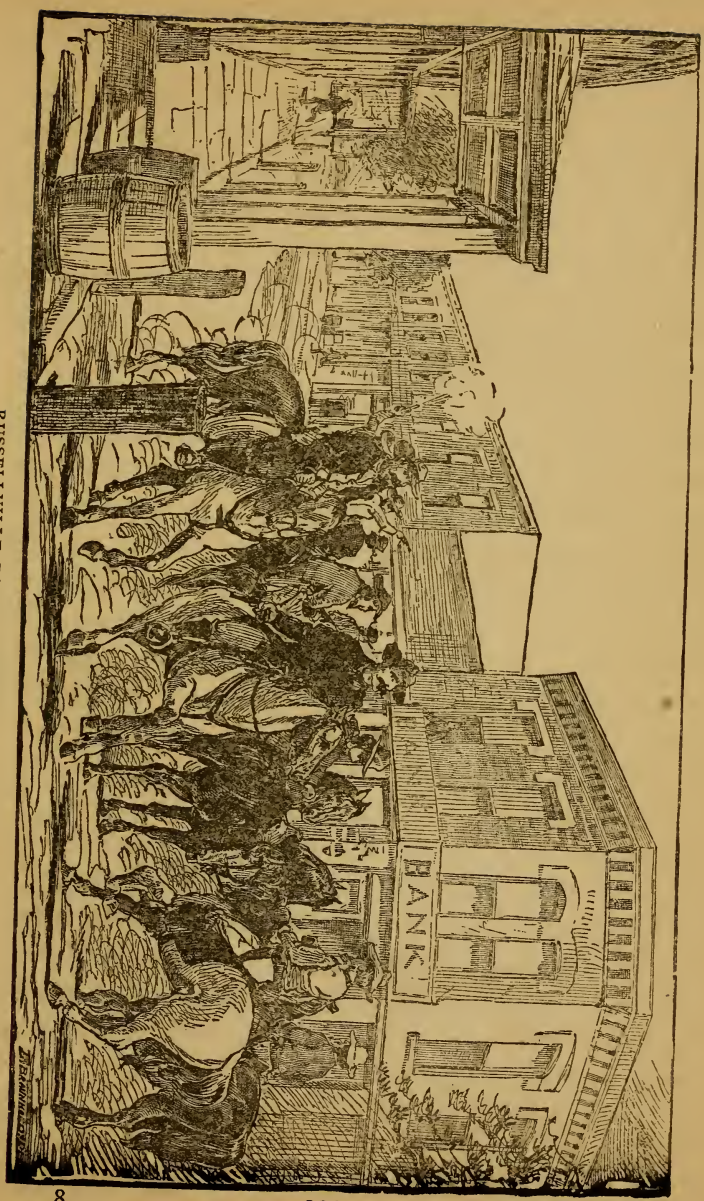
The two lived some time in blissful peace, and the bleak and weary weeks of war were being forgotten, when a sudden burst of prosperity fell to the lot of George W. Shepherd. The ill-gotten \$10,000—his share of the spoils from the Russellville bank—grew heavy in his pocket, and as the noon of life was well nigh past, a house of rather ordinary comfort, surrounded by a neat and spacious lawn, might not be out of

place, he thought. So a small estate was purchased, and apparent happiness—if that could be—smiled upon him and his. This appeared to the suspecting Russellvillians and the searching detectives as misplaced merit for one whose record was so clouded as Mr. Shepherd's.

Moreover, Mr. Shepherd's horses had been used to facilitate the exit of a good many guerillas and men of questionable repute, who had very suddenly disappeared from Nelson county, and among whom was Oll Shepherd. At any rate, a charge preferred against Mr. Shepherd for being an accomplice in the late robbery could not result very disastrously, whatever it might fail to accomplish. Accordingly the papers of arrest were served on him, and a thorough search for evidence to convict him did not prove fruitless. He went to Russellville—this time under a leadership slightly different from that on the morning of March 20, 1868. He did not enter the bank or ride up and down the street under a mask, as he had done on the former occasion, but walked straight-forward into the county jail, where he stopped till the grand jury of Logan county convened. When he was given a hearing he failed to impress that body with his conception of the circumstances and results of the Russellville bank robbery, and the jury returned a verdict of guilty. When the Circuit Court convened, he failed to muster any stronger argument in favor of his innocence, and he was committed to the penitentiary for three years, to crack stone or engage in any other employment, as the warden might dictate. *Sic vita est.*

Success attended the efforts of the avengers in one more instance. The Governor of Kentucky readily issued a requi-

RUSSELLVILLE BANK ROBBERY.



sition for the apprehension of the whole band of the Russellville robbers, collectively and severally, and, by untiring pursuit, the detectives and State officers at last found Oll Shepherd, the cousin of the gentleman who was spending his leisure moments in the Frankfort penitentiary.

When Oll Shepherd left Nelson county, he followed his cousin down through Tennessee, and into Western Missouri. He finally found a retreat in Jackson county, and took up his place of abode at Lea's Summit. Affairs in Missouri at this time had come to such a pass that no ordinary number of men could capture a guerilla bandit. Vigilance committees were necessary, and "the mother of invention" soon furnished them. The chief magistrate of the State issued his executive order for the arrest of Shepherd, and all that remained to be done was to inform the nearest vigilance committee of the order of the day. The magistrates acted with their usual promptness, and about twenty-five of them, properly armed, marched up to Lea's Summit.

To be sure, there was very little chance for Shepherd's escape, or survival. But the old guerilla blood in his veins was as thick and vigorous as ever, and he determined not to be taken alive. It was like the obstinate bull opposing an approaching freight train rolling along with a heavy momentum. His pluck was to be commended; but his judgment—where was that? The men rode up to Shepherd's house and called him out. Shepherd seized his revolver and appeared, when the spokesman said:

"Come, come, we want no blood. You are our prisoner! Surrender or die!"

But Shepherd raised his revolvers and shouted, "Never!"

The result was plain. Only one thing could be done, and this immediately at that, for, with the word, Shepherd commenced emptying his revolvers into the besiegers, and indeed, before he fell, he fired fourteen shots. But he could not last long, for almost simultaneous shots from the twenty guns that instantly were centered at him, left seven bullet holes in his body. He weakened, fell over against a tree, and continued the last acts of his life to his dying breath.

George Shepherd was now in the penitentiary at Frankfort, Kentucky. Oll Shepherd was dead, and the others of the bandits were so scattered, and each one so disguised, that none of them were ever traced, or at least captured. Thus ended the first bold robbery by the James gang, after the war.



CHAPTER XVII.

THE SECRET CAVE—A MYSTERIOUS RETREAT—ITS SINGULAR DISCOVERY.

Why did all trace of these bandits forever end at the borders of Jackson county? Pursuits which bid fair to be successful were time and again carried to the very threshold of that locality, and there ended in confusion. Jackson county was known for years as the rendezvous of the gang, but where within its limits could they hide so securely? True, they had friends there who would do their utmost to conceal them from danger, because they considered them persecuted men, and thought the hue and cry that was raised against them the work of enemies who still nursed old war time prejudices. Few of these believed the James and Younger Brothers guilty of robbery. They refused to credit the disgraceful charges brought against them, and continued to regard them as patriots. To these the boys might have run for safety from a band of pursuers who sought them in times of peace, but to repeatedly fly to them at times when excitement ran high over a bank or train robbery, would have at least aroused suspicion, and many of those retreats would have soon been closed against them; for there were many honorable citizens in Missouri whose doors were open to these boys as refugees from what they considered the unjust rigor of a revengeful government, who would have barred those

ENTRANCE TO THE SECRET CAVE



doors against them as criminals fleeing from the law. Truly some credence is due to the following story from the life of an old ex-guerrilla—or else there are many people in Jackson county who knowingly have given aid and sympathy to robbers, and thereby became accessories to their outrages, besides bringing upon their community the odium with which that section has so long been regarded, because of the security found there by its outlaws.

Recently, while searching among the old haunts of these renowned highwaymen for facts connected with their lives and crimes, the writer was recommended to call upon a man who followed Quantrell through the war, and pretty well known to have taken a part in some exciting events since that time. In fact, though now enjoying the confidence of many respectable friends, and living entirely by the sweat of his brow, upon the fruits of honest labor, as a mechanic, there is much of his history enveloped in a cloud which those who respect him for his subsequent course, refuse to investigate. Upon this party the writer called, and explained his visit, but found that gentleman unwilling to figure before the public in any developments connected with the subject in question. But after some persuasion to the effect that as the old guerilla league had long since disbanded, many returning to their homes and resuming the tamer pursuits of civil life, while of those who had continued in a perilous course but one or two remained, and these had not been heard from for years, and had doubtless ceased their depredations; that in Jesse James had expired the last active member of the original league, and whatever of secrecy which had once bound them together as

partizan warriors could not include new members recruited since for a different purpose; and that while it was not our desire to have him violate his obligation to his old companions, even though they had stretched those obligations so far as to use them in concealing unlawful acts done since the disbandment, I still begged that he would give us such information as he could reasonably impart, insisting that it was no violation to reveal such secrets now, since they really serve to protect no one, unless it be a few strangers, unknown to the followers of Quantrell, and not co-equally bound by the oath by which they were so benefited.

“Well,” said the old guerilla, “what do you want to know?”

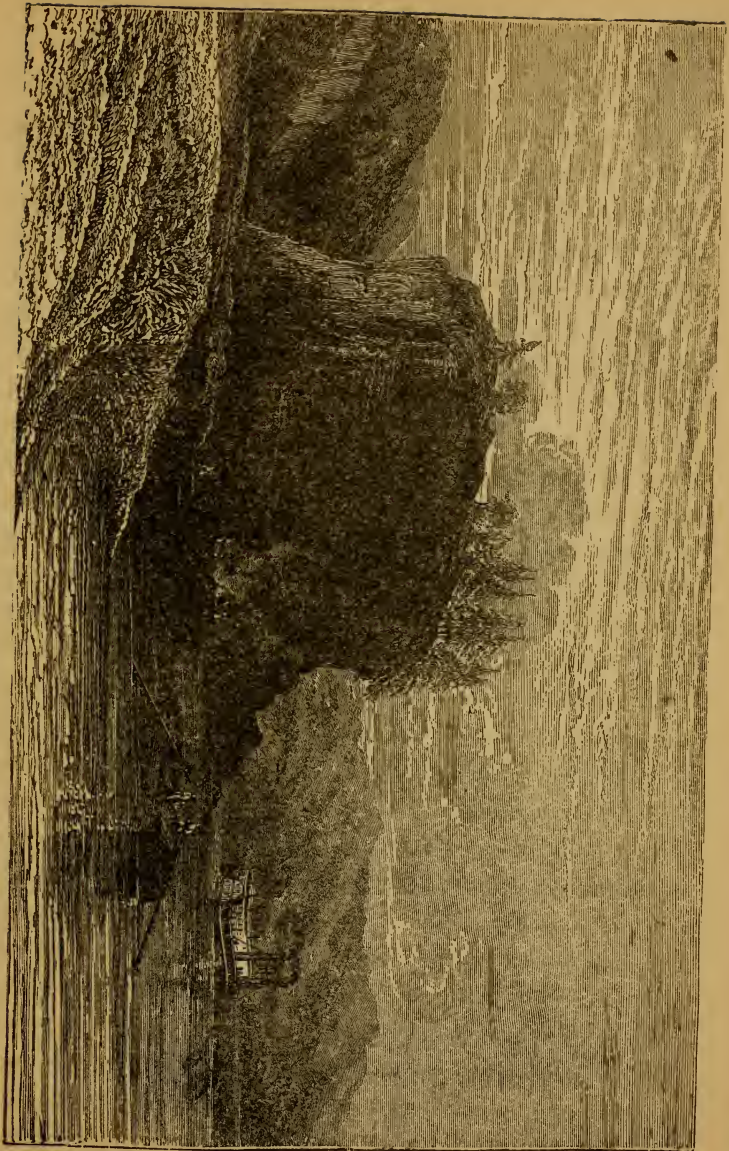
I replied that I would like to ascertain, if possible, why the James Band as well as the guerillas, always found safety in Jackson county. That this was known to be their hiding-place is not denied by any one; time and time again they have been followed to that locality, and there disappeared. The Federals and civil officers alike were cheated there; to that point Quantrell always headed his retreat in time of danger; there Jesse James and his companions always went when closely pressed, and there they always escaped. Why was it?

“Well,” said Mr. —, “I don’t know but I could throw some light upon that question, and under the circumstances I see no objection to my doing so. It’s a long story, but I guess I can keep you awake through it;” and lighting his pipe, the ancient pilgrim related this wonderful narrative.

“Early in ’62, when Quantrell first took up his quarters in Missouri, won by the novelty and freedom of guerilla life,

I joined the band, at that time in camp near Blue Springs. The boys had not then done much in the way of active service. I was one of the original 'nine,' and took part in the first important engagement with the militia. I was with Quantrell in all his subsequent battles of importance, until the fall of '64, when I went with Shepherd and some of the rest to Texas. Not long after I joined the guerillas I was out with a fellow named Goss on a scouting tour. Some Federals were reported to have passed down the river road that day, and we were sent to learn something of their whereabouts and the number of their force. We soon struck the 'trail,' and followed along pretty briskly, as the Federals had got a long start, and we were anxious to overtake them before they got much further. We had rode steadily for about six hours without seeming to get any nearer to the objects of our search, when, just as night came on, we turned a sharp bend in the road, and before we could check our pace we were right in the midst of a camp of 'Yanks.'

"Of course we had no business there, and with a couple of shots from our pistols, we turned and 'lit out.' But it was too late; our horses were getting tired from their long journey, and we had not got far till we heard them gaining on us. The country was thoroughly familiar to me. I knew every nook and by-way in the country. I soon saw that if we kept the road the Yanks would run us down sooner or later. We were coming, to a path,—now overgrown with brush and weeds—that used to lead into the woods. I was ahead, and signaling to Goss, I turned into this path. But Goss had not understood me, and rode on too far to turn back before



MAMMOTH ROCK NEAR THE MYSTERIOUS CAVE.

he realized the move, so ne went his way and I went mine. It wasn't long till I heard the Yankees ride by after Goss; then I retreated into the forest as far as it was possible to follow the path. By this time it was dark; I could go no further till morning. Besides, I did not want to return without knowing more about the Federals. So I tied my horse in a thicket and cut across on foot to the place where we had run into the encampment.

“The country there is very rough; high cliffs and deep ravines and dense thickets, seldom trodden by any feet but those of wild beasts, render that part of Jackson county comparatively uninhabitable. With considerable difficulty, although I had a pretty general knowledge of the situation, I made my way to the Federal camp, and after a careful observation, by which I found the force numbered larger than we had supposed, I retraced my steps. The moon had now arisen and made my way a little more cheerful and certain. This time I was able to shorten the distance considerably by scaling a ledge of high rocks which I was compelled to go around before, and in doing this I took a route where I suppose no man had ever been

“I had reached a place near the top, and was just beginning to think that I hadn't gained much after all by shortening the distance, when suddenly the earth gave way beneath my feet, and I sank, and slid, and fell down, down, down! till I thought I would never stop. When I 'landed,' I was in the dark, and considerably bruised. I groped around a little, but the place was strange, and I was afraid to move about much for fear of taking a new lurch and going further down.

I had no matches, and no idea where I was. Finally I thought of my pistols, and drawing one, fired it over my head. In the instant of light it flashed around me I saw that I was in a cave. Of course I was not delighted at the discovery, and attempted to get out by the way I had entered, but the wall was high and almost perpendicular, affording no hold for hand or foot, so, after several futile attempts, I gave up the intention for the time, and concluded to wait till morning cast some light on my surroundings, and making the best of the situation, I curled up in my new apartment and went to sleep.

“I awoke just as day was breaking, and proceeded to examine my situation. This I soon found was desperate in the extreme. The place through which I had fallen was entirely inaccessible to me. It was a narrow aperture at the end of a short, tunnel-shaped passage, which sloped abruptly into the cave, widening toward the base to within about eight feet of the bottom, when it ended in a steep wall of solid stone, smooth and slimy with a damp earth mold. To climb it was impossible; to expect assistance was madness, and the feeling of desolation and terror which came over me with the thought of starving in that terrible place, surpassed in intensity anything I have ever experienced, and I have been in some very close places since then.

“But I didn't waste much time in gloomy reflection. I began to look about for something from which I might gain a foothold high enough to reach above that wall. There was nothing movable in the place but some small stones and fragments of ledge rock, very hard to loosen, and a dead tree limb, which had evidently come in at the same time I did. With

these I went to work, and before night had built a very shaky kind of platform which almost reached as high as my knees, when the material gave out. Not a loose stone remained in the wall or floor, nor any that could be loosened, except one, a very heavy piece which jutted from the corner near the floor. This was very hard to move, but after repeated trials I could feel that it was getting looser. All that night I worked and pulled, with bloody hands, at that stone, in hope that it would add a few inches to my little tower. I knew it would not be enough when I should get it, but I worked on with the tireless patience which only desperation begets. At last it swung out and fell at my feet, and in its place an aperture opened into another cell much larger than the first. In this I found another opening, from which descended, at a gradual incline, a long, broad passage way, which wound curiously to the base of the cliff, and opened behind a thick growth of brushwood. It was an outlet, and I breathed the free air once more. Of course I hurried to where my horse was tied, and was made happy by finding him still there.

“Hungry and tired, but full of joy at the importance of my discovery of an excellent retreat for the band, I rode back to camp, and reporting the result of my observations concerning the Federals, related my strange experience. A detachment was immediately sent to explore the place; this time we discovered another apartment, and decided that it could be made impregnable. We promptly destroyed all evidence of the upper entrance by filling it with rocks and felling a large tree across it. Then the boys all ‘moved in,’ and we soon fitted up the cave in good shape for a place of repose, and stocked

it with ammunition and supplies for a long siege. A cannon was afterward placed in position to command the remaining entrance so that, garrisoned by two men, the place could be held against a regiment. That cave was our rendezvous, and was ever afterward used by us in times of danger. It was there we met—all that were left of us—after the Lawrence affair. The strictest secrecy concerning it was imposed upon all, and no man who was not a member of Quantrell's band has ever been admitted to that cave."

"But have not the strangers since admitted to companionship with the James and Younger Brothers, as bandits, been taken into the secret?"

"No. These men always separated after a raid; the 'old boys' went to Jackson county; the rest went where they pleased, and were generally caught or killed."

"But you haven't told us where we can find this mysterious place."

"No, and I don't intend to. I have told enough; I need not have done so much, but in doing it I have not violated my obligations to the boys, and have done all I can to remove the suspicions which ignorance of this has long forced upon honorable citizens. The community of Jackson county is not responsible for the security its robbers have found there, and with this I decline to discuss the subject further."

"But one more question: What became of Goss that night after you separated in the flight from the Federals?"

"Oh, they killed him. He was a good boy, and laid out four men in that retreat, but there were more of them, and he had to come. I knew they'd get him, poor fellow!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

AMONG THE ROCKIES—TO CALIFORNIA “FOR THEIR HEALTH.”

It is among the absurdities to think that even such a “hero” as Jesse James would pass through such a bloody and dangerous career as that of the average guerilla, without receiving many wounds. And a statement of that kind would be far from the truth. Jesse, though very young for one who had been spattered with so much blood, had faced many a revolver’s flash, and did not escape without something to remind him of his numerous encounters. At this time he had no less than twenty wounds on his body—ranging in severity from a slight bruise of the flesh to broken bones, severed veins, and torn lungs. Indeed, he had been literally torn to pieces; but his vitality and strength of will had always held the pieces together until nature could mend his shattered body. But he abused the soft restorer. Often, ere his wounds had scarce stopped bleeding—while they were yet irritated and feverish—he would start boldly out on an expedition that would require a hundred and one per cent. of robust health—such as his ride from his home just after the Liberty bank robbery. And Frank was in the same boat, except that he received fewer, or less severe, wounds. But he also had received many wounds that had seriously impaired his health. He was at this very time securely hidden away in Chaplin, Nelson county, nursing the stubborn Brandenburg wound. Many of these wounds did

not heal in a day; and to have several wounds kept in constant irritation would weaken the vitality of the strongest. And this was the case with the Jameses. They were both sick from their wounds. Moreover, Jesse was just relapsing from the excitement and peril that attended the Russellville bank robbery. He had ridden five hundred miles or more, through a rough country, at a time, and under such circumstances, that he could not always do just as his disposition would dictate. When he had left Chaplin, just after the Russellville affair, he piloted all his followers to the Mississippi, by day or by night, through glen or valley, or over hill or mountain, stream or rivulet, brush or bramble, and thence to what served as everglades for the fugitives.

This kind of work wore on Jesse's physical system. When he arrived among friends, who were numerous in Missouri, for many had hardly begun to believe, or even know, that Jesse at this time could have been squarely identified with such affairs as Liberty or Russellville, he anticipated a season of rest. But these friends thought that something more than a season of rest was necessary.

Dr. Joseph Wood, who had been Jesse's friend and physician on a number of occasions, counseled him to take a change of climate, and allow his fractured lung to heal. The doctor thought a voyage by sea would be very beneficial to Jesse, followed by mountain atmosphere.

Jesse thought the advice good, and concluded to arrange with Frank for a trip to the "golden West." The boys now had plenty of friends on hand, and such a trip would not be out of place.

As his father had done years before, when his son was but a lad of five years, Jesse concluded to try the atmosphere of the far West. His father had left home and children for wealth. Jesse was going after health, and—we shall see what else. Accordingly, about the close of May, 1869, after an affectionate farewell of his mother and old home at Kearney, where the days of his boyhood had been spent, he started for New York, intending to make the trip by sea. Although unmasked and undisguised, he passed through the principal cities in crowded coaches, and often, no doubt, in the very presence of detectives longing for a sight of him, reaching the metropolis in safety. In this heterogeneous city he met several old acquaintances with whom he spent a few days, preparatory to his departure for the Pacific slope.

Strange as it may seem to the great mass of law abiding citizens, these kindred spirits of dark deeds and darker future, never for once thought of betraying their notorious companions. The bond that united their hearts was stronger than all the inducement of reward. He could have remained for months, no doubt, in this, the heart of civilization, unmolested and unknown by but the few.

Those who were at the docks where the steamship *Santiago De Cuba* lay on the 8th of June, saw a young man, rather haggard and worn in appearance, step aboard, and immediately repair to one of the best state rooms of the vessel. This young man possibly would not have told any those who were watching him that his name was Jesse James, and yet it was he. The ship was going to the Isthmus, and so was its passenger. His little experience at Russellville had placed

him in a condition, financially, not enjoyed by very many of those about him, and right royally did he make use of the ill-gotten means. Many a one on board the *De Cuba* was won over to the genial and intelligent young man. The voyage was a delightful one, and enjoyed as much by Jesse James as an ocean ride in beautiful weather and with agreeable companions, could be enjoyed by an individual with two bullet holes through his lung, and forty millions people desiring his immediate presence upon the scaffold.

After reaching Panama, with its burning sun and malarial atmosphere, he rested for a day or two until another steamer should sail for the city of the Golden Gate. This rendezvous for all the worst characters under the sun, and perhaps a few from beneath the crust of the earth, opened up before his gaze about the first of August. Here he remained in inactivity for a short time, having been greatly refreshed by the journey from New York, and enjoying the salubrious atmosphere of San Francisco.

But let us return a moment and inquire after the older brother. Where is he? The people around Russellville do not know, although they would like to. It is reported on the most reliable authority that he was, and had been since the robbery, concealed in the house of a most respectable citizen of Nelson county. Friends to the boys were by no means wanting in that region. There he was known, principally, as the bravest of Confederate soldiers; as the one who had fought the hardest for the lost cause; as the heroic defender of Southern homes, Southern sentiments, and Southern money. Consequently, after the "haul," safety, friendship,

and physician's care were given him, until just previous to Jesse's sailing he was driven to Louisville in a close carriage belonging to a friend. The unsuspecting inhabitants of the country through which he passed, including Fairfield, Smithville, Bloomfield and Mount Washington, little dreamed the name and character of him who sat within that vehicle. Having reached the metropolis of Kentucky, instead of going to some out of the way tavern, or unfrequented portion of the city, he was driven directly to the "Southern Hotel." Although surrounded with scores of inquiring eyes, he walks straight up to the register and writes "F. C. Markland, Kentucky." Audacity! Was ever utter fearlessness of man, law, mob violence, more fully exemplified than in such an act? Despite the cruelties enacted by these James Brothers, the ungovernable hatred in their natures, the inhuman thirst for revenge—despite these, the intrepidity of heart, the reckless bravery displayed in their deeds, the unquestionable ambition for leadership and equality with the best of the land, compel admiration, often, and a partial respect.

After spending several days at Louisville with a few of his old companions whom he met, Frank sent word to his mother to meet him in Kansas City on a certain date, through which place he would pass on his way out West. He had concluded that the best place for him, in his weakened condition, would be with his uncle in California. Accordingly he left Louisville for Obispo county, California, stopping only at Kansas City, when, at the house of a relative, Mrs. Samuels' oldest boy bade her farewell, perhaps forever.

It is pleasing to note the genuine affection which seemed ever to exist between these proscribed characters and their mother. As is generally true, they hated with a terrible hatred, but also loved the few upon whom their affections were placed, with as deep and abiding love as is often witnessed. The extremes of character are often blended in one individual, and so it seemed in their case.

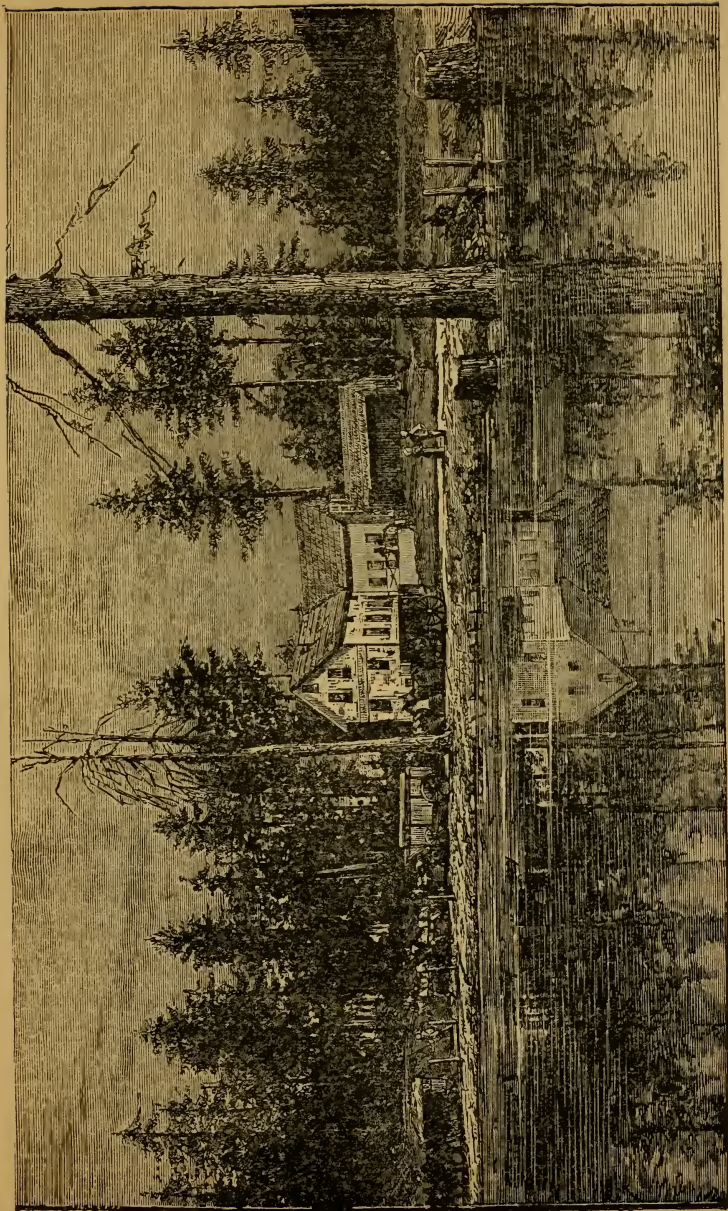
Several weeks before Jesse arrived on the steamer from New York, Frank reached San Francisco, but remained here but a short time, soon repairing to the home of his uncle, Mr. D. W. James, who resided at the Hot Sulphur Springs. The statements that have been made regarding Frank's taking the same route as his brother and reaching the Pacific by vessel from New York, which, by the way, was corroborated in a published letter from Jesse, are without foundation in truth. The letter undoubtedly was a blind prepared for the benefit of those who were after the boys. That Frank crossed the western half of the continent by rail, is attested to by a gentleman who traveled with him a great portion of the way, and knew both the ex-guerillas well.

At the home of his uncle he found a quiet retreat, frequented by invalids, and affording a most excellent opportunity to recruit his wasted energies. But soon desiring a change he visited an old friend by the name of Thompson, who owned a large ranche near by, and here he remained for several months. Not until after the arrival of Jesse upon California soil did he again return to Hot Sulphur Springs. Here the estranged outlaws met; after many months, during which each had suffered much, pain and had time to reflect upon their

devilish deeds and probable fate, these American brigands clasped hands once more.

They lived peaceably at their uncle's home, as gentle in manner and agreeable in conversation as society gentlemen. They were welcome boarders at the house of their relative. People who looked upon this youthful duet did not see the latent fire which burned within. Frank, with reticent, unobtrusive bearing; Jesse, with his brilliant talk, fine face, and polite demeanor, were not such characters as their new-found friends would ever have suspected as the most notorious bandits who ever defied law and society.

The stay at the Springs wrought wonders in their physical condition. Before the autumn leaves began to fall, each of the boys had entirely recovered his health, and felt as robust and full of fire as in any time of their history. But with this renewed strength came also the desire to see more of Western life, engage in some of their old sports, and should opportunity offer, startle the Nevada camps by a few crack shots from their belt companions. Here, at their uncle's, it was entirely too tame. The food they longed for, nay, must have, was excitement, thrilling excitement. Milk and fruit will do well enough for the infant and recluse, but something stronger, more stimulating, is demanded by the active man, full of life and vigor, surrounded by mountain air. If one nature shuns the busy world, with its many fierce struggles, and disagreeable brawls—its terrible action, but more terrible reaction—another individual dashes wildly into the fray, nor can he find peace except when the carnage is at its height. So Frank and Jesse strapped their trusty



THE RESORT IN CALIFORNIA.

weapons about them and started for the camps among the Sonoma Mountains. Sports of various character occupied their attention for the first few weeks. Shooting, card-playing, dancing, horse-racing, and a hundred other rough frontier amusements afforded enjoyment, again stirring within them the unquenchable appetite for notoriety and "red hot" experiences. Accordingly, having run across a couple of ex-guerrilla friends of the States, the four concluded to visit "Battle Mountain" camp, where an opportunity might offer to "shake e'm up," as Frank expressed it.

Before introducing our friends from Missouri to this encampment, it may be well to take a cursory glance at those who compose it. Like nearly all settlements among the Sierras at that date, Battle Mountain could boast of a representative from every land, race, color and social degree of which Western humanity had ever heard. Broken-down merchants, ambitious farmers, college men, horse thieves, escaped jail birds, Mexicans, Australians, Africans, Asiatics, Europeans and Americans—all could be found somewhere and at some time about this rendezvous for miners. If the visitors who are on their way to the camp are hard customers, not otherwise are those whom they will meet. The reputation of the place was such as to frighten away timid souls, but had infinite attractions for such as knew not fear, and courted danger. If two gamblers fought and neither was killed, both were branded as effeminate, chicken-hearted specimens of the *genus homo*, not worthy of a place among the camp's aristocracy. But should one of the combatants happen to be cut into sausage meat with a big bowie knife, the

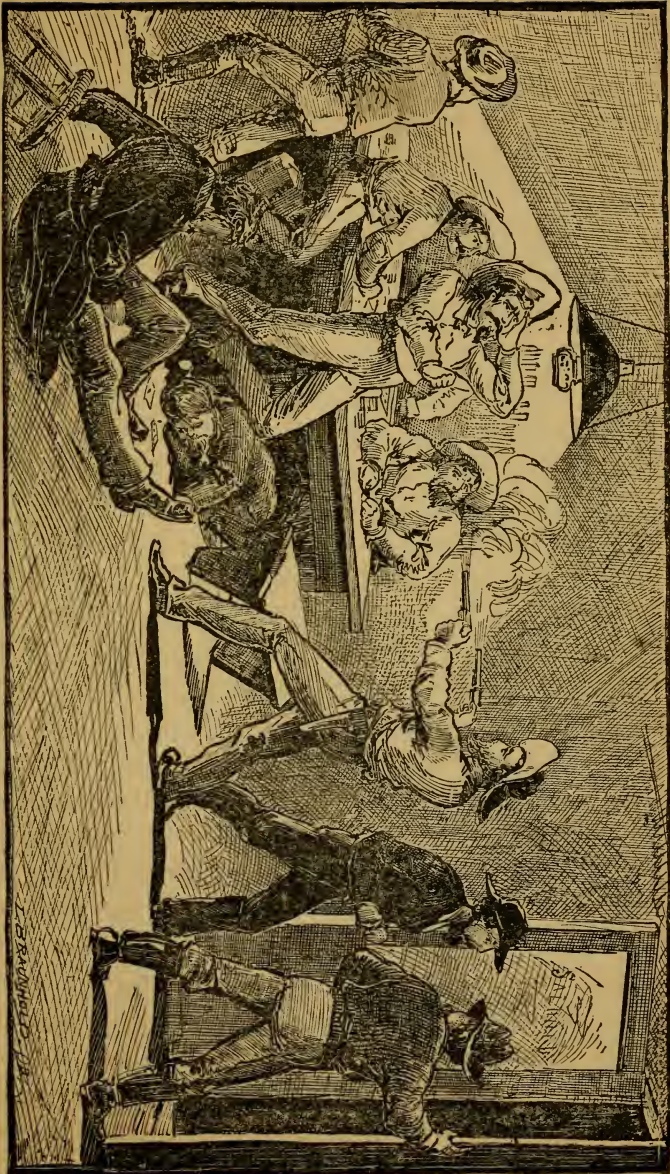
murder was either left unmolested, or strung up to the nearest tree, according to his popularity. But shoot, cut and fight they would do all on a moment's notice, with the slightest provocation.

Into such a crowd came the meek-looking Missourians. The two companions of the Jameses attracted some attention by their loud talk and blustering manner; but the backward and youthful-appearing outlaws themselves were scarcely noticed by the inhabitants of saloons, gambling holes and the tavern which they visited. Finally, noticing a motley crew of males and females in an old rickety shanty near by, they went in and were soon busily engaged in cards with their reckless acquaintances. Things moved along smoothly for quit awhile, the James Boys always refusing anything to drink, while the rest were quenching or provoking their thirst with the vilest whiskey.

But a "circumstance" was soon to occur which would test the blood of the most desperate in that desperate and rollicking crowd. One of the Missourians detected his opponent in the act of slipping a card up his sleeve. Immediately he threw down his "hand," and accused the "slinger of pasteboards" of cheating. The gambler emphatically denied the charge, and demanded retraction. Of course the Missourian answered this demand with a suggestion that the gambler go to Hades. Whereupon, as quick as thought, the gambler drew a long dirk knife, and in a moment more would have plunged it into the breast of his accuser. But Jesse James happened to be watching the whole transaction, and appreciating the imminent peril of his friend, drew a pistol

and sent a bullet through the heart of the desperado. The uplifted knife fell from his grasp, and the would-be murderer sank to the floor with a groan. As James fired this shot, the man who sat at the table with him also jerked out a revolver, and when Jesse turned to renew the game, he found the large muzzle pointed directly at his breast. With the most wonderful rapidity and skill, he whirled and shot the man dead before the latter could pull the trigger. In a moment all was uproar. The gamblers from all parts of the house jumped from their seats, and rushed to the scene of action. In the scramble the lights were suddenly extinguished, chairs and tables upset, and everything was in the direst confusion. Above the din, Jesse's voice was heard, as he cried: "Stand back! Be ready!" His three partners understood it and rushed for the door, which they succeeded in reaching after a fierce struggle. It was a wild scene. The click of the trigger, the rattle of knives clashing together, the explosion of the pistols, the shrieks of the terrified women, the cursings of a drunken and infuriated mob, together with the piteous groans of those who had been shot, cut, or knocked down, made the moment one of the most terrific ever experienced, even in that fearful den. By the aid of pistol flashes, Jesse managed to reach the door, but here he encountered two burly fellows ready to send a knife to his heart as soon as he should attempt an exit. He took in the situation at a glance, and with lightning rapidity sent a ball crashing through the brain of one, and knocked the other down with the butt end of his revolver. The crowd swayed toward him, but leaping over the groaning wretches he had floored, he gained the free

FIGHT IN A MINING CAMP.



L. BRAUNHOLD

air, and the presence of his companions. A light having been struck by this time, the four, as they looked through the window, could see three men dead, weltering in their gore, while four or five others were seriously if not mortally wounded. Jesse had done the most of it, although the other three had been sending in a shot through the windows now and then, which was by no means lost.

As soon as the results were seen by the gamblers, there being neither of the strangers injured, while at least seven of their own number had fallen, the cry for "Vengeance!" was raised, and with a grand rush they started in pursuit of the murderers. The James party had retired a short distance from the house, and stood talking over their experience. Whether they expected the mob after them or not, they did not attempt to escape. The infuriated crowd came pushing toward them. Jesse, who was always spokesman, cried out: "Back, you d——d miscreants! Stand back, I say!" Instead of obeying, they came on yelling, "Revenge! Down with the dogs!" "Boys, we are in for it," cried Jesse. "All right! Be ready!" Then turning to the crowd, he shouted: "Come on, d——n you! Just come ahead and be killed!" The four Missourians leveled their pistols and sent four of the mob into another existence. Again the flash of their four pistols was seen, and two more of the oncoming crowd dropped, seriously wounded. The pursuers hesitated a moment. They parleyed among themselves as to the best method of taking them, but while thus their attention was taken away, the four escaped in the darkness, and were never more seen in the region of Battle Mountain,

CHAPTER XIX.

JESSE AND FRANK JAMES AGAIN IN MISSOURI.

After the fearful experience at Battle Mountain, the James Boys found a little rest among the mountains of the West. For a few days they were concealed in Winnemunca, but as soon as an opportunity presented, they took leave of their few friends, and secretly departed for a more congenial clime. Their connection with the fight had been made known throughout that entire region. Well they knew that the penalty would be sufficient and speedily paid, should they happen to fall into the hands of the reckless crowd seeking them.

Consequently before Christmas of '69 had come, the outlaws were on their way back to Missouri and ex-guerilla friends. But their days of peace were over. They had sown the wind, and were to reap the whirlwind.

Arrived at the haunts in Clay county, they found their sympathizers few and far between. Most of those with whom they had lived and fought were no more. Very few of the number who had survived were at all willing to treat the proscribed characters with friendliness. They found a spirit of hatred engendered against the guerillas which was anything but comfortable. It being now rumored that Jesse and Frank James had again taken up their abode near the old farm, the atmosphere rose several degrees in temperature

around that section. It was indeed an unenviable welcome, but such as they must have expected. As they had never hesitated to strike any and every human being who stood in their way, so was the reaction of their work, as expressed in public sentiment, bitter and unmerciful. Instead of retaining the conviction that these young men were honest, the people now were ready to believe them guilty of anything. Was a horse stolen, a petty thief committed, a house broken into—anything of a lawless character—Jesse and Frank James received the credit of it.

And now considerable has been said regarding the effect of such accusations upon the lives of these desperadoes. A recent writer devotes considerable time in proving that they were driven into outlawry by the false charges and great wrongs that were hurled upon them by the people at large. That had nothing but truth been spoken of them after they returned from the Pacific slope, and had the militia of earlier days been less barbarous in their treatment of the family, the name of Jesse and Frank James would not to-day be such a reproach to their State and country as they are. That indirectly, the treatment which the Jameses received at the hands of their enemies, is the prime cause of all future acts.

It is true the militiamen ruthlessly dragged Dr. Samuels from his home and strung him to a tree; that they then visited Jesse in the field where, with lash and whip, they striped him from head to foot, finally leaving him in an almost dying condition; that time and again that public sentiment which is often more powerful than the sword, came down upon ex-guerillas when innocent. And to say that these things

SCENE ON THE MISSOURI RIVER.



did not bear some influence in determining the future course of these men, would be to deny that circumstances partially control every man's career. But no amount of ill-treatment could have put within them the demon of bloodshed and murder, prompting the committal of deeds which would shame the dwellers around Cocytus. It is too true that the bitter feelings between North and South—between militiamen and guerillas—fed the flames of fury burning in the breasts of each class, but other men hated without swearing eternal vengeance; other men fought gallantly and desperately until the cry of peace was heard throughout the borders of our stricken land, without unrelentingly continuing the warfare forever and aye. Men with better natures and more human ethics listened to the angel of peace and said, "It is enough;" thousands of genuine heroes, as brave and daring as ever sat in saddle, or carried a gun; heroes whose wrongs and ill-treatment measure far more than those of the lawless brigands of Clay county, Missouri, whose footprints from the Mississippi to the Atlantic were colored by the crimson drops flowing from their maimed and bleeding members; thousands of such laid down the mantle of war at the first command from the authorities at Washington, and have lived as law-abiding, respected citizens ever since. No amount of ill-usage can ever excuse, although it may modify, the crimes of these notorious men. Law is too sacred a thing to be trampled under foot, no matter what impels men to do it. And he who does it may look for naught else than the weight of its heavy hand upon his shoulder. Give the devil his due—let the subjects of this sketch be admired for their bravery,

their intrepidity, their respect for womanhood, but never can they be considered less accountable for their atrocities because of indignities they may have suffered at the hands of others.

Very soon after the James Boys returned from California, and even before any one scarcely was aware of their presence, a second robbery, as audacious and effective as the Russellville scheme, was perpetrated. The people of Clay county and vicinity had heard of the presence of Jesse and Frank James in the West, and still believing them there, the plan and execution of the robbery about to be mentioned was as great a surprise as it was a horror.

Gallatin, Daviess county, Missouri, is a small town of about one thousand inhabitants. In 1869 it was in a flourishing condition, having recovered from the effects of the war to a great extent. A single bank held the extra funds of the community, which about this time were supposed to be quite "flush." If any of the good-natured and quiet Gallatinians had witnessed thrilling exploits and daring deeds during the Rebellion of the few years past, they were to see something that would eclipse any of their former experiences in point of recklessness and outlawry. It was to happen on the 16th day of December of this year. The air was clear and frosty. The wind cut like a knife, and kept most of the men within doors. The streets were well-nigh deserted, and there seemed to have settled over the village a calm such as always precedes a storm upon the ocean. Suddenly there was heard the tramp of horses' hoofs and the crack of pistols. People rushed to the windows and doors, but speedily retired before the threatening commands of the armed strangers to remain

unseen. On came the band of desperadoes, shooting and yelling, thereby completely paralyzing the senses of those who heard and saw. The surprise was so complete, the shock so overwhelming, the men stood looking at each other, without moving a hand or uttering a single warning cry. Straight up to the bank two of the party rode. The cashier, Captain John W. Sheets, stood behind the counter all alone. One of the men immediately covered him with a revolver, while the other emptied the safe of its cash deposits. When all the money was safely stowed in a sack provided for the purpose, the robber who had relieved the safe of its contents stepped up to Captain Sheets, placed a revolver at his head, and without a shadow of cause, blew his brains out. The two then mounted their horses, joined the remainder of the gang, and disappeared as quickly as they had appeared.

The tragedy just enacted was short but decisive. The plan and execution manifested not only pluck but brains. No ordinary individual led the raid. At once the cry was raised that Jesse James, the notorious guerilla, was at the head of the gang. Immediately a score or more of the bravest mounted their steeds, and started after the robbers in hot pursuit. Most of them were ex-militiamen, and were not unaccustomed to the saddle. They were also fired with the dastardly murder of their esteemed fellow townsman. Captain Sheets had been at the head of a company of militia during the war, and was as brave a soldier as ever carried a musket. Even those who had opposed his principles during the war, now respected and honored him as a citizen. The news of his death had spread like wildfire; and many an eye

dampened at hearing the sad news. Why did they shoot him? What possible reason could there be for such a bloody deed? None could be divined then, but it has since been learned that he was mistaken for another man, Lieutenant Cox, who was supposed to have shot Bill Anderson, the guerilla. A flimsy excuse, indeed, which can never satisfy the feelings of an indignant people.

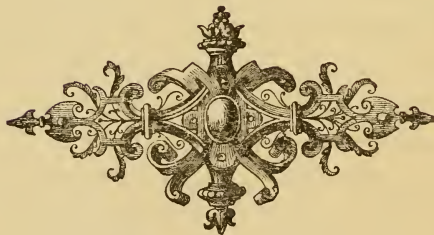
With full purpose to give no quarter, should they overtake the outlaws, the horsemen dashed out of the city as fast as their steeds could carry them. The robbers had gained quite a start, and were as used to the saddle as the old Greek to fine sculpture. No ordinary horseflesh was theirs, either. Men who had ridden with Quantrell understood the advantages to be gained in having fleet steeds. Consequently they were not to be so easily overtaken. One, two, three hours passed, and still no sight of the bandits. It was an exciting time. The pursuers had been completely surprised and paralyzed by the bold desperadoes; but now they had recovered their senses, and thirsted for vengeance. In Gallatin, all was confusion and excitement. Women whose husbands had gone in pursuit were weeping over the prospect of never seeing them more, alive; while knots of men and boys were to be seen on the corners, straining their eyes to catch the first glimpse of a returning horseman. The fleeing ex-guerillas were easily tracked toward Clay county. Finally the pursuers came upon them. The charge was so sudden that for a moment the robbers were demoralized, but being commanded to "fire" by their leader, they did so with fearful havoc. The repulse was severe—it was fatal. It persuaded

the oncoming crowd that a little more discretion and a greater number of men would be much more likely to capture the roughs. A man was immediately dispatched for reinforcements, while the company rested on their oars. That rest was fatal to their plans. The outlaws moved on toward Clay county with all speed, and as soon as they crossed the county line, nearly all trace of them was lost. No one could tell anything about such a company of men. The inhabitants, for the most part, were probably not willing to risk their precious necks by informing on the well-known characters; and it is not altogether improbable that the pursuers were talking to one of the gang frequently, when inquiring for the rest. At any rate, the murderers of Sheets were as safe from capture as a lion in the labyrinths of Asia, the pursuit of which would be futile of good results, while it might be pregnant with danger. Accordingly the chase was abandoned. The defiers of law were seen no more. Like a swift flying meteor, as it sweeps across the heavens, threatening instant destruction to everything in its path, is soon lost below the horizon, or disappears in mid air, so this daring, reckless, desperate band of men had rushed upon a startled town, accomplished their devilish desires, and as suddenly vanished from sight, to be recognized no more forever.

There can be little doubt that the James Boys were implicated in this affair. Although very soon after the robbery, reports having reached their ears that people generally believed them connected with it, they rode into Kearney, with the avowed intention of shooting the first man who accused them of it. The inhabitants of Kearney, however,

knew their neighbors well enough to keep quiet in their presence; nor, indeed, did many of them care to express themselves positively at any time. Jesse and Frank procured affidavits, in some manner or other, declaring that they were at home during the robbery. Jesse published a letter in which he said that he and Frank would deliver themselves up and submit to a trial, if Governor Craig would guarantee no violence from the mob in Daviess county. Governor Craig examined the evidence thoroughly, and published a letter in which he said that the James Boys were undoubtedly innocent of the charge in this case. The people generally, however, were fully convinced that these leaders of the lawless element in that section were in some way abettors of the crime; and a firm determination was manifested to root out the nest at all hazards. Whether guilty of this or not, the Boys' past record was against them, and they must submit to the natural consequences of their own folly. A reputation is sometimes much sought after, but not always most acceptable when obtained. The reputation of these Boys was not particularly conducive to their happiness. There were times, no doubt, when they would as soon have been without a reputation—times when the comparatively pure thoughts of their childhood came rushing in upon their memory, like the clear, crystal waters of a mountain stream into the angry, turbulent ocean; times when the power to blot out all their hellish deeds with one sweep of a magic brush, and begin life anew, were worth more than the courage and ability to vanquish a nation. Moments in which one week of peaceful, restful life, such as millions of their countrymen

were enjoying, would be a greater delight than the applause of ten thousand characters similar to themselves.



CHAPTER XX.

THE NOTED OUTLAWS IN DANGER—CAPTAIN THOMASON ATTEMPTS THEIR ARREST—DETECTIVES AFTER THEM—EVERY EFFORT FAILS.

Captain Thomason had been an officer in the Confederate army, and for unswerving fidelity to principle and undaunted courage, no man in the State of Missouri surpassed him. He had made his home since the war in Clay county, the rendezvous of the James clan. Time and time again he had expressed his willingness to assist in enforcing the law against the desperadoes; but an opportunity had not presented itself until the Gallatin robbery. Having been sheriff of this county he knew well the haunts of suspicious characters, as also the dangers attached to any attempt at their capture. Believing, however, that Jesse and Frank James were the most dangerous enemies to the community and country at large, he placed himself at the head of a posse of men, and started for the Samuels' residence.

In the meantime his intentions and movements were not unknown to those whom he sought. News had reached the Samuels' residence that he was coming—as news always reached that residence, no one knew how. At any rate, Jesse and Frank thought they would save him the trouble and embarrassment of inquiring for them at the house, so they rode out quite a distance to meet the brave captain and

posse. As soon as the two parties came within range, they opened fire. Crack! crack! went the pistols of a score of Missouri's loyal sons; but the James Boys sat as quietly and unharmed as though no leaden messengers of death were cutting the air about their heads. They came closer and closer. Finally Captain Thomason's horse was shot from under him. Being thus crippled for the fight, and no one else of the party caring to lead in a charge, the two desperadoes were permitted to ride away without injury. So ended another attempt to put shackles on the subjects of this narrative.

Captain Thomason was chagrined at his defeat, but all the more strongly convinced that the James household should be exterminated. Nor did he hesitate to express his conviction. Fearlessly did he accuse Jesse and Frank of many crimes, and constantly urge the necessity of a more determined effort against them. He got down to the bedstock of all the villainy when, in unmeasured terms, he charged old Mrs. Samuels with being deeper in intrigues than her sons. By his unrestrained tongue, she was accused of being the "vilest and most dangerous specimen of masculine femininity" that ever graced or disgraced a civilized community. Nothing was too mean for her to do, he thought. Should the mother cease her relentless goading, the boys would have less incentive to action. Mrs. Samuels heard of these sayings. Immediately she resolved to have satisfaction, and teach the gallant Captain that he must limit his remarks. A horse was brought out, the Doctor helped her into the saddle, and the ten miles of country between the two residences soon separated them no longer.

Arriving at Captain Thomason's house she walked straight in. The family were at the table partaking of their noonday meal. Without apparently noticing the new comer, the Captain continued eating. This was indeed a cool reception, and somewhat dampened the visitor's ardor. However, walking straight up to her accuser, she said: "Sir, I understand that you have called me a——!"

"Yes, madam, I have," said he, "and I now give you to understand that if ever I, or any of my relations are injured by you or yours, in the least thing, I swear before heaven and earth that there shall not be a stone left of your house."

"There won't, hey?" was the reply.

"No ma'am, there won't," continued the Captain, "and if any killing is to be done, it may be well for you to kill all my family, and leave none to avenge the injury."

It was enough. Mrs. Samuels concluded she could possibly serve herself best by immediately returning, which she proceeded forthwith to do. The plucky woman had mistaken her man. She had come to demand satisfaction, but carried away considerable "dissatisfaction."

Detectives from St. Louis and Chicago were beginning to take considerable interest in working up the case of the outlaws by this time. One of these from Chicago visited Kearney, and hired out to a farmer near by, where he remained several weeks, learning all he could about the coming and going of Jesse and Frank, but failed to elicit anything sufficiently positive to warrant a further attempt at their capture. Another from St. Louis walked from a neighboring town with a pack on his back selling needles, pins, etc., etc. He even

visited Dr. Samuels' residence, and took dinner with the family, paying for the same out of his store. Although considerable time was spent in the house, and every conceivable bait presented, the same result followed which had been experienced by his predecessors—nothing could be learned as to the whereabouts of Jesse and Frank. Parties from Daviess county also were active in efforts to ferret out the robbers, and accomplish their capture. The boys were known to be in the county somewhere; but all their schemes to draw information as to their exact location proved futile. Many dollars were spent, and nothing gained. The wily foes to humanity and peace evaded every attempt, and chuckled over their triumph.



CHAPTER XXI.

ANOTHER THRILLING TRAGEDY AT COLUMBIA, KENTUCKY.

Superstitious people are always ready to believe in the assistance of supernatural agencies, when any extraordinary train of events follow in rapid succession. When in the rebellion defeat after defeat followed the efforts of the Northern troops, many good old souls said: "Well, the cause is lost. The *Fates* are against us!" And then when the tide of battle changed, and the Southerners were routed, the cry of victory in the North was heard, and the red, white and blue waved over the fallen ramparts of the Confederacy; then said this same class, "Providence is favoring us. Heaven has decreed that the Union shall be saved."

That may be all true. Heaven may have decreed thus, but had the South possessed more money, soldiers, ammunition and ability than could have been mustered among their Northern brethren, the victory would have gone to the Confederacy. As certainly as the sum of the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, so surely will the strict obedience to natural law bring success. Gen. Grant captured Vicksburg by means of a clear head and persistent effort. "Accidental" successes are scarce. Brains and courage help men more than the fates. This is the rational way to look at the remarkable escapes of Jesse and Frank James. They always had well matured plans before making an attack. Everybody in the

neighborhood was not apprised of their presence two or three days beforehand. When people generally thought them in Kentucky they were most likely to be in Missouri; when the detectives were after them in New York, they suddenly turned up down in Texas. Shrewd scheming kept them out of the hands of the law. They were never idle. Although unseen, they were always digging. They studied their own resources. They made themselves acquainted with all the possibilities and probabilities of a raid. No deed of darkness was ever committed by them voluntarily without having prearranged a sure retreat. No, if these desperate men had startled fifty million people with their audacious escapades, and still walked the earth uncaught, it was not either fortune, Providence, or the devil that carried them through, but cool thought and fiery execution. This was the case in the robbery about to be related.

Kentucky was again to be the scene of action, and Columbia, Adair county, the particular place. It was a village of no great pretensions, and yet enjoying an air of peace and prosperity. Many of its inhabitants had fought in the late war, but had settled down to regain what they had lost. Especially quiet and peaceful appeared the town upon the 29th of April, 1872. Springtime had come, the flowers were casting their sweet fragrance over all that beautiful region; while the birds welcomed in their new found joys with gladsome song. Near the town were men in the field getting in their crops, plowing, harrowing, planting, in short, attending to the ordinary affairs of farm life. In the village all was quiet. Not very much noted for their "push and

drive," these Southern gentlemen were not desirous of any great activity upon the day in question. Scarcely any building was going on in the place, and trade was stagnant. The farmers were too busy to come to town, while the townsfolk were not particularly anxious for their presence and extra duties. At such a time as this, and about two o'clock in the afternoon of the aforementioned day, five men might have been seen entering the village of Columbia. They did not come from the same direction, however. Three came in by one road, while the other two appeared at the other end of the town. Of course no suspicion was aroused in this way, and the two companies passed along, almost unnoticed. There was nothing extraordinary in the appearance of their attire or manner—all wore broad-rimmed hats, as was customary, and rode along without exchanging a word. As they came near each other their horses' heads were all turned down the main street, and in a few moments they had pulled up and dismounted at the bank. Three of the party immediately strode into the bank, while the remaining two held the horses. This excited suspicion in the minds of a few passers-by, and immediately the alarm was given that a gang of robbers had entered the bank, and were at that moment rifling the safe and drawers. This was verified a moment later by hearing pistol-shots within the bank. Several men started to the rescue, but the desperadoes who were holding the horses at once began a fire upon every one who appeared. With terrible threats, accompanied with the most appalling oaths, the robbers on the outside frightened the populace, and literally cleared the streets.

In the meantime, the three who entered the bank found Mr. R. A. C. Martin, the cashier, Mr. Garnet, a citizen, and two other gentlemen quietly conversing on the topics of the day. Immediately these gentlemen were covered with revolvers, and ordered to hold up their hands. Mr. Garnet, being slow to obey, narrowly escaped being shot through the head, as one of the desperadoes pulled the trigger, but missed his game by Mr. Garnet knocking the pistol to one side slightly. No more firing was done then, as it was not desired to awake the town'sfolks until the booty was captured.

One of the outlaws stepped up to the cashier, and pointing his pistol at him, said: "Give us the keys to that safe!"

Mr. Martin replied, "I shall not, sir."

"Then, d——n you," replied the robber, "I'll blow your brains out. Quick! I mean business!"

The brave cashier uttered his last words when he answered: "I shall never do it; I will die—" But as he said this last word, the awful looking mouth of the pistol belched forth its death-dealing load, and heroic Mr. Martin fell to the floor, a lifeless corpse. Without the loss of a moment's time the murderer began his plunder, but was badly foiled in trying to unlock the combination lock. The other men in the meantime had a murderous looking revolver pointing at them, while the individual who held it, reminded them that they were in the same danger as their dead companion, and did they "stir a peg," more brains would be scattered over the floor.

Having put all the valuables that could be found in a sack, the three withdrew from the bank and mounted their horses,

One of them threw the sack over his saddle in front of him, and they started off, cursing, yelling, threatening and shooting—the monarchs of all they surveyed, and the terror of all who saw them.

Mr. Martin, the murdered cashier, was a gentleman of high repute. He was not only loved and respected by the people of Columbia, but by a large circle of friends all over Kentucky. At the time of his death he was a member of the Kentucky Legislature, and stood among the first in importance. So by killing Mr. Martin the desperadoes had wounded hundreds of others who would use every means in their power to hunt them down. Columbia had been taken by surprise. A few bold characters, who show they are not afraid of death, can inspire such fear in an entire community sometimes as to paralyze all their energies. Mediæval history tells of a youthful band of warriors who went out to meet ten times their number in battle. The commander of the larger force heard of the meager number that was coming to meet him, and disdained to have a fight with such a crew. He sent a messenger to them, saying: "I have three thousand men. You have but a mere handful. If you will surrender quietly you and yours shall be treated well. If not, you shall be swept away like a whirlwind." The message was delivered. Immediately the youthful captain said to one of his men: "Take this dagger and plunge it into your heart." The soldier did as he was bidden. Again the captain said to another, "Go and leap into yon abyss." The order was obeyed. "Now," said the captain to the messenger, "go back. Tell your commander what you have seen,

And tell him that three hundred as brave as these and as regardless of life, stand ready to meet all who may come." The messenger hurried back, related what he had seen, and immediately gathering up the baggage, the army of three thousand fled from the vicinity of such men, and never after returned.

So in this case. The people of Columbia were afraid to move a hand because the robbers were not afraid. But as soon as all the terrible news reached their ears—when they looked upon the bloody corpse of their gallant and faithful friend—a frenzy took possession of the people. Men swore they would never sleep or eat till the wretches were dead. A band well equipped and well armed was soon formed. Speedy farewells were taken of their friends, and the pursuers dashed out of the city. The robbers were traced here and there. Now they were close upon them; now they could not be heard of. Still the determined band of pursuers kept after them. Finally, in Fentress county, Tennessee, among the mountains, one of the robbers by the name of Saunders, was wounded and captured. The pursuit was at length given up, as all trace of the others was lost. Saunders was really the notorious Bill Longley, one of the bosom friends of Jesse and Frank James. They had met him in Texas, and the three had been boon companions ever since. It was well known that this Longley was with the James gang. Hence it appeared conclusive evidence of their connection with the tragedy. It is also now pretty well established that Frank James killed the cashier, while Jesse terrified the crowd outside,

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BOYS AND CIVILIZATION.

Although spending most of their time on the plains of Texas, in the forests of Missouri, or beyond the borders of civilization, the James Boys enjoyed seasons of "high life" in the centers of our population. They were uneasy. Wild, dashing, reckless living charmed them more than any other kind of existence; yet even that became dull and monotonous at times. As a rule they cared little for society, although Jesse could entertain a crowd with his wit and audacity as well as the best. Frank was particularly reticent. He enjoyed watching others at games and amusements, more than taking part himself. Both were cautious. A close observer would have noticed that when either spoke there was a restraint upon his tongue, and he watched guardedly those with whom he conversed. A constant study of human nature, and quick perceptive faculties enabled them to see through almost any disguise, and discover treachery. They were not without some culture, either. The Grand Pacific, at Chicago, or the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, contained no guests too refined or cultured to enjoy descriptions of sea voyages and travels by Jesse James.

They had within them the nature of their mother, but also that of their father. Not wholly illiterate when they left home, their mingling with all classes of men had been an

education to their ready minds, which assisted wherever they went. When fired with excitement and revenge, they were like wild beasts—heartless, cold-blooded, and desperate. When squandering the treasures of Russellville, Gallatin or Columbia, at fashionable resorts or in the cities, they were as gentle and humane, apparently, as any about them. Total abstinence was an established rule of their lives. No amount of persuasion could induce either to touch a glass of intoxicating liquors—an example that could be profitably followed by many considering themselves better men.

It is said that while Pinkerton's detectives were searching every nook and corner of Clay county, Missouri, for the outlaws, they were smoking Havana cigars and eating delicacies at the Grand Pacific in Chicago. And while a company of soldiers were scouring Missouri for them, Jesse and Frank were listening to Booth in New York. Like the Dutchman's flea, when you put your hand on them they are not there. Capable of assuming any character, and scarcely ever living under the same name three months at a time, they need by no means remain in exile. Although the outlaw Jesse James had been proscribed, yet the gentleman from London, Charles Sprague, was respected by all who knew him. At one time a jolly, whole-souled farmer from an unknown county in Illinois, at another, a merchant from Nebraska in the city purchasing goods. It is related that the day following the Corydon robbery, in which Jesse James had acted a conspicuous part, after spending the night in a thicket near by, he was just emerging into the road, with a granger's suit on, when he beheld two men a distance off

coming toward him. From their appearance he concluded they were after him. So, instead of going off in the direction he had intended, he turned toward the horsemen and rode along to meet them. Coming up to them he assumed the air of an illiterate farmer, and addressed them as follows:

“Hello, friends, whar are you goin’?”

“We do not know exactly, sir,” was the reply.

“Wall, that’s square. But say, yer ’onerable, upright men, ain’t you?”

“Well, my friend, do we look like rogues?” answered one of the gentlemen.

“No, you don’t, strangers,” said the granger, “an’ you’ll ’xcuse me fur axin you, but you see I am on the hunt for hoss thieves, an’ am goin to put that question to every coon I meet, an’ ef thar is a shadder of ’spicion, these here weapons will learn them not to steal another hoss.”

“Where are you from?” said one of the robber hunters, for they really were a couple of the party who started in search of the desperadoes. “Where were the horses stolen? We have heard nothing about it.”

“Way down on the Noderway. Hevn’t you heern of the Noderway bottom? Well, them durned whelps jist walked down thar the othar night and toted off two of the best animils in the hull bottom. This ’ere is a colt of one of the mars, though you can’t tell nothin’ ’bout this critter now, she’s so near tuckered out. I’ve been ridin’ two days as fast as Dolly’s legs could cerry me, an’ I’m most afeard they’ll give out ’fore long. But look ’yur, strangers, mayn’t I ax you whar you’re goin’?”

"We were on the search for some villains that robbed Corydon bank yesterday. Have you seen any one on the road this morning?"

The granger scratched his head a moment, then as if suddenly remembering having seen some one, he said:

"By jingo, I did see four tough lookin' chaps 'bout two hours ago, an' they were ridin' like blixen."

"How far from here do you suppose they were?" asked one of the hunters eagerly.

"Wall, I've rid purty fast. Lesse; it's 'bout twelve mile, strangers, an' ef they hev rid as fast as me, ther' is anyhow twenty-five mile atwixt us."

After a short consultation, the gentlemen of Corydon inquired whether he was sure there was four, and what they looked like. To which our verdant tiller of the "Noderway bottom" answered:

"Yas, ther' was four, and they was mean lookin' jakes, too. I kinder thought they might be hoss thieves, but when I put the thing to one of 'em the hull four glared at me in sich a way, an' let out sich a volley of cussin' that I did not keer much to tackle 'em. I've got good weepsons, but they pulled out some ones as big as two of mine, an' told me to git, I'm not a coward, uther, but I did git when they told me, an' I'd 'vise you fellers to git sum reinforcements ef yer goin' to take 'em in."

"We have two more men behind us a little piece, who will shortly be along. And now, friend, can't you favor us with your assistance? This country should be rid of these desperate characters at once, and it is quite probable you have

seen the very parties for whom we are looking. Come on, and perhaps these may also be your horse thieves.”

“My hoss is purty nigh tuckered,” said the rustic, “but ef you won’t ride too fast, I b’leve I will go with you. This thing of huntin’ hoss thieves all ’lone is not the pleasantest thing a feller kin do.”

So this audacious specimen of the *genus homo* rode along with the very men who were seeking his head, until they reached a railroad station. Here, pretending that his horse could go no farther, and that they might look for him as soon as he could travel, Jesse stopped. It was not long before a train came along. This he boarded, and before another sun had set, was safely ensconced in the house of a friend four hundred miles away.

Jesse was the cleverest one of the gang. He could make the best appearance, and assume the most various characters. It was fun for him. To be a grain merchant from Wichita, Kan., and be courted by the commission merchants and others at St. Louis and Chicago, was not all an objectionable relation for Jesse. And it is actually true that he was known for many months in St. Louis as “Mr. Campbell, a wealthy grain dealer of Kansas.” Under such a cognomen he paid regular visits to ’Change, conversed and became intimate with many of the leading business men of the city. In company with one of these gentlemen he visited the Four Courts one day, where there was more than one who would have given a good deal to have recognized him.

His associates were of the very best at these times. He gave the gambling dens a wide berth as a rule, although at

times he would engage in a game of cards. But the elements of refinement which were not altogether crushed out, and which under different training might have made of him a shining light in society, caused him to prefer the society of well bred and even cultured people to others of the baser sort.

His "savings" enabled him to live in luxury, to be known as a gentleman carrying a heavy bank account, and indeed, a very proper individual to take the hand of some fair daughter of the upper ten.



CHAPTER XXIII.

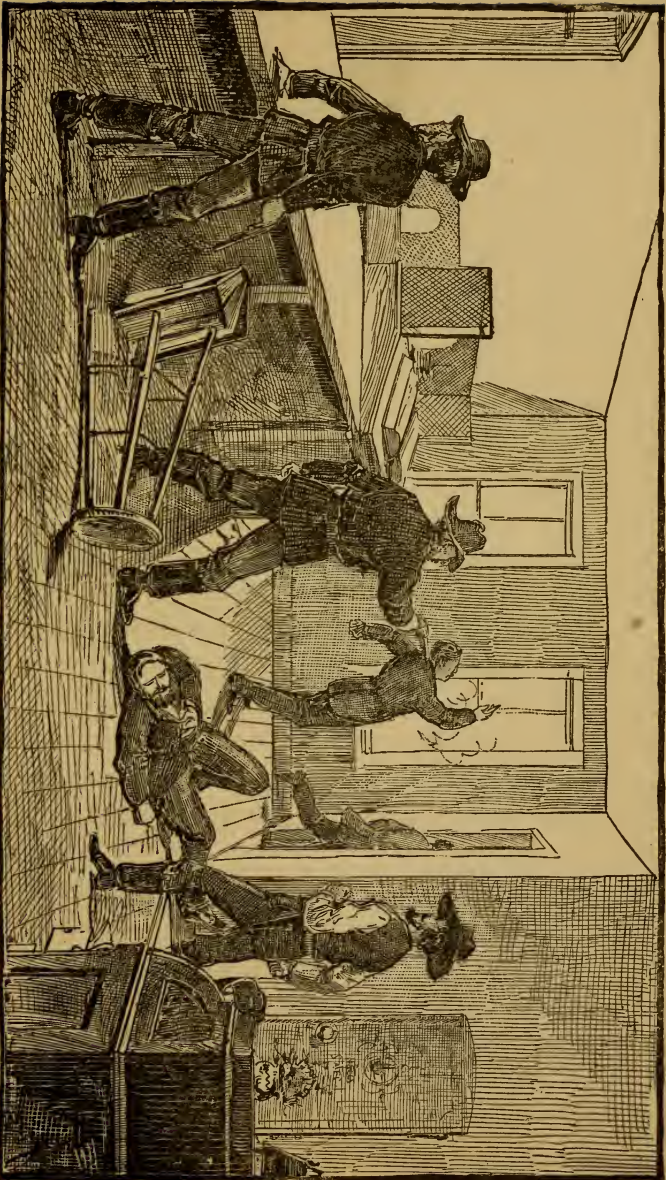
THE ROBBERS IN IOWA.

On the 28th of June, 1873, the people of Iowa and the entire country were again startled by another bold and successful raid upon a bank, in open daylight. The scene of action this time was a town of about eight hundred inhabitants—Corydon, Wayne county, Iowa. At the time mentioned this place enjoyed a lively trade. Its business was excellent, and a great deal of money changed hands here, which, for the most part, finally found a resting place in the bank. At this time of the year the farmers were all busy with their harvest, which had just begun. In the middle of the day very few came to town, generally waiting until evening to attend to such shopping as was necessary. Everything was hushed and still—scarcely a breeze blowing, or a friendly cloud to be seen. Old weather prophets said there was going to be a storm. They were right, but a different kind of a storm from what they expected. Suddenly there appeared, as if by magic, a squad of armed horsemen at the entrance of the town. Slowly they rode along, apparently having ridden a long distance, and very tired. A little boy out in the yard ran in and told his mother that “some awful lookin’ mens” were passing by. A carpenter stopped his work and gazed curiously at the strangers, remarking to himself that they looked like “Missouri Bushwhackers.” But the men rode on. The loafers on the corners

watched them eagerly for lack of something else to do, while two or three clerks made sport of their uncouth and ill-mannered appearance. Still the men rode on. Apparently careless and unconcerned regarding the opinions of any one around them, they nevertheless were watching closely the movements of all on the street. Suddenly, as though guided by a single impulse, they turned their horses' heads at a sharp angle and rode straight up to the bank. As in the other instances related in these pages three of the party dismounted quickly and entered the bank with pistols in hand, while the remainder staid outside and held the horses. In the bank were the cashier and two friends, who, taking in the situation at a glance, and vividly remembering the fate of Captain Sheets and R. A. C. Martin, offered no resistance to the intruders. One man, who seemed to be an old hand at the business, kept the cashier and his friends perfectly quiet by holding two dangerous looking dragoon pistols uncomfortably close to their craniums. While the other two were ransacking the safe, and scraping into a sack all papers and valuables that could be found, the guard jested about his good marksmanship, offering to bet that he could shoot a button off every time.

By the time the robbers had finished their work and were ready to leave with their booty, the town had been fully aroused, and the desperadoes upon the outside were having all they wanted to keep the mob indoors. However, the three came out, threw their sack over one of the horses, mounted, and with terrible oaths dashed out of the village.

Of course after thirty minutes or an hour had sped away,



INTERIOR SCENE OF BANK ROBBERY.

pursuers were ready and equipped for the capture. But a safe retreat had been prepared. These men who had risked their lives were not foolish enough to be caught when given an hour's advance. The country was searched thoroughly, suspicion cast upon those who knew nothing about it, but the spoils and the robbers were never more heard of.

Who were they? Surely the men who robbed Gallatin, Russellville, and Columbia, could not have gotten away up in Iowa! And yet people said the plan was the same. The execution of it the same. The number of men the same. The description of the robbers almost identical, except in apparel. But there were hundreds of miles separating the various points. Strangers would not enter a strange town and commit such a deed. They would remain where they were acquainted with the surroundings, and had safe retreats. All this was said, and the friends of the Jameses and Younger Brothers insisted that they were not connected with any of these robberies, especially the last. Perhaps not, but Jesse James and his associates enjoyed the results of the raid all the same. In fact, there is scarcely a shadow of doubt, taking all the evidence which can be obtained, that these very outlaws figured in each of the robberies mentioned. A line of communication was kept up constantly between the James Boys and Younger Brothers; and whenever one found a place to make a "strike," the others were on hand without delay. Friends they could always find where plenty of money was forthcoming. Nor were they so foolish as to travel together; nearly always a distance apart from each other, yet always ready to assist the other on a moment's notice. In this way

they could visit a community, lay their plans, prepare for emergencies, perhaps remain around for a week previous to the culmination of their schemes, and nobody ever see a suspicious looking character in the neighborhood.



CHAPTER XXIV.

AT KANSAS CITY FAIR.

It is October. The leaves of autumn have not yet begun to fall in Southern Missouri and Kansas. The golden harvests of a prosperous year have all been garnered, the work of the summer about completed, and everybody is willing to take a rest for a few days. At this auspicious period the managers of the Kansas City Fair Association had arranged a week's entertainment and sight-seeing. Large posters had been sent all over the adjoining country. There would be Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and perhaps several other States represented. It is a great thing in these Western States to attend one of these magnificent displays. Every department of human activity almost, is represented. The artizan, the merchant, the stock dealer, the agriculturist, the horticulturist — every species of industry known to the most enlightened people on the face of the globe, can here be seen. Sporting men come to win races; farmers come to display their grains and fruits; manufacturers come to advertise their inventions and show their gold medals; lovers of horse flesh come to view the best specimens of every stock; rogues come to swindle, gentlemen to be entertained, women to see each other and the babies, while young men and maidens usually wait for this season as the most favorable moment in which to settle their "future happiness."

The fair at Kansas was to excel anything ever arranged west of St. Louis—and it did. The city began to swarm with human beings and animals upon the first day. Merchants were delighted, and the managers felt like millionaires.

Upon the most auspicious day of all this prosperous week there must have been twenty thousand people present. Mr. Ford, a journalist of Kansas City, had charge of the money box at the passenger gate. He was sitting unoccupied for a moment in the forenoon, when a stranger stepped up to him and said:

“You have a good deal of money in that box.”

“Yes,” was the reply, “a good deal, and there will be lots more before night.”

“What if the James Boys should come along and demand it?” said the stranger.

“They wouldn’t get it without a fight,” replied the gentleman. “They might get it, but somebody would be killed before they did.”

“You would fight for it, even if you knew it was the James Boys, would you?” said the man.

“Of course I would,” answered Mr. Ford. “No man living could take this box without a struggle.”

The stranger stood a moment and looked at the gate-keeper in silence, eyeing him sharply, and then without further remark, walked away.

Mr. Ford was slightly suspicious at the time, especially since he had seen Frank James once upon a time, and this party looked very much like him. Before the man had disappeared from sight, the keeper of the “pool stand” was

positive he had been talking with the notorious outlaw. However, another rush of pedestrians coming up just then, all thought of the words just spoken and the man who had uttered them was swept away, and not again did they return until evening, when they were to flash over his mind with terrible significance.

The heterogeneous mass of the people were gathered around the race track. Old Sol was just casting his last lurid glances back upon the busy scene, as though loth to leave so interesting a spectacle. The day's work and play were nearly done, and the gate receipts about all in. Every neck was stretched, watching the flying steeds upon the race course, while the breathless silence of one moment and loud cheering of the next, showed full well the entire absorption of every one in the scene before them. Even the pool keeper was trying to look over a myriad of heads in a vain attempt to watch the movements of the flying steeds. Just at this moment a sound of horse's hoofs rattling down the road was heard. In a moment seven brigandish-looking horsemen stopped short at the gate. A few of the spectators saw them; but the majority was not aware of their presence. The gate-keeper felt a peculiar thrill permeate his every portion, but before a word could be uttered, or assistance called, two of the heathenish-looking men were by his side with cocked pistols.

"Not a word," said one of the desperado "or I'll blow your brains out."

While one of the robbers thus held his revolver at the head of Mr. Ford, the other one seized the money box, handed it to another, the two mounted, and with a tremen-

dous volley from their dragoon pistols, and a triumphant shout, the desperate band of outlaws dashed madly out of sight.

Eight or nine thousand dollars were in the box. Twenty thousand people in the very presence of such a scene, and yet away go the participants! Many hundreds stood looking in blank amazement; perhaps some who had fought with Quantrell, and recognized some of their old comrades in the squad. No doubt a few had witnessed the Gallatin raid, and who now thought that these men were dressed very much the same as the desperadoes they had seen, and one or two of their faces even looked familiar.

When the startled crowd could collect their senses, cries of "Police! police!" "Robbers! robbers!" "Catch 'em," etc., etc., but nobody started in pursuit. As soon as the officers of the law, who are generally some place else when needed speedily, discovered what was the matter, a hot pursuit was begun. Fleet horses were brought into requisition. Characters as desperate as the pursued joined in the chase. Men and women climbed upon the fence and wagons, while a few gained the roof of several of the buildings, where with field glasses they watched eagerly the race. If they had been absorbed a moment before by the flying steeds, whose owners were seeking simply money, the absorption now was in another race, where not only the almighty dollar was the reward to the victor, but perhaps life. At first glimpses of the robbers could be gained by means of good glasses; but soon they were lost to view. Their horses were evidently of good blood, and the riders knew how to make the best of

them. The pursuers sped on and on, looking to the right and left as they went, in a vain attempt to catch a glimpse of the birds who had flown. The same old story. After hours and even days of searching, the officers returned without their prey, and people marveled. A bold deed, indeed, and \$9,000 captured in the face of twice that number of people! Who could have the courage? who plan so successful a retreat? There is but one answer—Jesse and Frank James, assisted by their boon companions, the Youngers. Besides, several parties, knowing the outlaws, had seen them in Kansas City that day. These testimonies, together with that of Mr. Ford, the gatekeeper, and the execution of the deed, make it beyond dispute that the aforesaid individuals stole the money box at the Kansas City Fair.



CHAPTER XXV.

ST. GENEVIEVE RAIDED.

When the French Catholics who braved the perils of the unknown Mississippi Valley, were planting villages over Illinois, Indiana and States farther east, a few of their number were courageous enough to even paddle their rafts across the Father of Waters and through Missouri and Iowa, to leave footprints of civilization. One of these beacon lights set up in the dark wilderness of barbarism was St. Genevieve, Missouri. Although oft attacked by savages and wild beasts, its inhabitants held their ground, and St. Genevieve lived on to tell future generations what brave hearts and strong arms could accomplish for civilization. Simple, pious, and humane, its founders were. For a half of a century there was not a lawsuit, nor scarcely a ripple in the peaceful flow of its social life. Under such influences its second and third generations grew up. Nor did they depart in the least from the spirit of the fathers. While the white men had now planted homes, towns and even cities around them, and the busy world was becoming busier; the physical warfare was giving place to mental warfare; gold, gold, was the absorbing thought which was keeping the surging masses stirred up like the molecules of boiling water; the people of St. Genevieve remained quiet, inoffensive, and prosperous. A Savings Association had been formed to which nearly every one in the place belonged. All of the hard-earned dol-

lars of one hundred and twenty-five years was stowed away in this treasury. The funds had been deposited in the bank for safe keeping—how safe they were kept we shall now proceed to relate.

It was a lovely day in May. All nature seemed jubilant over the departure of winter, and the coming of spring. School children were hurrying along the streets, desiring to be freed from the prison life of a schoolroom, to join their voices in the general anthem of praise going up from every quarter. The clock had just struck nine. Nothing unusual about that. No one paid particular heed to the language of the clock except three individuals—Mr. O. D. Harris, the bank cashier, and two strangers who were standing on a street corner. Mr. Harris put on his hat, bade his wife good-bye, and started for his day's work. At the same time the two villainous looking strangers glanced at each other significantly, and one said: "That's the time. We'll just about strike him." The other nodded, and the two walked leisurely toward the bank. As Mr. Harris arrived at the door, he somehow felt a slight hesitancy about unlocking it—perhaps it was because he noticed near him on the walk a couple of brigandish fellows who were apparently waiting uneasily for some one. But just then the son of General Rozier came up. The young man's father was president of the bank, and had sent his son down to attend to some little matter until he should come.

The cashier and Mr. Rozier opened the door and walked in, not noticing that they were immediately followed by the two ruffians on the walk. In fact, the first intimation which Mr. Harris had of their undesirable nearness was given by some

one behind with the words: "Surrender, d—n you!" Starting to turn round the cashier was forcibly reminded of the necessity of looking straight, since an ugly, open-mouthed navy repeater struck against each side of his head. Mr. Harris concluded to surrender. He concluded to surrender quicker than the Confederate commander of Vicksburg. He felt no disposition to stand a siege—his resources were gone, his artillery silenced, his country needed him elsewhere—at any rate, he felt that if he didn't capitulate he would be decapitated. So he answered the robber that he would. Young Rozier had whirled about when he heard the command, only to see a similar weapon of warfare pointing straight at him. The party holding it glared at him and said: "Silence, you d—d little rat, or I'll put you where you can't tell any tales."

"Why—why—what for?" answered the terrified youth.

"Dry up! Not a word! Or I'll stop your blabbing d—d quick."

But the young man lacked the discrimination of the cashier. At any rate, he didn't consider it wise to surrender his prospects for living into the hands of such tough-looking customers. So without another word, and before the desperado realized it, he jumped out of the room and ran like a good fellow. As he did so his temporary and self-installed guardian sent a messenger after him which well nigh cost the young man his life. The bullet cut through the clothes on his shoulder and burned the flesh slightly. However, the game was good, and it didn't take many minutes to awaken the slumbering city. One gentleman across the street from the bank saw the robber shoot, and also the predicament of the

cashier. He was about to rush across to the rescue, when his wife caught him and pleaded with him not to sacrifice his life—as he most assuredly would have done.

After his futile attempt to stop Rozier the robber returned to assist in gathering in the spoils.

“Open that safe!” growled one of the raiders to Mr. Harris, “quick!”

“Of course, sir,” said the cashier, “my life is worth more than a few dollars.”

The two then proceeded to rifle the safe, and \$3,600 was found in one package, while a box containing four or five hundred dollars in gold coin was emptied into the sack.

Hearing the citizens making considerable of a clamor outside, and thinking that there might be more money in immediately departing than remaining longer, the robbers, commanding Mr. Harris to come along with them, left the field of plunder, and walked rapidly down the street. The presence of the cashier of course kept the citizens from firing at them, while a sufficient number had not collected as yet, to attempt an arrest. Quite a crowd of non-dangerous individuals, such as women, children, and one or two loafers, followed them at a respectful distance. To these the brigands cried: “Hurrah for Sam Hildebrand!”

After moving down the street for a short distance the trio came upon two more of their gang, who were holding four superb horses. One of the men perceiving a beautiful gold chain dangling from the vest of their prisoner, concluded something had been overlooked, so proceeded to relieve the owner of his valuable property,

Just as they were mounting, an accident befell them. One of their horses broke loose and ran off a short distance. This might have placed some men in a critical condition. But not so these dare devil outlaws. They saw an old German farmer driving along near them. He could catch the horse. Brandishing their revolvers, and cursing vigorously, the bandits ordered the German to do so. The old gentleman felt impelled to obey those weird-looking desperadoes, so the escaped steed was caught and returned to the band. Then with a loud yell of defiance at the approaching mob of citizens, and leaving Mr. Harris standing upon the pavement, the four dashed away.

Pursuit was begun at once. About a dozen men started after them before they were out of sight, and soon overtook them. But they had under-estimated the characters of such men. The four turned upon their pursuers and fired volley after volley into their ranks so rapidly that the twelve fled for their lives. The vanquished dozen returning to the city, another and larger posse started out, but it was impossible to come up with them, or even to discover their whereabouts. There was no difficulty in tracking them for a distance, but finally every vestige of their presence was lost. The game had flown.

An old farmer living near St. Genevieve was on his way to town this eventful morning of the 27th of May, when he met a party of rough looking horsemen riding at full speed. A halt was called as they reached the farmer, which didn't add any particular pleasure to the old gentleman's reverie.

"Where are you going, Dutchy?" said one of the gang.

“Wake up, or you may lose the top of your head,” said another.

“Well, friends, I don’t know that it is any of your business where I am going, but I started for St. Genevieve,” replied the old man.

“Be careful, old bald-head,” said the spokesman, “do you see this?” and he pointed a murderous-looking dragoon pistol at the wayfarer. Then, changing his tone somewhat, he continued: “When you get into St. Genevieve just step around to the bank and give ’em all my regards, will you? Tell ’em we’re coming back some day and will check out. The accounts are a little in our favor, but if you look along the road as you go in, you will find some papers which may help to balance them.” And the horsemen put spurs to their horses and dashed off, leaving the bewildered rustic sitting on his wagon gazing after them. Sure enough, before reaching the city limits, the farmer found a number of papers scattered along the road, which had been deposited by the county officials, and which were of no value whatever to any one but the owners. These the large-hearted purloiners of poor men’s savings had mercifully cast away, much to the gratification of those immediately concerned.

But who are the bandits? Where dwells a band of four men brave enough to enter a city of three thousand souls; enter it in broad daylight, and when everything was astir; in the face of all her citizens dare to walk up the principal street, to the most business part of that street, and commit such a deed? Never had there been such a scene in St. Genevieve—never such a bold defiance of men and law in the history of

America. Gallatin, Russellville, Columbia, and Corydon had been treated similarly, it is true, but these were towns of less than one-third the population of St. Genevieve. The robbers certainly lived in Missouri, because most of the deeds had been committed there. Was it Sam Hildebrand and company? Some people thought so then, and even several of the papers asserted it, but Sam Hildebrand's bones were resting quietly in the graveyard at this time. Mr. Harris went to St. Louis immediately after the stealing, and there met Gen. Rozier, who had been in attendance upon the State Board of Equalization, at that time in session in Jefferson City. The matter was thoroughly discussed, detectives employed, and every effort made to capture the desperadoes. So determined was the effort for awhile, that people lived in hope of a final culmination to the long and desperate struggle of law and order against outlawry and murder. The efforts, however, proved as futile as former ones, except, perhaps, to pretty well establish the fact that Jesse and Frank James were two of the successful raiders. Their friends, as usual, denied emphatically any connection with the deed on the part of the Boys, but their denials were as useless as the endeavors to capture the brigands.

It is somewhat strange that during all these years there would still be some who would not believe for a moment that the James Boys were capable of such deeds. It was readily admitted that Jesse and Frank would fight and kill if necessary, but that they were too honest to steal. The faith in their integrity, possibly, was due largely to the high regard that was entertained for their father. He had been a man

of unimpeachable life. His friends had been legion, his enemies few. And no doubt his sons had a degree of uprightness in their characters when the war broke out, but certainly not very much of it remained after the varied scenes of ten years from that date. It is true, they did not stoop to petty thefts—they struck for larger game. But money they must have, and no men of their type were so capable to get it, and get it in abundance, as they.

To say that many of the depredations were planned by the Jameses and not executed by them, is certainly to speak without any knowledge of their natures. Risk and danger are what they courted. An opportunity to use their unerring revolvers and strike terror to the hearts of a multitude by their audacity, was the joy of their lives. Quantrell had not trained them to lie still while their comrades did the bloody work. No, if Jesse and Frank James had anything at all to do with these robberies—and they did—beyond a doubt they took the leading *role*.



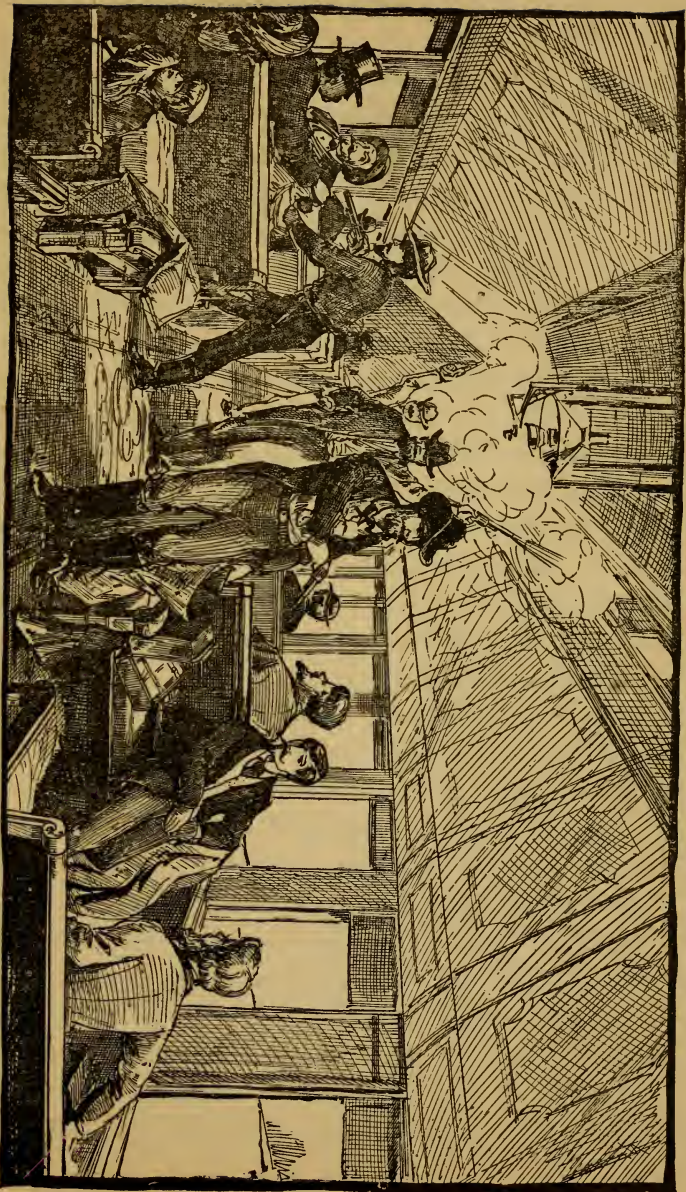
CHAPTER XXVI.

In the semi-civilized days of every country there has ever been very little safety accorded to travelers. For years after the Atlantic slope had been settled, and even large and flourishing cities had sprung up, men and women who dared to venture beyond the Alleghanies, toward the great West, were almost sure to meet with one or two bands of highwaymen before reaching their journey's end. A great deal of traveling was done in those days in large, close carriages. The women and children usually occupied the interior of the vehicle, while the men sat upon the outside, ready for emergencies. Many a pioneer has defended his treasures in this way at the peril and often loss, of his life. The robbers were not often courageous enough to attack a number of emigrants together, but usually discovered the strength of each victim previous to the onslaught. Are there not many who read these pages that can vividly remember such dangers as these? How the wife would strap the belt of gold around her waist, out of sight, or bury the buckskin bag in the unfathomable depths of her bosom, when starting upon a journey, not forgetting to carry a revolver or shot gun, either? These were days of peril to single wayfarers. But as the march of civilization was heard across those eastern hills, and the cabins of sturdy settlers began to dot the country all along the road, highway robbery diminished in these regions altogether.

So every country on the face of the globe has had its petty

thieves and robbers. A few have been infested with bands that apparently feared neither man nor devil. Old England has been thrilled by the deeds and exploits of Duvall and Sheppard, while the "Wild Boar of Ardeennes" has proven that a man can be even an outlawed nobleman, and still maintain much of the honor attaching itself to such a character when favored by government. Most of the bandits and brigands, however, and all of the minor highwaymen, of whom history tells us, have been brave when they were in the majority, or held their victims at a disadvantage. But perhaps no land under the sun has ever seen such men as Jesse and Frank James. Men who would not stoop to rob a house, stop a single traveler, deprive a poor man of his money, or deceive a friend. Men who are as wise as serpents and as brave as lions. Men as strong in their friendships as they are bitter in their hatred. Brigands, indeed, but gentlemen when they chose to be. Perhaps no nation is capable of producing such fiery characters as the United States. While their production is by no means a glory to the nation, yet others have lived with greater disgrace. May they not be said to be characteristically American in many particulars? Impulsive, yet clear-headed; revengeful, yet scarcely vindictive; defying established law, yet true to a law of their own; the most notorious desperadoes within our borders, yet still clinging to the hope that their claims to citizenship may not be entirely swept from their grasp.

But if the people of this country had stood in amazement at the unprecedented daring displayed by these daylight bandits in robbing banks of their treasures, a greater manifes-



INTERIOR TRAIN ROBBERY.

tation of that spirit awaited them. This time the scene was to be on a railroad train filled with passengers. After the St. Genevieve robbery the outlaws rested on their oars "a spell." The search for them had begun and well nigh ended before they appear again upon the stage of action. But, as still water runs deep, the silence maintained by our friends of unknown haunts was more fraught with devilment than disastrous action. A plan was conceived and matured, during this interval, to waylay a train on the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Road. Such a thing was almost, if not quite, unknown at that time. Trains had been "ditched" by villains expecting to get some of the spoils, but to plunder a train had never been attempted. The scene of the disaster was to be about fourteen miles east of Council Bluffs. The parties to accomplish the deed were—well, about a week previous to the robbery, Jesse James, Frank James, Jim Younger, Cole Younger and a desperado by the name of Robert Moore, met in secret conclave in Jackson county, Missouri. No one outside of that company knoweth the exact proceedings of that conference. But it is known that the first thing settled was that a railway train should be "dumped." The second question before the assembly of notables was, "Where shall it be?" Moore said he knew of a good place on the Hannibal & St. Joe road. That there were "lots of clinkers went over that road," and that they could easily get back to their old stamping grounds. This was not received with favor by our wary friends, the Jameses. Other routes were proposed, but finally it was agreed to pay their respects to Iowa, where there would be plenty of "black abolitionists" to fight. Jesse said things

were getting pretty warm for them in Western Missouri, and he "didn't want any more devilment kicked up so near the nest." Accordingly, after minutely describing the point for meeting, and exactly determining the time, the party broke up in twos. One couple was a pair of rusty looking farmers when they took their departure from the house in Clay county. The second pair came out with plug hats, broadcloth suits and heavy gold watch chains, while the odd chap was dressed in a business suit, and wore a long beard. The three parties took different routes. Nor did they meet again until the 20th day of July. The rendezvous, pre-arranged, was not far from the line of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, in a thick wood. Here the robbers met, as before stated, on the night of the 20th, after the sable goddess of night had thrown her mantle over all nature and thereby precluded the possibility of the outlaws being watched. They came into camp as they had started out—in pairs, and from different points of the compass. There was a hearty hand shaking, jovial remarks about each other's appearance, and the five weary travelers laid down to rest. Two of the party next day surveyed the situation. They found a most excellent place for their black deed about three miles from the camp. A ditch of about four feet bordered the road bed here, while a patch of woods near by would assist their escape. A sharp curve near the place selected made it impossible for the engineer to see more than one hundred and fifty feet ahead.

To this place these desperate characters repaired on the night of the twenty-first. At three o'clock in the morning the Eastern bound train would be along. That was the one

for their purpose. "Western trains don't carry the rocks," said Cole Younger. Eastern trains, coming from the gold regions of the great West usually had on board, not only passengers who carried wealth in their pockets, but, as a rule, some bricks from the mines. Besides, this hour was a very appropriate one. All on board would be wrapped in the arms of Morpheus, except a few, and would scarcely get their eyes open before the game closed upon them.

With perfect coolness one of the men took the crowbar and began loosening the spikes, while the others carried several ties from a distance and laid them down near at hand. After these preparations, one of the party was sent up the road a little piece to watch for the train. The remaining four sat down upon a log and smoked, joked and planned as deliberately as though it were an everyday occurrence to endanger the lives of three hundred human beings by "dumping" the train upon which they rode.

In the meantime a large company of travelers had left Council Bluffs en route for more eastern points. Not many of them, indeed, was sure of their locality nor anything else. A half-dozen or more were wide awake, thinking of the experiences before them. Women were aboard without guardians or knowledge of railway life. Children were there, sleeping peacefully in the arms of their parents, and dreaming of youthful games and fancies. Old, white-headed men were there whose years were weighing them down, and disabling them for travel without assistance. Wealthy merchants, rusty farmers, Western stockmen, hardy pioneers, dyspeptic collegiates—in fact, every class of mortals commonly

seen on a Chicago railroad train, were dozing, snoring, growling, and quietly sleeping on cushioned couches at this particular juncture of their journey.

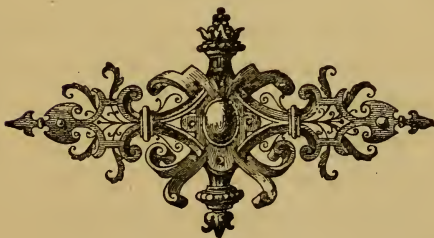
The night was dark. The sky was lowering; but the sleepers knew it not. The watchman near the curve strained his eyes to catch the first glimpse of the headlight. He puts his ear to the rail and listens. A rumbling sound is heard, and he jumps to his feet. The signal is at once given to his companions, who spring into immediate action. The spikes are withdrawn—the rails torn from their resting place—ties piled upon the track, and the preparation is complete. Woe to the unfortunate engineer and fireman who rush wildly over this spot! The flashes of light from the bull's eye are seen. The rumbling of the heavily freighted train becomes louder and louder. The inhuman wretches stand and quietly wait for the fatal moment. On comes the cargo of humanity—to what? The locomotive rounds the curve with a flash. Immediately the headlight sends its rays ahead, and discloses the huge pile and distorted rails! What thoughts pass through the mind of that engineer as he beholds the awful doom before him! Sixty yards ahead, and the train flying at the rate of thirty-five miles an hour! In a second the engine is reversed, the throttle pushed in, the shrill scream of the whistle rings out upon the startled air, and all is done that can be done to avert the calamity. But it is too late. A terrible crash, a tremendous shock, and the fiery horse careened, trembled, and settled down on one side. The coaches did not leave the track, but were fearfully shattered. Every passenger was thrown from his seat, and many were knocked sense-

less. A general confusion followed. Cries of children, screaming of women, and groans from the injured, joined in a discordant uproar. No time is left for passengers to ask questions or seek information. Immediately the cursings and threatenings of armed men left no doubt as to the cause. Revolvers were pointed at them and they were ordered to deliver up their valuables. No opposition whatever was offered. The desperate characters struck terror to the heart of every one. Money was handed over to the amount of several thousand dollars, besides watches and other jewelry. Having finished their work of plunder among the passengers, the express and baggage cars were visited, and their contents secured. Everything was put into sacks, and carried off. In less than half an hour from the first shock the robbers had got their spoils and departed for parts unknown. Then came the reckoning. A search discovered the dead body of the engineer, and the fireman very seriously injured. The noble man who had stuck to his engine, endeavoring to save the lives of others, had himself been instantly killed by the shock. No one else was fatally hurt, although nearly every one had sustained slight bruises.

Wild excitement prevailed throughout the country at hearing of the audacious robbery. Officers were soon scouring the country in all directions. The sheriff of the county in which the deed transpired inaugurated a vigorous search, and was successful in tracking the outlaws to St. Clair county, Missouri. Here all trace of them was lost, and the pursuit given up.

It is undisputed that at least two of the Younger Brothers

were parties in this transaction, and perhaps another. The friends of Cole Younger have attempted to prove that he was elsewhere at the time, and have partially succeeded. At any rate, the deed is characteristic of this gang, and will ever be attributed to them by an outraged and indignant public.



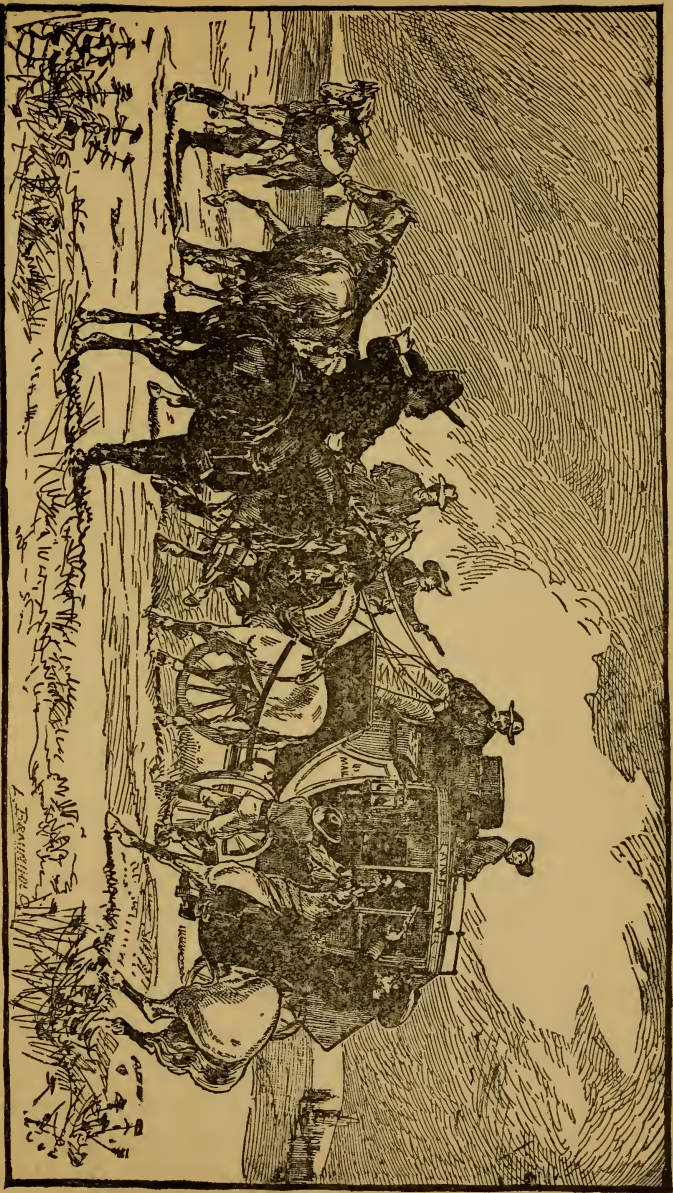
CHAPTER XXVII.

STAGE ROBBERY ON THE HOT SPRINGS ROUTE.

It was January, 1874. Nature had taken upon herself the garb of winter, and presented no cheerful countenance to the weary traveler. A slight snow had fallen the night before the circumstance about to be related. A few tiny specimens from the world's great ornithological garden were attempting to enliven the weary silence, and scatter the dreary shadows of a sunless day by attempts at warbling.

A stage coach has just "pulled out" from Malvern, a small town on the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway. The driver was a burly-looking fellow, but accommodating withal, while his long service on this route had made him as familiar with every point between Malvern and the Hot Springs as he was with the rough and ready life he was living. Many a dark night and dreary had he held the lines over the steeds before him. Many a tale could he unfold of his experience in former years, when it was more dangerous to travel highways than now. He loved to talk about the notables he had "carried" in various parts of the country, and how much wealth had been intrusted to his faithful hands. It was even hinted by his associates that Horace Greeley had honored his rickety coach at some time or other, and that Buffalo Bill was a particular friend of his. At any rate, the

STAGE ROBBERY.



aforesaid gentleman, who now sat upon the outside and thundered "Go," "Git," every forty-fifth second, was evidently no amateur—he had been there before. But even with all past experience and boasts of bravery, he was soon to meet with a circumstance in his career which was to make his hair stand up strangely, and his right arm forget its cunning.

Within this "royal palace" of the plains sat a number of gentlemen of various ranks, dignity and wealth, but all having the same destination in view—the Arkansas Hot Springs. The wonderful properties of these springs had become quite widely known at this time, and invalids from all over the country were availing themselves of their healing properties. The company within the stage on this occasion consisted of Mr. Charles Moore; John Dietrich, Esq., Little Rock, Ark.; William Taylor, Esq., Lowell, Mass.; a gentleman, name unknown, from Syracuse, N. Y.; Ex-Governor Burbank of Dakota; E. H. Peebles, Hot Springs; George R. Crump, Memphis, and three farmers, whose names are not known.

Although not in the best of health, these seekers after the bloom of youth were endeavoring to make the trip as enjoyable as possible. Stories, jokes and lively conversation kept time with the "bumpety-bump" of the springless vehicle. Their endeavor being to regain lost energies, complete freedom was voluntarily granted each one to furnish as much nutritious conversation as he might be able.

But while the stage coach rumbles along over the stony road, up hills, down into valleys, and over prairies, let us for a moment notice the actions of a small band of desperate looking men, whose steps have led them along the same highway,

At the time we see them they are near a stream called the Gulpha. A thick patch of woods shields them from view, but considering the fact that we are acquaintances—having met some of them before—we will slip around to their hiding place and listen to their plans.

“Let’s see,” says one, “they’ll reach the Gaines Mansion in about half an hour, hey?”

“That’s the time,” growled another; “but the devil only knows whether them crowbaits can make it in that time or not.”

“Well, boys,” continued the first, a black-whiskered, determined looking fellow, who seemed to be the leader of the gang, “we’ll take a smoke, and then get ready to tap those rheumatics for a little of the filthy lucre. ’Tain’t often a stage coach is ‘held up’ nowadays, but we’ll show ’em that the thing can be done in good style yet;” and the robbers all laughed heartily over the way the “stagers” would “pony up” when their navy repeaters told them to.

The old Gaines House was a first-rate stopping place along the road to the Springs, and it was customary to take a rest at this point. A beautiful country as far as scenery is concerned surrounded the place, while the Gulpha, only a short distance further on, afforded a most excellent “watering place.” High hills with forests covering their sides and tops, could be seen in almost any direction. In fact, the road at this place was situated in a kind of glen, bounded on all sides by hills and woods.

A little after the regular hour the loud tones of the driver urging his horses to a faster gait were heard, and soon his

"Whoa!" told the inhabitants of the Gaines mansion that another load of passengers had arrived, and would need attention. Accordingly the passengers were soon out of their cage and enjoying the fresh air of an Arkansas winter. "Five miles to the Springs!" shouted one, "and then this interminable journey will be finished." But hold a moment, my friend, perhaps that journey will never be completed. Something may "turn up" which will put your recovery beyond the hour expected. However, it is cruel to destroy the pleasures of anticipation, so we will permit the joyful countenances and confident hopes, notwithstanding our knowledge of a band of men in the adjoining woods yonder across the stream, who are waiting for their coming with great anxiety.

The rest is over—the king of the stage coach thunders out "All aboard!" and again our distinguished friends are on their way to health and happiness.

Soon after crossing the Gulpha, and scarcely before the vehicle was out of sight of the Gaines House, a dark, dangerous-looking man stepped suddenly into the road from concealment, and commanded the driver to "Halt!" As this desperado was immediately followed by others, fiercer looking than himself, the gentleman addressed concluded very suddenly to obey the order. The strange voice was heard upon the inside, and immediately the curtains were thrown back and a half-dozen inquiring countenances peeped out, only to be very quickly withdrawn. One glance was quite sufficient. A couple of ugly, long-barreled pistols stared them in the face, while a terribly significant voice thundered: "Come, git out of there!" Completely bewildered, the passengers sat still

a moment, not knowing what to do. But they were not left in doubt as to their duty long. Again the command came with a terrible oath: "Tumble out, I tell you." They tumbled. Every one crawled out except a gentleman severely afflicted with rheumatism who was permitted to remain in his seat. The command upon reaching *terra firma* was: "Hold up your hands," which they proceeded to obey without a word. Then they were ordered to form in a circle, which they did. One of the robbers held a large revolver uncomfortably near their heads, and threatened to blow out the brains of any man who stirred. One of the desperadoes had a double-barreled shot-gun, with which he kept the company in considerable trepidation, especially the gentleman from St. Louis, whom he took especial delight in tormenting. After getting the captives in a circle, and "shaking in their boots," as they expressed it, an investigation into the characters and business of the travelers took place. Ex-Governor Burbank was interrogated, and then relieved of everything he had, including quite a number of papers. Mr. Burbank requested that the papers be returned, as they pertained only to his own affairs, and were of no value to any one else. The leader of the band, who had the papers, said:

"Well, I'll see, pard; you don't know whether I want them or not;" and he proceeded to examine the bundle. Seeing one with the seal of State upon it, he presumed at once that it was a warrant for the arrest of somebody, perhaps members of their own gang.

"Boys," he cried, "shoot the cur. He is a detective."

No quicker said than three murderous looking revolvers

were raised, and Governor Burbank's heart stood still. No argument or sympathy could avail anything with such bandits. How terribly painful the pause which followed that command! But, thank heaven, there was a pause of a moment, and the next instant the chieftain discovered his mistake in supposing the owner of the papers a detective.

"Let up, boys; let up. The chap is all right, I guess." The pistols were lowered, while the spirits of Mr. Burbank were elevated. In fact they went up suddenly, like a balloon suddenly relieved of its ballast. For the time being the mercury had fallen about thirty-two degrees, until he felt as though it was considerably below the freezing point. His past life had been partially reviewed in that short space of time, and, although a politician, many things came up before him which he had rather kept away. But the pistols were down and his hopes were up.

Getting through with the Governor, the interrogator proceeded to deprive the rest of the company of their money and jewelry. Coming to Mr. Taylor of Lowell, Massachusetts, the robber thought he had seen him before, and said:

"Who are you, and where are you from?"

"I'm from St. Louis, sir," replied the gentleman, "and my name is Taylor."

"Oh, yes; I know you, d—n you. You're one of them dirty reporters, ain't you? I've seen you before. You're goin' over to the Springs to write up a lot of lies for that dirty *Globe-Democrat*. Well, give 'em a good one about the stage robbery, and don't forget to send in my regards."

Mr. John Dietrich was the next one to give his pedigree.

"Where are you from?" demanded the chief.

"I am from Little Rock," answered Mr. Dietrich.

"Little Rock? Well, what do you do there?"

"I am engaged in the boot and shoe business, sir."

"Well, why ain't you home tending to your business, then?" said the bandit; "this is a poor place for boot and shoe men, hey?"

"Decidedly so, sir," replied the gentleman; and he no doubt felt all he said.

"Is there a Southern man in the crowd?" said the robber.

"Yes, sir," replied four of the captives.

"How many of you were in the Confederate army?"

Only one, Mr. Crump, had been in the army.

"What regiment did you belong to? Who were you with, and where did you fight?" demanded the outlaw.

Having answered all these questions satisfactorily, Mr. Crump was given back his watch and money.

"We don't want to rob a man who has fought them d—d Yankees. I think you're all right. You don't look as if you were lying. These sneakin' Yankees have drove us into outlawry, and they'll git enough of it before they're through with it."

One of the passengers, the Syracuse gentleman, having been stripped of every cent he had, said:

"Gentlemen, you have taken all my money, and I have no friends about here. Won't you let me have five dollars to get word back to Syracuse?"

"A thousand miles from home with no money and no friends. Boys, he is in a pretty bad fix, ain't he? You had

better go off and die, my friend. A man like you has no business living. No, sir; you don't get any of your money back."

While all this was going on, one of the robbers unharnessed the horses and amused himself by riding up and down the road. After testing the animal for a while he cried out: "Boys, he's the worst plug in the country, but I guess he'll pass." And he brought the horse back and ordered the driver to hitch him up again.

After having all the sport they cared to, the audacious robbers sat down and calculated their receipts. Three thousand and ninety dollars had been secured. Mr. Crump had given \$45, but it was returned before the start. Mr. Moore added \$70 to the pile; Mr. Peebles \$20; the three farmers \$45; the Express Company \$450; Governor Burbank, in money and other valuables, \$1,450; the Syracuse passenger \$160; Mr. Taylor \$650; John Dietrich \$200.

Not such a bad reckoning for the outlaws, but a very serious one for their victims. But even such a sacrifice was gladly submitted to when they learned that each one was to be allowed to depart with a whole skin. It takes a good many shining dollars to balance the scales when a man's life is on one side.

Finally the robbers ordered all to climb in the coach and "git out." It was not necessary to repeat the command, as the passengers were about as anxious to leave for healthier regions as their friends of unknown names were to have them go. Some of them wondered if this was the first process that all seekers after immortal youth who visited the Springs were

put through. Perhaps it was not a bad remedy. Many an invalid has been made such by an over-abundance of "filthy lucre;" and now that they were relieved of any anxiety concerning their wallets' safety, who knows but their physical organism received an impetus toward health? At any rate, they did not worry much about being robbed again before reaching Hot Springs, which was only about four miles.

After getting the stage coach started on its way again, the brigands retraced their steps to the secret ambush whence they came. After a few words regarding a future meeting, they changed attire and separated, each one taking a different route. It is reported that one of their number took the next stage for the Springs, and spent a week among those whose cash he was making the best possible use of.

But why is all this recorded here? Evidently the subjects of this narrative had something to do with it. Indeed, it is beyond doubt that Jesse and Frank James, together with some of the Younger tribe were the leaders, and that they enjoyed the fruits of this robbery. Although entirely unexpected in that region of the country, yet these men never did aught expected. And although supposed to be, and in fact reported to be, in another part of the United States at this time, nevertheless their whereabouts could no more be determined by reports than the position of a modern politician seeking favor of three parties. Their friends have said they would not rob a number of unprotected passengers on the public highway—that whatever else they might be guilty of, their fair treatment to unarmed and innocent individuals could never be gainsaid—but circumstances alter cases very materially at times, and these

men had learned to get money in any way which might appear the most convenient.

The robbery created great excitement throughout the immediate neighborhood, as well as in all parts of the country. Thrilling telegrams were sent to all leading journals greatly exaggerated, and the visitors at the Springs lessened very materially. Parties scoured the country, but discovered nothing except the empty hiding-place near the scene of the robbery. After awhile it quieted down—the world jogged on, and the old stage too. People forgot the circumstance—the public pulse was again in its normal condition, and the friends of the “Spoils system” reveled in the resorts of pleasure another season.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

TRAIN ROBBED AT GAD'S HILL—THE CITIZENS CAPTURED AND IMPRISONED.

Iowa had been startled by a train robbery within her borders. The great public heart had stood still when the news flashed over the wires. Men thought of Robin Hood and the Harts, and wondered if civilization and law were going to meet foes more dangerous than these lawless characters. After a few days the excitement died away, the officers were close upon the robbers, and the world said such a daring deed would never be repeated in this country. But the band who had succeeded so admirably on the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Road, and had enjoyed the luxury of a well-filled purse and bank account, were not of the same opinion as the "dear people." Another scene, somewhat similar to the one in Iowa, was to be enacted, though many hundred miles from the first.

It was the 31st day of January, 1874—about six months after the Council Bluffs tragedy—that the events of the present chapter took place. The 31st of January! A mean, raw, wintry day all over the land, and especially in Wayne county, Missouri. The people gathered together in Gad's Hill—a small village in this county—around fires and in the "Grocery," were endeavoring to make more cheerful the inner sanctuary than Old Prob. had constructed the outer. Not

many there were, to be sure; for Gad's Hill only boasted of the immortality of her name—not her population. The aforesaid cognomen of this romantic Missouri village had been given and popularized by the poet as the chronicler of events, as the scene of encounter between Sir John Falstaff and the Buckramite legion. It was therefore, not unknown in history, although very little anywhere else.

Upon this cold, cutting end of January the quiet folk of the quiet village were to witness something which would cause them to think the termination of the world at hand instead of a month. It was to occur along toward the evening twilight. No one scarcely could be seen upon the street. The man of Dry Goods, Boots & Shoes, Notions, Hardware, etc., yawned over the dreary prospects of trade, and every one sighed over the monotony of Gad's Hill existence. Their monotony was soon to be relieved. Suddenly the sounds of horses' hoofs were heard, the deep, rough voices of men proclaimed the entrance of a desperate band of horsemen into their midst. People ran to the windows and peeped out. The horsemen rode directly to the railroad depot. One of them dismounted, walked into the office, pointed a revolver at the agent, and ordered him to surrender. Of course opposition was fruitless. After seeing the agent under guard, the remainder of the band went through the village and took prisoner every man they could find. All the captives were brought to the depot, where one of the desperadoes kept them quiet with his long navy revolver. After the village was declared captured and every masculine in the prison house, the fierce, weird-looking band sat down to wait for the 5:30 train.

Said train had started from St. Louis the morning of this eventful day. Conductor C. A. Alford, one of the most popular train men of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway, was in charge. Several coaches were well filled with passengers, while the express car contained more than its usual store of valuables. Bleak enough indeed was the wind upon the outside, but the cheerfulness of palace car and sleeper made the contrast all the more marked. The shades of twilight were just approaching as the brakeman called out "Gad's—Hill." No one stirred. No one cared for Gad's Hill. The musical tones of said brakeman had rung out so frequently during that long weary day that it now only soothed the dozing brain to sweeter insensibility. Oblivion of all surroundings, those train-ridden mortals were borne into the station.

Usually the train did not stop at Gad's Hill. The robbers knowing this had stuck out the signal flag, and thrown open the switch, so that the train would go into the ditch unless stopped at the proper place.

The engineer saw the flag and whistled down brakes. No one was to be seen upon the platform, but as soon as the engineer came to a stop, two armed men stepped into the cab and ordered him to surrender.

"What for?" was the reply.

"No words about it, d—n you!" thundered one of them. The engineer was taken into the temporary prison house, deprived of his money and watch, and left with the rest.

As Conductor Alford stepped upon the platform, and cried: "All aboard," a dragoon pistol was suddenly put under his nose, and the cheering words:

"Your money, d—n you! Be quick!" were uttered in a very positive manner. The money wasn't long in coming—fifty dollars constituted his purse, which was gladly handed over to escape that murderous pistol. Seeing the conductor carried a massive gold watch, the robber demanded it, and then ushered the crestfallen conductor into the presence of his friend, the engineer.

Two of the desperadoes in the meanwhile had mounted the train, and with cocked pistols were relieving the passengers of extra cash. To every one they put the question, "What's your name?" All responded without a word but one gentleman, a Mr. Newell, who inquired, "Why do you want to know my name?"

"None of your business, d—n you!" replied the robber. "Quick! shell out your cash and ask questions afterward."

Mr. Newell handed out his money and watch, then said:

"Now sir, tell me why you want to know my name."

"Well, you've acted pretty square about handing over, so I'll tell you. That old whelp of a Pinkerton is on this train, and if we find him his heart will be torn out and roasted on the spot."

Fortunately for the Chicago detective he was not aboard. Perhaps at that time he was working up some scheme for the capture of these very outlaws.

After finishing their work of plunder in the coaches, the robbers proceeded to the mail and express car, where a large amount of money and valuables were secured.

Finally the leader of the gang called out:

"Let 'em go, boys! We've got it all."

The engineer was released, and ordered back to his car. The conductor was just starting back to the train, when one of the bandits stepped up and said:

“Here, you’re the conductor, ain’t you? Take this watch back. You can’t run a train without a watch.”

Mr. Alford took the watch, climbed aboard, and the train moved off, a financial bankrupt.

Having accomplished their purpose, the band of horsemen ordered the release of the Gad’shillites, mounted their steeds, and rode out of town laughing, talking, and swearing like Congressmen after a Washington banquet.

The dark canopy of night had settled over the scene when the robbers left the village, and the released prisoners in the depot felt no inclination to follow such characters. Besides, the country was very thinly settled, with few inhabitants to guide the pathway of pursuers. The town of Piedmont was not far distant. As soon as the train reached this place telegrams were sent to St. Louis and Little Rock, announcing the experiences of the evening. Immediately a posse of men were sent out from various points with very poor success. All night long the plunderers rode, and no ordinary steeds were theirs. At a convenient place a halt was called, the fruits of their desperate deed brought out and divided, and the seven separated into pairs.

The fact that the train robbers were so anxious to meet Pinkerton, is very conclusive evidence that Jesse and Frank James were the leaders. These two outlaws were known to bitterly hate the detectives. Time and time again had their regard for the little Scotchman been expressed in language by

no means doubtful. But other reasons there are also, for giving these noted characters the credit or discredit of the Gad's Hill robbery.

It is reported that the robbers did not take different directions after dividing the spoils, but continued the same way by separate roads. They must have done so, as five of them called at the residence of a lady named Cook, near Carpentersville, to get breakfast. This place was about sixty miles from Gad's Hill, so they must have ridden all night, and very rapidly. In the afternoon of this day upon which they took breakfast at Mrs. Cook's, quite a large posse of men from Piedmont and Gad's Hill reached the same place in pursuit.

Again they were identified by Mr. Payne in Texas county, whose house they passed. Mr. Payne said that each was not only armed with pistols, but with a repeating rifle also. They continued on and stopped at the residence of Senator Mason. Mrs. Mason, whose husband was at the time in Jefferson City, attending the Legislature, was ordered peremptorily to furnish eatables "for five mighty hungry men." She was very much frightened, but obeyed the command at once, and rejoiced to see them finish their meal in such haste and depart.

After tracking them thus far, the pursuers failed to get any more intelligence as to their whereabouts, and gave up the chase.

It was a good "haul" for the outlaws, they having secured \$8,000 or \$10,000 without a scratch. They could afford to rest a while, but whether they did or not we learn further on.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE COUNTRY AROUSED—WHO WERE THE ROBBERS?

Only eleven days after the Gad's Hill tragedy five heavily armed men entered the little town of Bentonville, Benton county, Ark. The streets were almost deserted, while the male inhabitants of the place were few and far between. Those who witnessed the incoming group of horsemen thought nothing of it, as such scenes were by no means rare. The band rode along leisurely, looking at the various store buildings in a careless manner, laughing and talking the while as though they were enjoying a pleasant ride. Reaching the dry goods and clothing establishment of Craig & Son, the horsemen suddenly turned in and hitched. One of the proprietors saw them, considered them customers, and started toward the front part of the store to wait upon them. He did "wait" upon them, but differently from what he expected. The conversation was opened in an embarrassing manner by two or three long, ugly-looking weapons fitted for killing buffaloes or wild beasts. The speech these weapons made was short and even silent, but fearfully expressive and impressive. The gentleman of the store felt as though he had never heard such depth of meaning expressed in so few words. It was indeed *multum in parvo*.

"Quick!" said the leader of the gang; "not a whimper, or I'll blow off the top of your head."

His command was obeyed to the letter. In fact, the affable proprietor's tongue would not have permitted any extended remarks on his part, on account of suddenly losing its power to wag. There was a feeling of numbness all over his physical organism which was anything but demonstrative in its tendency.

Without a word the other members of the gang went behind the counter, rifled the money drawer, then repaired to the safe and secured all that could be found in it. It so happened that the exploit did not prove a financial "bonanza," as Messrs. Craig & Son had just made a deposit of nearly all the cash on hand, leaving for the plunderers only about one hundred and fifty dollars.

With this amount they took their departure, threatening the occupants of the store with instant death should they attempt to give the alarm. With this parting advice to their creditors the robbers mounted leisurely, passed by a saloon near at hand in which were twenty or thirty men, and rode out of the village as unconcerned, apparently, as a popular candidate on election day.

No sooner had their forms vanished from sight, than Mr. Craig heralded the news far and wide. The roughs in the saloon at once signified a willingness to go in pursuit, but were so slow in preparation, being loth to leave their grog, and incapacitated after they did leave it, that the escape of the bandits was easy. Nothing of importance was ever heard concerning their route. They had come and gone without "scratching a hair or breaking a bone," while no man cared to renew their acquaintance.

That this band was the same as had visited Gad's Hill the 31st of the previous month, there could be little doubt. The description of the men was similar to that given by Mr. Payne, Mrs. Mason, and others, while the vicinity of Bentonsville was the one where some had suspected the gang as being.

But who were they? We have said that the evidence in favor of the James and Younger Brothers being the leaders in these raids was full and complete, and it is. But others also assisted. Indeed, attempts have been made to prove that the afore-mentioned desperadoes had nothing to do with these robbers, while certain other individuals have been marked out as the most probable. Such characters as Cal Carter, Bill Longley, Jim Reed, Jim Clark, Sam Bass, and Sid Wallace, all notorious outlaws of the Indian Territory and Texas, have been connected with the Gad's Hill tragedy. The mistakes regarding the exact persons arise no doubt from the fact that these individuals were members of an organized band of bandits, infesting all this Western country, and to which the Jameses and Youngers belonged. The members of this organization in sections were kept apprised of the workings of their fellows, and were sometimes indiscreet enough to disclose their knowledge. By this means suspicion was at once fastened upon them as conspirators, and the true robbers neglected.

One character in particular has been charged with complicity in the Gad's Hill affair, against whom the evidence is too uncertain to be entertained. This was George Shepherd, ex-guerilla and friend of the James Boys. He had fought with Quantrell, had loved the black flag, and had sworn to protect and aid all others of that terrible band with his life. After the

war, through the influence of his wife and others, he was led to abandon the wild pursuits of the past years, and settle down in Nelson county, Kentucky. Here he lived at the time of the Russellville Bank robbery. After this tragic affair, the authorities knowing what Shepherd's past life had been, caused his arrest as one probably connected with it. Sufficient evidence could not be secured to prove him one of the participants in the affair, but he was found guilty of being an abettor to it. The James Boys had undoubtedly been sheltered and assisted by him, and these were the robbers of Russellville. Consequently he was "sent up" for three years. His wife not being as faithful as others have been, concluded she would again launch out into the sea of matrimony. Having obtained a divorce without trouble, she married and took her new found husband to the home bought and owned by the discarded one. Shepherd it seems did not learn this until after finishing his term of imprisonment. Having closed his career at the State Penitentiary he repaired to his home in Nelson county. His surprise and grief knew no bounds when he discovered the faithlessness of his wife. Although he could have driven the couple from his property, which was worth about six hundred dollars, he let them alone and took his departure for more congenial climes. He went to Missouri. People knew where he had gone and as soon as the Gad's Hill tragedy took place his old enemies at once fastened the crime upon him. But as has been said, George Shepherd was undoubtedly innocent of any connection with the deed.

It is known that Bradley Collins, one of the most desperate and heartless desperadoes who infested the State of Texas was

also very familiar with Jesse James. He had been seen in company with them, and by some was supposed to be connected with the robberies just recorded. Another of their boon companions was the notorious John Chunk. This individual frequently came into Missouri, and was possibly not far from the classic Gad's Hill upon the 31st of January.

The organization before alluded to was far extended and complete. Like everything with which Jesse and Frank James had anything to do, it existed by reason of the brains manifested in its formation as well as the desperate characters who composed it. A regular network it was, into which the law-abiding victims might fall with no hope of disentanglement. We shall soon see how some of these victims did get into its meshes never again to see the light of day.



CHAPTER XXX.

SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR THE CAPTURE OF THE BANDITS.

The robbery at Gad's Hill created great excitement throughout the country, and a determined effort was inaugurated for the apprehension of the desperadoes. The Governors of Missouri and Arkansas offered rewards, and set all the police and constabulary forces upon their track that could be utilized. Besides these officers of the law, Allan Pinkerton, the noted detective, engaged in the search. Few defiers of the law have ever escaped, it is said, when Pinkerton begins to manipulate the wires for their capture, but Pinkerton was not enough for the James Boys. The general government even sent men into the wilds of Western Missouri and surrounding regions, who prosecuted the search with the utmost vigor. The various sections of country were divided up, and the detectives in each placed under the command of one man. St. Clair county, Missouri, where the Younger Brothers lived when they were at home, was in the hands of Captain Allan, *alias* Lull, a shrewd and courageous member of the Allan Pinkerton force. Captain Allan secured the services of a young man by the name of Daniels, who was well acquainted with the country, and proved a valuable guide. Part of the robbers were tracked into this county, while others were followed through Southern Missouri and beyond the Missouri River. Two of the Younger Brothers, John

and Jim, were known to have arrived at home soon after the last mentioned tragedy, with plenty of money. The evidence against them was beyond the shadow of a doubt. The best of the force was centered here, and their capture expected within a short time, when something happened which completely demoralized all the plans in this section.

It was a bright sunny morning when Captain Allan, taking Ed. Daniels and a "fly cop" from St. Louis, whose assumed name was Wright, along with him, concluded he would reconnoiter a little. They mounted their horses and rode out into the country. It was not supposed for a moment by the detectives that their business in the community was known by any one. Nor did they, as they traveled along this cheerful morning, possess the least hint that their men, for whom they were hunting, ever visited in that immediate neighborhood. Their mistake in this regard became evident before many miles had been traversed. They passed by the residence of one Theodore Snuffer. He was not considered the most respectable citizen by the better class of his neighbors, but was never known to have harbored men under the ban of the law. It seems, however, that John and James Younger were at his house upon this particular occasion. How long they had been there is not known, but any one should be condemned for associating in the least with such known desperadoes. As the three detectives passed the house, the Youngers saw them. John jumped to his feet at once and said:

'Jim, there are them d—d 'cops,' and they're after us. What do you say to givin' 'em a little turn? They're the

dirtiest cowards that ever struck this country, anyhow, and, d—n 'em, we'll show 'em what kind of chickens they're scratchin' for. Are you in?"

"Get the horses, quick! Of course I'm in. There's that d—d Allan. I've been wantin' a pop at that cur for two weeks. They can't prowl around here and go home with a whole hide."

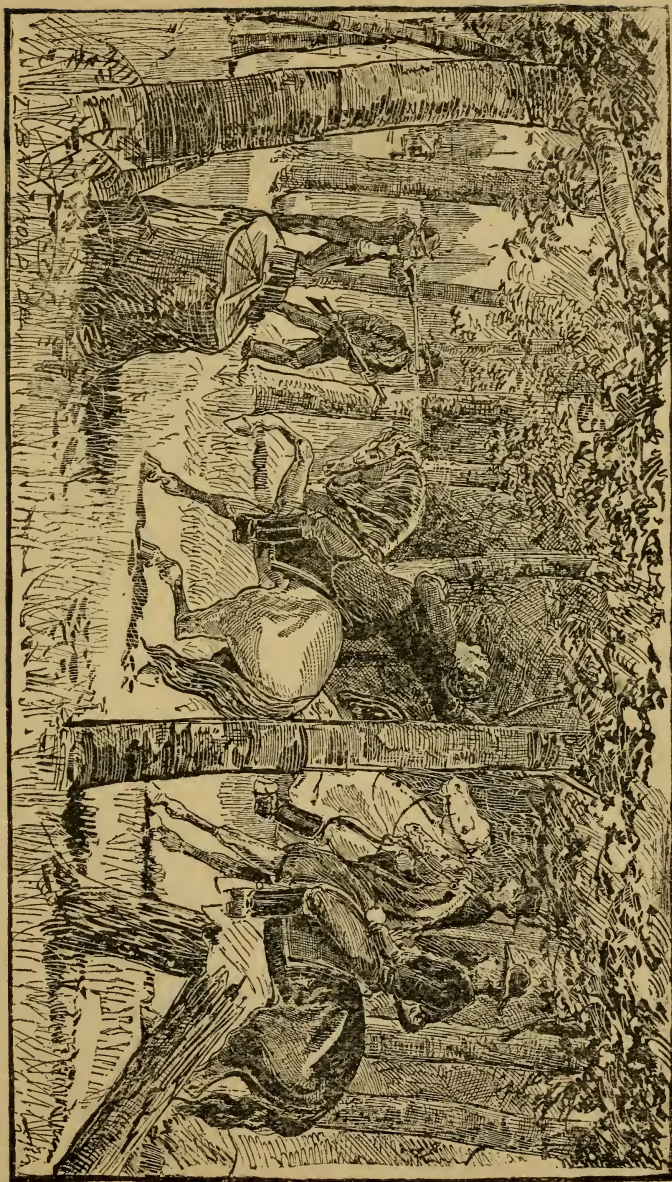
In a moment the two brothers were in the saddle. Several pistols and a double-barreled shotgun constituted the accoutrements of each. With as little noise as possible they passed out of the gate and rode right up behind the detectives, before they were observed.

"Throw up, d—n you! throw up your hands!" cried James Younger, as he and his brother covered the detectives with their shotguns.

"Drop your pistols, you curs!"

Nothing was left for Daniels and Allan to do but obey, as the robbers had every advantage. Wright, the St. Louis "cop," was riding in advance of the other two, and did not hear the command nor know anything of the attack until a shot was fired.

James Younger dismounted to pick up the weapon that had been summarily deposited by the roadside, while John kept the murderous shotgun leveled at the prisoners. His arm becoming tired he lowered the gun for a second, when quick as a flash the gallant Allan jerked a revolver from his breast pocket and sent a ball crashing through John Younger's neck. Younger reeled, dropped his gun, rallied again, and just as he was falling pulled a pistol from his pocket and fired.



The ball struck Captain Allan in the arm and side, inflicting quite a serious, but not fatal wound. But the heroic Captain was not to escape so easily; James Younger fired two shots in rapid succession, both of which took effect, and Allan fell from his horse a dead man. Then began a terrible struggle for the young and courageous Daniels. He too, had preserved a pistol in his breast pocket, with which he came very near ridding the country of the most desperate of these inhuman brothers. As quick as James Younger opened fire on Captain Allan, Daniels put a ball through one of Younger's arms. But the desperado was too skilled in the art to let an amateur beat him in a fair conflict. Before the young man could shoot a second time a ball struck him in the neck, tore through the artery, and he fell from his horse mortally wounded.

Had Wright been less frightened when he heard the first shot and seen what was the matter, young Daniels might have been living to-day, and James Younger in his place. But thinking that the prospect was bad for a reward, and the atmosphere was unhealthy in that region, he put spurs to his horse and departed. After killing Daniels and Allan, James Younger pursued Wright for a short distance, but without getting a shot at him. Returning to the spot where lay the three men expiring, James Younger gathered up the pistols of his brother and repaired to the Snuffer domicile. His brother John was brought into the house, and his remains cared for. James seemed much affected at the death of John, who had been with him in so many deadly conflicts and terrible experiences. A strong affection existed between the two. Their desperate natures seemed linked together with a

chain of iron, that well nigh crushed the one when the other fell.

As the news spread rapidly that two brave and heroic officers had fallen at the hands of Younger, said individual was obliged to move his quarters very suddenly and secretly. Taking the weapons of his dead brother with him, over which he swore vengeance many times, he repaired to Boone county, Arkansas, where another brother joined him.

But what of the James Boys? How are they faring? Detectives have been on their track. Their trail has been scented—their rendezvous discovered, and hopes have run high; but lo! they have been more successful in escaping than the Youngers. Brave men sought their lives, but the Jameses were braver and shrewder than they. No such men have ever gone unhung in this country as these outlaws. Their lives seemed magic. Their knowledge of plans for their capture almost supernatural. Every attempt was foiled, every effort unavailing. Perhaps the most cold-blooded and inhuman act of all this terrible tragedy will be presented in the next chapter.



CHAPTER XXXI.

A DETECTIVE DETECTED—WICHER'S HANDS TOO SOFT FOR
A FARM LABORER—HE IS CAPTURED BY HIS EXPECTED
CAPTIVES, AND PUT TO DEATH IN THE DARKNESS.

As in the first years of "the late unpleasantness" when a general failed against the confederates, his head was at once cut off, metaphorically, so whenever a fresh raid on bank, train or stage-coach was effected by the bandits of the West, a fresh effort was made by the authorities, usually at the very liberal sacrifice of one or more lives of regulars or volunteers.

Fame and fortune awaited the successful, and lured the unsuccessful to premature death. Among these voluntary victims, Detective Wicher was one of the most lamented. After the Gad's Hill robbery he stepped forward in the hope of achieving what his predecessors had failed to accomplish. It was very generally believed that the James Brothers were involved in the enterprise referred to, and it was understood that they had returned to their home near Kearney. It was against them that Mr. Wicher proposed to direct his energies and ingenuity. He had lately assumed the burdens of matrimony, and hoped to reap a rich reward in this case. "Nothing venture, nothing have," has urged many to disaster; and Mr. Wicher's daring was not armed with the necessary caution. "Bearding the lion in his den" is a typical expression for the highest courage, and such will be regarded the impelling force in the case of Mr. Wicher.

With the customary obstinacy of men overpowered by an idea, Wicher discounted all the dangers, and had faith in his scheme. He would deceive them by his disguise of a farm laborer, forgetting that a coarse suit of clothes and a bundle formed a thin disguise to observant outlaws.

It was on the 10th of March, 1874, that the devoted Wicher arrived at Liberty, the county seat of Clay county, Missouri, and immediately proceeded to the Commercial Savings' Bank where he met and had a conversation with Mr. Adkins, President of the bank. He made his errand, or a part of it, known to Mr. Adkins, and deposited with him some money and papers. As the banker could not furnish all the necessary information he sent the detective to Col. Moss, who did all he could to dissuade Wicher from his foolhardy enterprise.

But nothing would serve the detective but an inroad into the home of the James' Boys. What he expected to do when he got there is past all figuring, and the fact is that he possessed no understanding of the condition of affairs. He did not realize that the moment a stranger reached Clay county he was "spotted" by the friends of the outlaws, and was at their mercy from the outset. So it was with Wicher.

There was in the town of Liberty on the day Wicher reached there, an old companion of the James Boys,—one James Latche. This fellow had made himself notorious, even in the midst of the rough life of the frontier, and had been run out of Texas for participation in a raid there. This man saw Wicher arrive in town, and watched him first to the bank, and afterward to the residence of the ex-sheriff. This was enough for Latche, but when an hour or two later he

saw the detective dressed in his farm laborer's clothes, his suspicions became certainties.

Wicher was doomed from the instant the eyes of Jim Latche rested upon him. The train from Liberty to Kearney did not leave until late in the afternoon, and long before that time the outlaw spy had reached the home of the gang, and had notified them of what he had seen and heard. There was a hasty consultation, and three men stole quietly to a hiding place by the roadside, a brief distance from the Samuels' house. The trap was baited for the victim.

Swinging down the dusty road just at sundown came a trampish-looking young fellow, with his carpet sack slung over his shoulder. Out from the shade of a heavy tree appeared a man. The two met face to face—Wicher had found Jesse James at last.

"How are you, Captain? Fine evening," said the detective.

"Where are you going?" said the other, with an oath.

"You are not very civil, but I will answer you differently. I am looking for work on a farm. Can you tell me where I can find employment?"

The other carelessly threw back his hand, and Wicher was looking down the barrel of a heavy revolver. "D——n you, no," was the answer to this question. "You've got all the work old Pinkerton will ever give you."

"What do I know about Pinkerton, and why should you treat me this way? I am a stranger looking for work. If you will not be civil you can let me go about my business."

The detective was cool, and tried manfully to keep up his assumed character, but he was dealing with a human tiger.

“You’ll come sneaking around here to take the James Boys in, will you?” was the taunting reply. “You ain’t the first of Pinkerton’s gang I have put out of the way.”

“I know nothing about the James Boys, or Pinkerton, either; let me pass.” The detective made one step forward.

“Throw up your hands,” commanded Jesse James. Two men, with pistols in each hand, stepped from the roadside. Wicher was a prisoner, and the captor was captured.

The three outlaws conferred a moment, and then Jesse James addressed his victim:

“You were at Liberty to-day and plotting there to capture the James Brothers. How do you like it as far as you’ve got, eh? Now I know you. Detectives can’t come into this country and get out alive, and your fate is fixed.

“Boys,” continued the outlaw, turning to Jim Anderson and his companion Fox, “shall we do the job here? I think we’d better take him across the river. Disarm the spy.”

As the words of death passed the lips of the outlaw leader, the two men sprang upon the detective. One vain attempt he made to draw his trusty revolver, but the pistol of Jesse was at his head, and in an instant he was disarmed. He stood helpless in the clutches of the James gang.

At this moment Bradley Collins and Latche came up, and assisted in binding the detective. He was gagged and placed on the back of a horse. His legs were bound under the belly of the animal, and he rode off with his captors.

For five hours through that dark night this strange procession rode on through lonely woods and by lonely paths, known only to the outlaws. Jesse James, Bradley Collins

and James Anderson were to do the work, and they had decided to take their victim across the Missouri to finish him. Surely never was man placed in a more awful position than poor Wicher, but he scorned to beg his life. It would have been useless had he offered millions of dollars for it.

Before daybreak they had reached the Missouri River. At Blue Mills the ferryman had tied his boat on the south side of the river. He was roused by shouts from the other side.

"Hello, ferryman; bring her across in a hurry. We are on the hunt after horse thieves. Look alive."

The boat was worked across and the four men rode on.

"We have our man," said Jesse; "and if you don't want a dose yourself you keep quiet about this night's work."

On the other side the men left the boat. This was the last ever seen alive of J. W. Wicher, except by his murderers.

They halted in a lonely place, about half way between Blue Mills and Independence. The long ride with pinioned arms and feet had deprived Wicher of all power to resist.

A sharp report rang out on the still air, followed instantly by another. Wicher gave one convulsive bound, and all was over. At six o'clock a passer-by found lying in the road a corpse. There was a bullet-hole in the left breast and another wound in the forehead, and this was all there was to tell how Wicher met his fate at the hands of Jesse James.



CHAPTER XXXII.

ATTACK ON CASTLE JAMES—PLANNING THE ASSAULT—
A RIDICULOUS DEFEAT, AND ITS HORRIBLE CONSEQUENCES.

January 25th, 1875. On this day the great detective, Pinkerton, has decided to avenge the death of Lull, Daniels, and his favorite assistant, Wicher, and with one *coup de grace* redeem the profession of which he aspired to be, and believed himself to be the head, from the ridicule and contumely into which it had fallen. As yet no employe of his, no matter how cunning or wily, has discovered the secrets of the gang or decreased its numbers. As yet no brave-hearted man in secret service has won renown by bringing these desperadoes to justice; but to-day a plan that has been for two or three weeks growing shall be consummated—to-morrow the prison or the grave shall close upon the James Brothers—to-morrow Pinkerton & Co. will recover the laurels they have lost.

“Oh, never shall sun that morrow see!”

Mr. William Pinkerton, brother of the head of the firm, is in Kansas City. He has been there some days. No one knows it in the region except a band of citizens who desire to rid their State of these bloody marauders. He has brought with him a corps of assistants. These, too, are hiding and lurking in secret places. Cipher dispatches are daily,

sometimes hourly, sent to Chicago. Signs, words, and all kinds of communications are transmitted from citizen to detective, and from detective to Chicago, from whence comes instructions.

The James Brothers are in the neighborhood. They are at the residence of Dr. Samuels with their mother. Bad as they are, this one good trait remains—devotion to their mother. They are there to rest from their travels, and possibly to enrich her with their spoils. They are seen about the premises by the neighbors, and at the depot at Kearney by others who apparently are pre-occupied, but who really are more than ordinarily interested in their movements, each one of which is communicated to the detectives. Everybody is sure and certain that they are at home.

The human poachers knew where their game was settled, and on the date referred to they determined to take it, alive or dead. The war so much prolonged and so disastrous to the detectives, is to end in complete victory for them. But never was attempt more foolish, reckless and cruel than this. It was absurd and futile.

On the 24th, the day before the promised victory, the train from Chicago brought to Kansas City a reinforcement of the best skilled detectives the country could afford, or money employ. On the evening of the 25th a special train left Kansas City and took them to Kearney Junction. Landed at the depot they were assured that the boys were at home. The neighbors have seen them that very day late in the afternoon or early in the evening. Once more they reckoned without their host,

Frank and Jesse James had by this time grown used to being hunted, and therefore senses that were dormant in most other men were quick and alive in them. We do not know whether the detectives would have made good banditti, but we feel certain these James Brothers would have made super-excellent detectives. The silence of Kansas City and Kearney was ominous to them. They knew it to be the precursor of a storm; that there were no strangers about seeking conversation or calling at the house, was itself suspicious; that the neighbors were silent and coldly friendly, woke their apprehensions, and made them vigilant. They detected the detectives, learned that means were employed for their capture, and when the plan was to be carried out. They laughed at citizens talking the language of mutes, for they read it while it was used. They learned that the hieroglyphic operator had an unusual rush of business, and actually knew of the cipher dispatches to Chicago, and so on the afternoon of the 25th they discovered that Dr. Samuels' house was in an unhealthy situation, and left for a safe retreat.

While the detectives were stealing cautiously and cunningly to capture them living or dead, they were traveling on their beautiful steeds in another direction, to the home of a mutual friend, and while the shameful blundering deed of blood was being wrought, were partaking of his hospitality.

The reinforced corps of detectives and well armed citizens arrive at the residence of Dr. Samuels, "Castle James," as they call it. Around it at a comfortable distance extend the citizens as guards. To it approach nine of Pinkerton's

best and bravest human bloodhounds; they have found the trail, are on the scent, and are *sure of their prey*.

Their plan seems to have been to alarm the inmates, and thus bring to the rescue Frank and Jesse, whom they would have then compelled to surrender or shoot dead. Therefore they prepared some balls of tow saturated with turpentine, or it may have been kerosene oil, and also some hand grenades, to be used if the battle became too hot for them.

[For the benefit of our readers who may not know the instrument designated, we may explain that it is a hollow ball or shell of iron filled with powder, which is fired by means of a fuse, and thrown among enemies; this, bursting into many pieces does great injury, and is often particularly deadly, and always annoying and dangerous. They were used in an attempt on the life of Napoleon III, and were successful in the assassination of the late Czar of the Russias. See Webster.]

The operations commence. Two men approach a window and attempt to open it. The noise occasioned by the attempt, though exceedingly slight, aroused a negro servant who was sleeping in the room, who immediately sent such a yell of alarm through the house as only a negress can utter. This roused the whole family, and to her aid came rushing Mrs. and Dr. Samuels and the entire family, some of whom were mere children. See! A ball of lurid light goes hissing through the window into the room and falls among the affrighted inmates. Its flames reveal all who are there, but no Frank or Jesse James. Another comes, and once more the light exposes the women and frightens the children, but

does not bring out the outlaws. And now, most horrible to relate, one man, let us hope more zealous than obedient, throws into the group of defenceless women and children a grenade, which immediately explodes; a deafening noise fills the room with clouds of smoke, shrieks, cries of pain, and hear it, ye blundering detectives, a dying groan! Even this ignominious attempt brings no James Brothers to the defence.

The assailants did not remain to learn the extent of the injuries they had perpetrated, but they knew that their plotting was in vain; that their deeply laid scheme had not succeeded; that instead of ensnaring they had scared the game.

We spoke of a dying groan. From whom came it? Wait until the smoke has cleared away, and we will show you. On the floor lies a child eight years of age, his side completely blown off, the mangled flesh scattered around him or hanging on him in tatters. A few moments and the river of his blood will have flown away. Over him sits his mother, Mrs. Samuels, her right arm lying in yonder corner. Dr. S. is bruised and cut all over. The frightened negress is seriously hurt, and every one injured. The walls are charred with fire, the furniture broken, the floor wet and red with blood.

A day or two afterward, when the detectives are at home, discouraged, and, let us hope, ashamed, this afflicted family laid their little one in a grave in the garden, which a merciful God immediately covered with the winter snow—fit symbol of the child's innocence, teaching thus that it is far better to die in the peaceful innocence of childhood, than to live the hunted agony of guilt. Had he lived he might have joined

his brothers, and added one more to the detested brotherhood of James.

Whether or not it was lawful for these gentlemen to pursue the plan they did, we do not pretend to say. Perhaps outlaws deserve no mercy. But it seems to us that there is a point beyond which a detective ought not to go—most certainly the child did not deserve the violent death. Let us hope that they felt keenly not only the failure of their plot, but the accident which took the life of a guiltless boy.

“But were Frank and Jesse at home?” asked a neighbor of Mrs. Samuels. “Were they at home? you inquire. Could they have been, and nobody killed?” was her significant reply. “The James Brothers will seek revenge.”



CHAPTER XXXIII.

CONCILIATION AND REVENGE—PROPOSED AMNESTY FOR THE OUTLAWS—A CURIOUS DOCUMENT.

Up to the time when the detectives made their last bold attempt to capture these young men, public opinion was against them. They were dreaded by all, and few if any of the inhabitants of Missouri but would have rejoiced to hear of their capture, and have seen them executed. But when it was seen that the detective force were urged by revengeful motives; that they had no scruple whatever, so that they might attempt and accomplish their purpose; when again it was learned that the innocent had suffered for the guilty, it became known that the desperadoes were too much for the crafty men who hunted them, the tide of feeling began to flow in their favor, and if they could not justify these men, it was thought best to let them alone, or make an effort to conciliate them, if possible, and restore them to such a place in society as they might with their unquestioned ability adorn.

Many of the most respectable of the people all over the State favored one or other of these plans. They seemed to read in the attempts to capture these men, a series of persecutions instituted by the government for political purposes, or for the punishment of crime committed during the war. The reasons used to set forth this policy have been enumerated by a previous writer somewhat as follows. Whether they pos-

sess any weight, we leave to the judgment of the reader. It was said: 1. That the State had already lost considerable sums in pursuing them, and failed. 2. It was more than doubtful whether they could ever be captured. 3. That while the James and the Youngers were declared to be, and were treated as outlaws, other bad men would commit crimes and shift the responsibility onto the outlawed men. 4. That the course pursued against these men was a series of persecutions. 5. It was finally pleaded that the resistless hunt after these men was stimulated by the vindictive feeling of political enemies, engendered by the war and dating therefrom, and therefore inasmuch as the United States government had granted amnesty to its enemies for acts committed during the continuance of hostilities, that it was not right for the State of Missouri to pursue with vindictiveness any of its citizens, for acts committed during the war; and they also contended that the outlawry of these men grew out of their course in the period intervening between 1861 and 1865.

Undoubtedly there was an element of truth in some of these statements, but they seem to us to be most miserable reasons for granting license to these men to continue their work of robbery and murder. As all other means had failed, the work of reconciliation had to be attempted, and therefore the views which we have tabulated above took a formal shape in an elaborate preamble and a formal resolution, which were submitted with much grace and sincerity to the Legislature of Missouri, and advocated with much zeal and eloquence by the late lamented Gen. Jeff. Jones of Calloway county, and a member of the House of Representatives. These received

the approval of Attorney General John A. Hockaday, and many professional gentlemen of high standing and ability.

As this is one of the most curious circumstances in the annals of crime, we append the essential part of the interesting document.

“OUTLAW AMNESTY BILL.”

WHEREAS, By the 4th section of the 11th Article of the Constitution of Missouri, all persons in the military service of the United States, or who acted under the authority thereof in this State, are relieved from all civil liability and all criminal punishment for all acts done by them since the 1st day of January, A. D. 1861: and,

WHEREAS, By the 12th section of the said 11th Article of said Constitution, provision is made by which, under certain circumstances, may be seized, transported to, indicted, tried and punished in distant counties, any Confederate under ban of despoic displeasure, thereby contravening the Constitution of the United States and every principle of enlightened humanity; and

WHEREAS, Such discrimination evinces a want of manly generosity and statesmanship on the part of the party imposing, and of courage and manhood on the part of the party submitting tamely thereto; and

WHEREAS, Under the outlawry pronounced against Jesse W. James, Frank James, Coleman Younger, Robert Younger and others, who gallantly periled their lives and their all in defense of their principles, they are of necessity made desperate, driven as they are from the fields of honest industry, from their friends, their families, their homes and their country, they can know no law but the law of self-preservation, nor can have no respect for and feel no allegiance to a government which forces them to the very acts it professes to deprecate, and then offers a bounty for their apprehension, and arms foreign mercenaries with power to capture and kill them; and

WHEREAS, Believing these men too brave to be mean, too generous to be revengeful, and too gallant and honorable to betray a friend, or break a promise; and believing further that most, if not all of the offenses with which they are charged have been committed by others, and perhaps by those pretending to hunt them, or by their confederates; that their names are and have been used to divert suspicion from, and thereby relieve the actual perpetrators; that the return of these men to their

homes and friends would have the effect of greatly lessening crime in our State, by turning public attention to the real criminals, and that common justice, sound policy and true statesmanship, alike demand that amnesty should be extended to all alike of both parties for all acts done or charged to have been done during the war; therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring therein:

That the Governor of the State be, and he is hereby requested to issue his proclamation notifying the said Jesse W. James, Frank James, Coleman Younger, Robert Younger and James Younger and others; that full and complete amnesty and pardon will be granted them for all acts charged or committed by them during the late civil war, and inviting them peaceably to return to their respective homes in this State, and there quietly to remain, submitting themselves to such proceedings as may be instituted against them by the courts for all offenses charged to have been committed since said war, promising and guaranteeing to them and each of them full protection and a fair trial therein, and that full protection shall be given them from the time of their entrance into the State, and his notice thereof under said proclamation and invitation.

The bill was first introduced in March, 1875, and was fully discussed by the Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence. A majority of the committee agreed to recommend the bill to the House of Representatives. Near the close of the session of the 28th General Assembly it came up for its third reading. The debate was long and animated. General Jones wrought most nobly to see the bill pass. It was, however, defeated, and that act of the Democratic Legislature of Missouri was the practical ratification of Gov. Silas Woodson's message of outlawry communicated to the 27th General Assembly.

It is reported that the raiders were aware of this measure; that during the time of its submission and discussion not a robbery or murder was committed in the State, or thereabouts, and that they were anxious for its passage. What they could

have gained it is hard to see. If they had been forgiven all the crime committed by them until the close of the war, then the long catalogue of murder and crime since that time would have been brought home to them, and one of two things must have resulted, either imprisonment for life or the gallows. Still it is to be hoped that they desired to leave the life in which they had spent so much time, brains and bravery, and perhaps they presumed that the kindly spirit of these resolutions would be extended, or their surrender cover all of their crimes. Our opinion is that if the bill had passed they would have given themselves up to the authorities, and by them have been treated with more mercy than they had ever shown to others. This is the critical moment of their life. We think they felt it to be so, for it has been affirmed again and again that they communicated with Governor Hardin and the Attorney General on the matter through the Sheriff of Clay county. What these communications were no one knows, and perhaps never will. The bill failed, and the boys were left to wander—not only branded with the mark of Cain, but intensified Ishmaelites, their hands against every man, and every man's hand against them.

The bill failed. After its introduction in March, 1875, it was referred to the Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence. There it was fully and ably discussed. It was agreed to report favorably to the House of Representatives. Toward the close of the session the bill came up for the third reading. An influential representative named made a strong speech in its favor. The members were favorably impressed. But opposition came from a quarter from whence it was not expected.

A member read a portion of Gov. Silas Woodson's message to the Twenty-Seventh Assembly denouncing these same outlaws, and the Legislature refused to pass the bill. "Thou shalt not establish iniquity by a law." Society refused to receive them back and pardon them.



CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE SAN ANTONIO STAGE ROBBERY—"ONE GENEROUS ACT."

In the days of railroad and steamboat traveling, we easily forget the days of the good old stage coach; we scarcely call it speed, unless we move at the rate of forty miles an hour. Nor do we care to take a journey without the newspaper, the novel, the peanut vender and the orange boy; what care we for scenery, so long as we can fly through space with these necessities of life added to dust, cinders, smoke and nervousness? The possibility of accident lends zest to the flight. These, unfortunately, are more frequent than welcome, and more fearful than anything of which our grandfathers or grandmothers conceived. Nothing in the civil life of the past was ever so dreadful in its suffering results as a modern railroad disaster. When we are shot through space by electricity, or sent under the ocean by pneumatic forces, or possibly sail above the world in balloons, these may be eclipsed. But whatever painful accidents may be in the future; to whatever accident our present mode of traveling may consign us, let no one dream that there were no dangers attending the old stage coach.

Perhaps now, there is no more healthful or pleasant method of crossing a country than this. Let us have a pleasant summer day, four good horses, a good whip, and a

seat beside the driver, and we will not thank you to ask us to take a seat beside you in the "lightning express." We are not at all surprised that people of wealth and leisure are adopting the old-fashioned vehicle, and that people of taste prefer it to any other mode of viewing the land. In the course of twenty years there will probably be a "four in hand club" in every city on the continent.

Perils of robbers belonged to the stage coach. Few coaches but had a history of robbery and death. It were therefore strange if the James Brothers had not resorted to this method of prosecuting their diabolical business.

After the murder of farmer Askew, who was a great favorite in his neighborhood—in fact, wherever he was known—the tide of feeling toward conciliating these men turned to indignation; and they therefore thought it a stroke of good policy to depart to pastures new.

They hid themselves in the Indian Territory for a time. Here, by means best known to themselves, they collected a gang of ruffians of their own ilk and determined upon trying Texas. Imagine this band of outlawed men, Jesse James, Clell Miller, Jim Reed, Cole and Jim Younger, and another, supposed to be Frank James.

There was a mail coach that ran regularly between San Antonio and Austin. They selected the spot in which they would meet it, about twenty-five miles west of Austin, where the coach would be at dark, May 12, 1875.

On the coach were eleven passengers—a most excellent company—high-toned, aristocratic, wealthy for the most part. One maiden lady fair, fat and forty, at the least. Sev-

eral other ladies with charms, watches, rings and purses; Mr. Breckenridge, president of the First National Bank, San Antonio; and last, but by no means least, the Right Rev. Bishop Gregg of Texas.

The day had been lovely, the ride charming, the balmy air had invigorated them. The monotonous scenery had been forgotten in the cheerfulness of the company. The monotony of riding for a day had been broken by anecdote, joke and song. The driver had lost his taciturnity and become as merry as the bishop, and as important as the banker. And now as if to compensate for the barrenness of the wilderness, the sun gathers all the beauties of the sky together and paints the heavens in all the colors of the rainbow, arranges the clouds into the likeness of forests, of flocks, of armies, of cathedrals, and brightens them all with his parting smiles while he steps into a chariot of fiery glory and leaves the world with an intimation that he has gone to a land where there is no night, where the need of his beams is never known.

The gloaming has come upon the travelers. Thicker wraps are used. Somnolence steals over them. Half asleep, half awake, they move on; nothing but the crack of the driver's whip and the rumble of the heavy wheels to break the silence of the immeasurable prairie.

Jehu sees something in the distance. They seem like rancheros and yet they are not riding mustangs, but splendid American horses. He is a little puzzled and says half to himself, and as much to the others:

“ I'll swar them's queer fellers!”

They rode toward him at a rapid pace, and before he had

time to deliver himself oracularly, the leader of the gang rode up to him, and pointing a loaded revolver at his head, with an oath ordered him to stop with the alternative of having his brains blown out.

Jehu stopped.

In the twinkling of an eye the robbers ranged themselves three on a side and held the whole company under cover of their weapons.

“Come tumble out,” the leader laconically commanded. “Do it quick if you don’t want to die where you sit.”

As no one of the party, not even the Bishop, cared about taking the “silent road to the immortals” just then, they “tumbled out,” and were formed into a group by themselves, which was enlarged by the addition of the driver. Two of the robbers kept them in awe by standing over them with their revolvers.

The two leading horses were detached. Then began the search for booty. The United States mail bags were cut open, registered letters extracted, valuable packages stolen. One of the bags was made to hold the plunder. Having confiscated all that was possible from Uncle Sam, they turned their attention to the passengers.

First they began by breaking open their trunks and packages. The ladies were insulted as their articles of clothing were searched for money and jewels, they were mortified as trinket after trinket so dear to the female heart, so pleasantly associated with tender and sacred memories, were ruthlessly derided, destroyed, or stolen.

This over, Jesse James addressed the outraged company

in tones of mocking courtesy, and said as blandly as possible, "Ladies and gentlemen, we will now relieve you of any money or articles of value you may have about you."

"Do you mean to rob us?" cried the Bishop.

"Oh dear no," said Jesse, "we only desire to relieve you of any incumbrance, that's all, old sock. You should not use such language to us. It is ugly."

"Don't you call that robbery?" responded the prelate.

"Come now, old coon. Dry up. Don't ask any more nonsensical questions. Fork over. Let's have the money."

Discretion being the better part of valor, the Bishop silently complied.

"Now that watch of yours," they demanded.

"What! you surely will allow me to keep my watch. It is a gift most dearly prized. Will you dare to rob an humble minister of Christ of his timepiece, the gift of loving and devoted friends?"

"Hand it over at once," demanded Jesse, getting impatient. "You must pay the full toll." Most piteously he pleaded with the unscrupulous robber that he might keep his watch, but in vain; all that he could say was met with threats and ridicule.

"So, ho! you are a parson then, are you—it makes no difference. Christ did not have a watch and he did not ride in stages, either. He walked about or else rode on an ass to do his Father's will, and wasn't arrayed in purple and fine linen, and didn't fare sumptuously every day. Preachers have no use for watches. Go and travel like the Master without one. Take off them silk buckskins, put on the camel's hair. Now

then, out with that watch. Not another word—not one! We are not Christians, we are Philistines.”

The Bishop gave it up most reluctantly, but it was loss of watch or loss of life.

“Got anything more?” asked Jesse.

“Nothing,” replied the Bishop.

“Well then, search him,” said Jesse to Cole Younger, “we can’t depend on these canting parsons in an affair of honor.” The search was fruitless, and the Bishop was liberated.

Eight gentlemen were searched, and but little found. Then they came to Mr. Breckenridge of the San Antonio bank. He proved to be a big bonanza. They found on him and took from him over one thousand dollars, an elegant gold watch, and a valuable diamond pin.

The ladies were next attacked. They were commanded to yield their treasures.

“Hand out your pocket-book,” said Jesse to the first one approached. She was aged, and wore the signs of respectable poverty. She obeyed and he proceeded to examine its contents by the light of a lantern.

“Madam,” said he in tones respectful and deferential, “is this all you have?”

“Every cent in the world, sir.”

“How far are you going?”

“To Houston.”

“Here then, take your money, we regret having annoyed you.”

To her intense gratification the lady found when she reached home that the robber had placed in her pocketbook a twenty

dollar bill, and she was often heard to say in after days when she rehearsed the events of this night to her friends, "Well, well, the Boys were bad sure enough, as Heaven knows, but they might have been a good deal worse, and Jesse was very good to me."

From the other ladies they took all they could find. From the fair old maid they purloined a gold watch and a hundred dollars in cash.

The job took them nearly two hours to complete. Not one of the company resisted, only the Bishop remonstrated, but it was in vain. They hauled about \$3,500 besides the plunder from the mail bags and the leading span of horses. Enjoining strict silence and secrecy on their victims, they rode away into the dark and desolate night.

The stage rumbled slowly on, carrying to its destination a poverty stricken and heart broken group with only one redeeming thought—they had by yielding their possessions, purchased their lives.

The life of a desperado is a terrible one. Let no young man who may read this book eliminate the excitement and the success if it may be so called, from the hardships, the homelessness, the constant apprehensions, and the inevitable end, the gallows.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE FATE OF FARMER ASKEW.

Like a lioness bereaved of her whelps they rose from their period of hope in which vengeance slept, and remembered the fatal night at Kearney, the mutilated mother, the mangled child, the grave in the garden, and swore VENGEANCE! Hitherto they have been but learning their trade, now and hereafter they will follow it, lead where it may, to what it will. They are now hopeless and desperate men. They paint this word upon their banner, unfurl its red letters to the prairie breeze. Woe be to the men who cross their path. Woe deeper yet to those who belonged to the party on that fatal night at Kearney. Among the many whom they suspected as having been engaged with the detectives in the raid on the home of Dr. Samuels, was a flourishing farmer and prominent citizen of Clay county named Daniel H. Askew, "Old Dan Askew," as they called him. Such men are not easily prejudiced against particular persons, and therefore it is necessary that we learn upon what they based their feelings against him. He was a very plain-speaking man, and in the strongest terms had denounced the proceedings of these James Brothers. He was said to have been one of the parties who, with the detectives, made the raid above mentioned. Whether he was or not is doubtful, for Mr. Askew frequently denied any participation in that shameful matter; indeed, he dis-

claimed all knowledge of it whatever. But they suspected him, and it was enough to produce dislike. Their suspicions grew into belief when some of the scouts found a couple of blankets and evidence of the late presence of men in the haystacks of Mr. Askew. Their belief was greatly strengthened by the departure of Jack Ladd, a young man in the farmer's employment, who left the country on the night of the assault. These facts were far more than the denials of the blunt and honest farmer. They had sworn, and would have "vengeance!"

The night of April 12th, 1875, was beautiful, calm and clear. The house and farm buildings of Mr. Askew stood in the light of the brilliant moon. The peace of heaven was shedding its benedictions upon the home of this horny-handed son of toil. The day's work was done, the evening meal disposed of, the events of the day rehearsed. Just a few chores, in anticipation of the morning, and then the needed rest for the weary man and the sweet rest that attends the honest man, will lock the family in its silent arms.

About fifty yards from the house is a spring. To it Mr. Askew takes a bucket for water. Returning with it to the house, he set it down upon the porch, reached for a dipper and lifted from the "old oaken bucket" the healthful draught and applied it to his lips, when lo! ringing on the calm evening air is the report of a rifle; through the full moonlight a deadly bullet whistled. Now another and now another, each one aimed at Askew, and each one lodging in his brain. He fell to the floor and expired in a moment. The alarmed wife and daughter rushed out to see the father fall

and three men flee from behind a woodpile which had been built in front of the house. Who were they? Perhaps the question will never be answered on earth; but it is morally certain that, in the final judgment of all men, Frank James, Jesse James and Clell Miller will have to answer for the deed.

A little while afterward, that same night, three men, answering to these in height and form and voice, called at the house of one William Sears, whom they summoned to the door and said: "See here, we have killed old Dan Askew, and if any one wants to know who did it, tell them it was the detectives." Thus attempting to throw the crime upon Pinkerton, who was then in bad odor through the country, they departed.

The tide that had flowed in their favor now began to ebb the other way. The coroner and gentlemen of the jury who investigated the circumstances of the murder, knew that he had been killed by three unrivaled shots; but who they were, they had no evidence to show. We must leave the matter till the secrets of all hearts and lives shall be revealed.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ROBBERY OF THE MUNCIE EXPRESS—ANOTHER FRUITLESS SEARCH—DEATH OF M'DANIELS.

After the robbery of the stage, this band of lawless young men were in hiding. For a few months the money lasted them. The winter is at hand, and if they are to live they must make other efforts to acquire the means to do so. They have heard possibly from one Jackson Bishop who had been a noted guerilla of Quantrell's party, and who was in the mining business in Colorado, and possibly from some friend in the employ of the government, that a very large cargo of gold dust is *en route* to the East from Denver by the Kansas Pacific railroad.

They held a council of war and decided that this was their opportunity. So they journeyed from Texas through the Indian Territory to Kansas.

One night in December, 1875, when the stars were shining from the brilliant heavens, the cars bearing this government treasure came slowing into the little depot at Muncie. It halted at the water tank, and as it did so the voice of Jesse whispered, "Now, boys! Quick, quiet and steady!" Not another word. In a moment the train was boarded. Bill McDaniels held the engineer and fireman under the terror of two pistols, and swore that if they so much as "winked an

eyebrow" he would send them to the country where summer clothing is not much in requisition.

The other robbers disposed of themselves according to previous arrangements. Two of them stood on the platform of the cars guarding the doors. The others rushed through commanding silence on the passengers, and threatening them with death if they attempted to make any noise that would arouse attention. This done they proceeded to the baggage car where they held the express messenger at their will. They opened the safe and leisurely counted and appropriated the treasure. It was a bold stroke, a daring deed. In less than fifteen minutes they had become the possessors of thirty thousand dollars worth of gold dust, some silver and other valuables to the extent of twenty-five hundred dollars or more, and with it were escaping over the Kansas prairie.

In these few moments they had stolen from the government without a man to resist them, fifty-five thousand dollars. Not a cent was ever obtained. Not a man was arrested, and the crime was so adroitly committed that it could be proven against no one.

Not a passenger was molested, nor any one on the train hurt. It may be that the prize was so great that they forgot to commit any murder.

The news spread like a prairie fire. The murder of Dan Askew was revived. Hundreds of men joined themselves together and formed hunting parties, but they never took the game. The government and citizens both were outwitted and beaten by these shrewd and lawless men.

It is said that the place where a crime has been committed

holds a terrible fascination for a certain class of minds. They cannot keep away from it. One such was in this desperado gang, for Bill McDaniels was in Kansas City a few days afterward. He was arrested for being drunk; on his person were found some articles which were identified as having been on the express car at Muncie, besides a very large sum of money. But he swore he had honestly earned it in Colorado. He was not a man for the authorities to let go, and so on some pretext or other he was lodged in the prison at Lawrence, Kansas. Detectives were employed, pardon offered, money tendered, so that from him they might learn the names and whereabouts of the men engaged in the Muncie affair. But he was silent. He knew nothing, and told nothing.

As the police were taking him from the calaboose to trial, Bill escaped to the woods. For a whole week he hid, while they hunted him there. At last a citizen named Bannerman fired a shot which wounded him fatally. In death he was true to his partners in guilt. Not a word implicating them passed his lips. The secret was carried with him to another world. Alas, that such fidelity is not oftener seen in those who profess a higher service and a deeper attachment.

The gang were deeply chagrined at Bill, that he should have allowed himself to be taken, and to be taken drunk was cause for much mortification and indignation. But when they learned of the efforts made to derive from him the information he possessed and failed, that he was true to the last moment, and held out against bribe, promise and threat, they forgot his folly and forgave it.

When they heard that he died game, they held a sort of

Irish wake in his honor. Filling their bumpers and raising them to their lips, Jesse, half sad and half in mirth, said with his usual oath, "Boys, he was a brick after all, so here's to Bill McDaniels *wherever he is*; he was game to the last, and died without a squeal! Here's to Bill." He deserved the compliment. Had he spoken one word he might have yet been alive and they every one been lynched many years ago. But uncertain is the life that depends on the word of honor of a bandit.

On the same day that the robbery was committed at Muncie, another was committed at Corinth, Mississippi, many hundreds of miles away. The James Boys were so notorious as robbers that this was charged to them. It was impossible for them to have been in both places at the same time. They were capable of many things, but hardly equal to that. It is quite likely that they knew of it, perhaps they planned it, and without doubt it was executed by some of the members of their gang. We must exonerate them from any personal participation in it. And if all the truth were known it would be seen that many crimes were committed and laid at their door, of which they knew nothing. "Give a dog a bad name, and hang him." It became the fashion just as much as it is now to daub on China, to say that every notorious deed was wrought by them.

These false charges gained them some sympathy. They felt, and others too, that they were wronged men. Be that as it may, they richly deserved this reputation. They were capable of committing any violation of law, divine or human. Had they been honest and honorable men, no one would

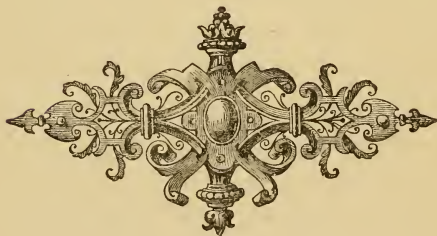
have thought of associating their names with any misdemeanor. They brought this odium upon themselves. They sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. Served them right! Did not such a result always follow a life like theirs, a number of innocent people would be charged with foul and bloody deeds, and suffer in consequence.

Then there was in these men that element of cowardice which seeks to throw the blame of wrong doing upon others. Ever since Adam endeavored to blame his wife for his fall, his magnanimous sons have sought to blame some other for their transgressions. It is a fact patent to all that if anything is smashed in a house the cat did it; and if anything is wrong in a store the boy did it; and if any one goes astray in a church the devil is the cause of it, and among criminals society is always blamed. There is not a prison or a penitentiary, in this or any other land, where the prisoners acknowledge that it is by their fault that they are there. Wives, parents, children, companions, are unjustly blamed. With the true disposition of criminals, the James Boys accused the government with being the cause of their mode of life, and we are sorry to add that in this idea agreed many citizens, otherwise respectable, of all grades in society, and of every political party.

After the Muncie and Corinth affairs matters were quiet.

Here we may tarry to answer questions that we feel sure will arise in the minds of our readers. Where were the men, and what were they doing? It is not at all likely that they would remain together. It is an open secret that they separated to hide in large cities. There are no better places for

such a purpose, and Jesse James was in the habit of going to New York, where he put up at the best hotels under an assumed name. Here he was a dashing young fellow, fond of dress and of a good time generally. He always went about well armed, was always on the alert, and although plans were frequently laid to capture him, he was always gone before they could be carried into execution.



CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN VIRGINIA—THE HUNTINGTON RAID.

From the fall of 1875 to the spring of 1876 was a long holiday. They could afford it and made the most of it, but at this latter date they met and began their infernal business once more.

Missouri, Mississippi and Kansas were left. They turned their face toward and devoted their energies to West Virginia. Huntington, Cabell county, is a lovely town with about 3,000 inhabitants. It is beautifully situated on the Ohio River. The Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad runs through it. Before the introduction of the locomotive it was dull enough—a veritable Sleepy Hollow; but afterward it was wide awake and thrifty. It drew a large amount of trade to which it had been before a stranger. This was the place that the bold banditti selected for the scene of their new operations.

It has been reputed that early in the spring of 1876, Mr. R. T. Orrey, cashier of the bank, was conversing with one of his depositors on the common events of the day, and from these to the anticipated opening of the Centennial Exposition. The point turned upon the kind of speech General Grant would make at its opening.

“Wall, I guess he won’t say much. Haint nothin’ much

to say. I guess anyhow he'll just say what other folks tell him," said the banker derisively.

"Do you know," responded the customer with a smile, "that I think that is Grant's salvation? He owes much as a soldier to his skill and success; but, as a statesman, he owes most of all to his wonderful ability to hold his tongue. Doesn't Shakespeare or some other old coon say, 'He that can hold his tongue is bigger than he that wins a battle?' Now Grant can do that best of all. Drunk or sober, it doesn't matter which, he never talks. And then when he makes a speech folks thinks they're awful cute, because they are etarnal short. But they're after all shorter in sense than words. He can say nothing profoundly."

The talk flowed on in this vein till two o'clock in the afternoon, when four men on horseback came trotting down the street. They were comparatively unnoticed. Arriving in front of the bank, two of them dismounted and entered the building — Frank James and Cole Younger. Two remained outside to prevent interference on the part of the inhabitants. The two who entered the bank covered Mr. Orrey and his customer with their shooting irons. As the safe door was open, the task of getting the spoils was accomplished without difficulty, and \$10,000, in as quick time as it takes to read, were removed from the safe to an empty bag brought for the purpose. Mr. Orrey and his friend were helplessly bound and threatened with instant death if they gave any alarm. They then remounted their horses and went at a flying pace for the hiding-places of the Virginia hills.

Those who remained outside kept the citizens in awe by

their murderous fire-arms, their daring desperation, and their unerring aim. The whole affair did not last half an hour. The whole of it was done so quietly, that perhaps not more than a dozen people knew of it when they were leaving the surprised citizens to untie Mr. Orrey and his friend. Their horses ran at the top of their speed, and before the citizens could muster for following them, they had put many miles between themselves and the peaceable citizens of the thrifty little Virginia town.

The first thing done in these cases is to follow and take the desperadoes. Therefore the sheriff gathered twenty-five noble souls around him for that purpose. Authorities throughout the region were notified, and if the whole country did not turn out after them, the whole country was on the lookout for them. Bligh, the Louisville detective, was employed. He directed the hunt, and sent his very best men into the fray. For days the pursuit was exciting. The robbers were diverted from their rendezvous. Their horses gave out and were abandoned. They rushed for safety into the mountains of Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee. The pursuers overtook the pursued. A terrible fight followed. Both sides fought furiously. A bullet pierced the heart of Tom McDaniell and stopped it forever. Jack Kean was taken,—the others escaped with the booty. Jack Kean was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in the penitentiary.

The James Brothers were not captured. They, with Cole Younger, escaped into the Indian Territory, where they divided the funds equally between them.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

JESSE'S COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE—A ROMANTIC STORY
OF LOVE AND DANGER—A STRANGE WEDDING TOUR.

It affords us real pleasure to turn to the better nature of those of whom we have been writing. A true charity will rejoice that amid so much that is evil some little good can be found. Notwithstanding all the wrong they did, we must never forget that they were men, subject to the same temptations, and capable of being good like ourselves. Had our circumstances been as theirs we might have been like them; had theirs been as ours they might have been like us. Had we given way to the temptations that beset us, we might have been with the vicious; but having withstood, we are numbered with the virtuous. We believe that in these desperadoes were the elements of noble men, but they were perverted, and the men became as bad as they might have been good.

The sons of a Christian minister, they had excellent training, and education above the average. It is impossible that these should be fruitless. While all this made them worse, enabling them to do what by lack of education they otherwise would not have done, yet it was the one hope of their redemption. They had refined feelings, and memory of better days, a Christian home, a mother's love and a father's prayers, by which they might be won back to society. It

JESSE'S COURTSHIP.



would be passing strange if this did not manifest itself somewhere at some time.

At a conference of colored ministers and churches, the presiding officer asked concerning a brother: "Is he entirely sanctified?" To which the brother replied: "Boss, I guess I is in spots."

A better answer has never been given. The best are good in spots, and perfectly good in very small spots, if in any. The worst are good somewhere.

"Grandma," said a young lady to her aged relative, who had a pleasant habit of saying all the good she could of every one, "I do believe you would say something good of the devil; you can see no harm in any one, I do declare."

"Well, my dear," the benign old lady replied, "I really think we ought to admire his perseverance."

A little boy was anxious to see a convict. His father gratified the curious request. As he looked wonderingly upon the poor wretch in irons, his father said: "Harry, what do you think of him?" He replied: "Papa, he looks like a man."

Frank and Jesse James were men. They were bad men because they were capable of being very good men. As it took an archangel to make a devil; Lucifer, Son of the Morning, to make Satan, the father of lies; as it took a dutiful Nero to make the monster who fiddled while Rome was in flames, so it required men of the education, the courage and the noble qualities of these unfortunate brothers, to be the leaders of this terrible gang of desperadoes.

Yes, they were men; men with fears and hopes, and loves

and hates; men who could think and reason and feel as we; with the same passions and desires.

We are not to be thunderstruck as we learn that they fell in love. Why should they not? He is a very small man indeed whom some woman cannot or does not love. Women have given their hearts to, and their lives for, men as bad as these. It may have been very foolish; they may have repented of it, but such is the case. Such men can love. Women are found who love them. Many are redeemed from evil courses by a woman's devoted love.

“Oh, the love of woman—the love of woman! How high will it not rise, and to what lowly depths will it not stoop! How many injuries will it not forgive! What obstacle will it not overcome, and what sacrifice will it not make, rather than give up the being upon which it has been once wholly and truthfully fixed! Perennial of life which grows up under every climate, how small would the sum of man's happiness be without thee! No coldness, no neglect, no harshness, no cruelty, can extinguish thee! Like the fabled lamp in the sepulcher, thou sheddest thy pure light in the human heart, when everything around thee is dead forever!”

The outlaw, the highwayman courting, seems impossible. Why should it be so? We are not astonished when we read of the physician who has used his license to administer poisonous drugs *a la discretionem*, for the purpose of poisoning some one from whose death he expects some pecuniary profit; we are not very much astonished when we learn of the gentlemanly bank director swindling widows and orphans; when we learn of the pious defaulter who has defrauded some char-

itable or religious institution. Nay, we are not surprised to learn that these had wooed and wed; that they had luxurious homes and bright and beautiful children. Indeed, some of these men so sin in consequence of an excessive love to wife and family; therefore it ought not to create surprise that the bold bandit of the prairies should indulge in the same pleasures and find an object for the wealth of his affection.

Jesse courted his cousin, a young lady, quite handsome, well educated, of a gentle disposition. He thought her an angel. She is an orphan. Her uncle is a clergyman. They reside in Kansas City. Jesse and Zee were boy and girl together; attended the same Sunday school, day school, and singing school. They grew up together till the war, when, as in so many other cases, they were separated. He became a brave and daring soldier, and she worshiped his deeds; he became a reckless outlaw, and she would not believe it. After the war they frequently met, and she had nothing but words of admiration and affection for Jesse, who, with all his sin, was always tenderly kind to her.

"To his eye

There was but one beloved face on earth,
And *that* was shining on him; he had looked
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye followed hers, and saw with hers,
Which colored all his objects;—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,

Which terminated all; upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously."

The courting went on like Othello's and Desdemona's. She loved him for the dangers he had passed. And he loved her that she did pity them.

Frequently he visited Kansas City, and braved the police and others who were lying in wait for him. At one time, while visiting the home of his betrothed, five officers headed by the sheriff, came there to arrest him. Always on the alert for danger, he discovered them in time, and concealed himself under a bush beside the doorstep, where he lay during the search, with a pistol in each hand, cocked and ready for service. The men searched the premises industriously; one came and stood on the step just over Jesse's head, but went away without seeing him. If he had seen Jesse then he probably would not have gone away, for Jesse has since said that he could have killed every man in the party, but abstained from doing so because he feared that Zee might get hurt in the melee.

In 1874 Jesse James and Miss Zee Mimms were married at the home of a mutual friend, Dr. Denham of Kearney, Clay county, Missouri, by the Rev. William James, of the M. E. Church South. This gentleman was Jesse's uncle and a relative of the bride. The party was select. Jesse had won a wife, and she had become an outlaw's bride.

Their wedding tour was a flight across the country to Texas. There were no orange blossoms nor white gloves, nor any other livery of bride and groom worn on that jour-

ney; no sweet girl friends accompanied the young wife on her lonely way; no merry jests nor joyous laughter cheered that nuptial tour. The happiness of the poor bride was held in constant check by fear and watchfulness; the ceaseless vigil of the refugee restrained the joy which should have filled the breast of her outlaw husband. Poor girl! She had left a quiet home and loving friends for a place beside her hunted lover; before her was anxiety and dread, a wandering life, perhaps privation—certainly dishonor. How much her love and fidelity were to cost her she had not guessed—or she was very brave—but if she ever regretted the choice she made; if there ever were moments in her life when she contrasted her lot with the freedom and happiness of her girlhood, and shuddered; if the man who so remorselessly murdered his enemies was ever cruel to her, she bore it heroically, and locked the secret in her breast forever.

In Mexico they remained nearly two years. A little child as innocent and sweet as ours, came to bless them. Jesse was often seen with it on his shoulders, capering across his ranche, while Zee stood watching the child and its father with all the tenderness and joy of a woman's love, and Jesse acting, if not repeating, the immortal words of Shakespeare:

“The mistress whom I serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labors pleasures.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

FRANK'S FOND LOVE.

For me, I'm woman's slave confest,
Without her, hopeless and unblest;
And so are all, gainsay who can,
For what would be the life of man,
If left in desert or in isle,
Unlighted up by beauty's smile?
E'en tho' he boast of monarch's name,
And o'er his own sex reign supreme,
With thousands bending to his sway,
If lovely woman were away,
What were his life, what could it be?
A vapor, but a shoreless sea;
A troubled cloud in darkness tossed,
Among the waste of waters lost;
A ship deserted in the gale,
Without a steersman or a sail,
A star, a beacon light before,
Or hope of heaven evermore;
A thing without a human tie,
Unloved to live—unwept to die.
Then let us own through nature's reign,
Woman the light of her domain;
And if no maiden love not given,
The dearest bliss below the heaven,
At least due homage let us pay,
In reverence of a parent's sway,
To that dear sex whose favor still,
Our guerdon is in good or ill.
A motive that can never cloy—

Our glory, honor and our joy;
And humbly on our bended knee
Acknowledge her supremacy.

Frank was a different man from Jesse. The latter was born to lead, to inspire, to do things quickly, with a dash. The former was quieter, more thoughtful, slower in his mental movements, very stubborn, and once roused to action or pursuit, a formidable foe. For a friend, give me Frank, but as a foe my selection (if I must have any) is Jesse. Jesse and I may become friends, but if Frank is against me, we are enemies forever, for he is a stubborn, implacable man. Both were marvelously endowed, and, but for the perversion of their gifts, might have been as great in virtue as they were in vice.

In consequence of this difference in mind and temperament, Frank was the better character of the two. Though both had the same educational advantages, and although Jesse committed his tasks with the greater ease, and rendered his recitations with more facility, yet the slow accretions of Frank, which appeared commonplace, at last exceeded the stock of knowledge acquired by his brother. Notwithstanding he was an outlaw, and one of the most hated of men, yet he was a remarkably good scholar—a proof that education is limited in its influence on the character.

He (Frank James) left his Cæsar and Virgil and the Phædo, his Telimache, etc., for a place in Quantrell's bloody band, which was described by Col. W. C. Moberly, as follows:

THE QUANTRELL GANG—THE BRUTALITY OF THE OUTLAWS WHICH NUMBERED JESSE JAMES AMONG ITS MEMBERS.

“I want to say to you that Governor Crittenden did exactly right when he had Jesse James killed,” said Colonel W. C. Moberly, “and he deserves the thanks of every law-abiding citizen in Missouri. I am not a Democrat, and would not vote for Governor Crittendon, but I’ll stand by him in this matter every time. There are few men in the State who know more about bushwhacking than I do, and I am in favor of clearing out such infernal devils as the Jameses without mercy.”

Colonel Moberly, who is now practicing law in St. Louis, was during the war lieutenant-colonel of the First Missouri militia, and afterward first lieutenant-colonel of the Thirty-fifth regiment, with headquarters at Brunswick. He organized the first regiment of militia enrolled in the State, and claims that he is entitled to the \$25,000 offered for such service at that time. The city of Moberly, Missouri, is named after him, and he was president of the North Missouri Railroad and the president of the Missouri Valley Railroad.

“You are rather severe on the James Brothers,” suggested the reporter.

“Yes,” said Colonel Moberly, “but not too severe, and I’ll tell you why. For four years I fought against those infernal devils, the Jameses, Bill Anderson, Todd and Quantrell, and I am satisfied from my observations that any mercy shown to them is wasted. I will tell you one or two anecdotes which will illustrate the brutal, devilish character of the gang of which the James Boys were prominent members. One Sunday night, in 1863, twelve pickets brought to my office at Brunswick two women who told a most pitiul tale.

One of them said that she wanted me to send men to Carroll county to catch Quantrell and his men. She said that a company of peaceable armed citizens had gathered there, and Quantrell and his gang had fired upon them, killing twelve of them. Her husband ran home as fast as he could, and was followed by the bushwhackers, who caught him and slowly tortured him to death. First, they cut off his hands at the wrists, then his nose, and finally his head. I said it was no use to send out any more men then, as the scoundrels were probably in some other county by that time; but I sent out forty men, and when they came back they fully corroborated what the woman had told me, and more too. She had told me only a part of the story, for these outlaws, one of whom was Jesse James, had mutilated her husband's body in the most sickening manner, just out of pure devilishness. After this the gang went to a German settlement, where four aged Germans and their women had been left at home to take care of the family. These devils appeared in Federal uniform, said that they were Federal soldiers, and wanted something to eat. They talked Union, and were treated kindly. There were twelve or fifteen of them, and the old men fed them and their horses, and gave them the most hospitable treatment. When they had all they wanted to eat and drink they made the old man saddle their horses out in the stable lot, and jumping into their saddles, turned and shot down the inoffensive old man in cold blood. They then warned the women that if they stirred out of the house that day they would be shot, too. This was in Chariton county, and Jesse James was one of the gang who committed this outrage."

“But don't you think that Jesse James could have been captured alive by a large force of men?”

“No, sir. He would have killed a dozen, at least, and then perhaps have made his escape after all. I had the pleasure of killing some of Quantrell's men, and they were literally girdled with revolvers. Quantrell used to sit on his horse with his reins in his teeth and fire with both hands. These are facts that I have told you, but I could not repeat them at the time, for I was surrounded by these men for three years. Bill Anderson once sent word to Huntsville that he was coming there to take the town at a certain time, but the people didn't believe it. They didn't suppose he would attempt it, but at the appointed time he rode into town, robbed the bank, murdered the people on every hand, and made his escape. In Moberly once I received a note saying that he would be there the next day to take the town, and I knew he would keep his word unless I could prevent it. So I started off with five hundred men that night, waylaid him as he was coming to the city, and killed several of his men. He did not visit Moberly, but he would have done it if I hadn't waylaid him. Now, sir, Gov. Crittenden was right, and every man in the State ought to stand by him in this matter.”

It seems surpassingly strange that a youth with scholarly tastes and habits should become, if not the leading spirit, certainly one of the controlling spirits of such a gang as that. Of what use were his accomplishments? How fearfully they were abused!

His personal appearance is handsome, well and compactly built, with regular features. He speaks Spanish,

French and German in a low, musical voice. He is very clean in his habits, and dresses neatly and quietly. In the interims of *business*, he visits the world at Saratoga, Newport and Long Branch, and passes for a gentleman. Seeing society is one of his pleasures, and being so handsome and accomplished, it would be passing strange if he had

“ Never been smitten,
Or had the mitten.”

The truth is, Frank has been unfortunate in his love affairs. When almost a boy, certainly in the early part of his career, he was nearly ensnared in the meshes of the silver net which a Kentucky maiden had spread for him. She,—sweet, pure soul—made him her hero, and sighed and pined to share his adventures.

Just at that time, however, a cruel fate interposed between them. Frank had been too venturesome, and he discovered that means were being employed to capture him. He therefore sang “ Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye,” and escaped for his life, to the tune of “ The Girl I left Behind Me.” He did not regard it as prudent to return for two years; when he did so, it was to discover that his beloved had not only charms to soothe the savage breast, but to attract another suitor to her side. She was so affluent in her affection that she had some to give to another, and to the gift of her affections she had added her fickle and faithless self.

In the meanwhile, Frank had not been idle. He believed, with Robert de Browne, that

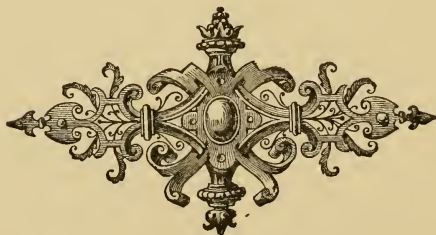
“ Nothing is to man so dear
As woman’s love in good manner.

A good woman is man's bliss
Where her love right and steadfast is.
There is no solace under heaven,
Of all that a man may never
That should a man so much glean
As a good woman that loveth true.
No dearer is God's hurd,
Than a chaste woman, with lovely word."

Thinking of women as other men do; needing their companionship as do others; seeking their elevating and refining influence as do the majority, we are not surprised that those who were best acquainted with this handsome and accomplished outlaw's private affairs, should assure us that he was in love with an heiress in New York, and that she was in love with him. She was beautiful, accomplished and wealthy. How they became acquainted we do not know; but the acquaintance grew into companionship, and then ripened into affection. They spent their mornings riding through the parks; in the twilight he rowed her on the murmuring waters. The silvery moon often gilded the lovers locked in the most affectionate embraces, and but for circumstances which she could not control, and which summoned her abruptly from the side of the *incog.* raider, she might have suffered all the miseries that fall to the lot of an outlaw's wife. No doubt she has thanked the kind and loving Providence which at that time appeared so cruel.

Years passed by, and as Frank had been thwarted in his blissful dream, he grew sullen and obstinate, until the dying affection of his soul awoke into greater power than ever before. Deeply in love, he was silent in love. For years

the fair, sweet face of Annie Ralston held him enthralled. She was *petite*, her eyes deep azure, she had glossy brown hair, long silken eyelashes, Grecian nose, low, broad forehead, and lips that the gods themselves might kiss. This little woman unconsciously imprinted Frank James' heart with the image of her bonny self, and he had similarly affected her. Woman's devotion and sacrifice is great, but perhaps the devotion of Annie Ralston to Frank James will bear comparison with many instances that have been decorated with the flowers of literature.



CHAPTER XL.

FRANK AND ANNIE.

“ Ah, I remember well—and how can I
But evermore remember well—when first
Our flame began, when scarce we knew what was
The flame we felt; when as we sat and sighed,
And looked upon each other, and conceived
Not what we ailed, yet something did we ail,
And yet were well, and yet we were not well;
And what was our disease we could not tell,—
Then would we kiss, then sigh, then look and thus,
In that first garden of our simpleness,
We spent our childhood. But when years began
To reap the fruit of knowledge— ah, how then
Would she, with sterner look, with graver brow,
Check my presumption and my forwardness!
Yet still would give me flowers, still would she show
What she would have me, yet not have me know.”—*Daniel.*

If we have been curious concerning these men whose lives are before us, we become more so concerning the women who became their wives. We too often think that only fallen women marry fallen men. With the James Boys, this was not the case. The girls they married were as virtuous and faithful as any who may read these lines. They deserved a better fate; but such is the wealth of a woman's affection, that she frequently sacrifices herself to very unworthy objects. But where she loves, she does so with the whole heart, and

though the object be the scorn of mankind, yet she will cling to him, and for his sake bear reproach, contumely and scorn.

“ He little knows

A woman's heart, who, when the cold wind blows,
Deems it will change. No, storms may rise,
And grief may dim, and sorrow cloud her skies,
And hopeless hours, and sunless days come on,
And years, where all that spoke of bliss is gone,
And dark despair the gloomy future fill—
But, loving once, she loves through good and ill.”

In Independence, Missouri, are many old inhabitants who knew beautiful Annie Ralston and her father. He was a gentleman of the Southern type—wealthy, cultivated, aristocratic and refined. To his hospitality there were no bounds. Strangers, friends and acquaintances received a cordial welcome to his hospitable mansion. Annie was the pride of her father's heart, his pet and his companion. Had we seen this pretty motherless girl on her father's knee, entwining her arms around his neck, and laying her tired head upon his shoulder and there falling asleep; had we seen her festooning his head with vines and flowers; had we seen them at play, he becoming a child for her, and she a woman for him, we would not then have prophesied that the aristocratic papa would be changed for the Barrabas of the prairie, the luxurious home for the mountain hut, and the elegant company of Southern ladies and gentlemen for the oaths, lewd stories and rough life of an outlaw's wife. Such a change did occur.

The war came on. The booming of the artillery became familiar to her ear; the sight of death and blood grew famil-

iar to her eyes; to stories of cruelty, sin and wrong, her mind became accustomed. A change occurred in her home; the father's fortunes suffered. To sustain himself, Mr. Ralston took to drink; his "property" was taken from him, and Annie with her Southern training, hated the North, and felt herself a wronged woman.

We may therefore easily understand how she would appreciate the deeds of the James Boys, who preyed upon that society which she felt had robbed her of her home and fortune. With her father, she was deeply attached to the Southern cause.

But we anticipate. At the dawn of womanhood, Annie became a student in the female college of her native town. Being liberally endowed with intellectual gifts, she soon led her classes with ease to herself, and pride to her teachers. At Commencement the highest honors were awarded her. She was an accomplished musical genius, sang delightfully, and performed upon the harp as well as upon the other instruments usually taught to young ladies.

After she left school it is evident that she became her father's housekeeper. As by this time his unfortunate habit had grown upon him, as they had descended from affluence and wealth to comparatively meager circumstances, the lot of Annie was peculiarly trying.

About this time it was noticed that two young gentlemen, strangers in the city, were frequent callers at the home of Annie. It became known that they were Frank and Jesse James. Then the neighbors whispered that Annie was the attraction. Soon it became the talk of the town. Matrons

who had daughters to dispose of snubbed her, her companions cut her, her star faded, and Annie was excluded from society. It was known that she loved Frank James. He was her idol. She loved him for his personal qualities, which as we have seen, were really excellent, and then she sympathized with him, for was not he a rebel against those powers that had robbed her of her fortune? It is said that his conduct to her was most respectful and reverent, and hers to him most devoted and affectionate. It was a love match, and no mistake.

On a beautiful bright day in 1875, some acquaintances saw her at the Union depot, Kansas City. After exchanging civilities, they parted. In a short time her lover joined her, and when the evening began to hang the curtain of the night, pretty Annie Ralston and her lover stood before a clergyman in a distant city, and were made husband and wife.

There seems to have been no effort on her part to redeem her husband from his perilous life; on the contrary, she seemed to have indorsed it. It is but just to say that this is very unusual. When a woman marries a criminal, a sot, a libertine, it is with a deliberate purpose that she will save him. In most cases they are most decidedly mistaken, and find it out when it is too late. Here are some simple verses which, if read aright, may be a timely hint to our fair readers:

“ Oh, woman, you're sold at a fearful price,
If you wed your virtue to a chance device,
And trust your soul to that of vice;
Don't marry a man to save him.

“ A life that is pure needs one pure in turn,
A being to honor, and not to spurn,
An equal love that shall constant burn;
 Don't marry a man to save him.

“ A woman's life is a precious thing,
Her love is a rose unwithering;
Would you bury it deep in its early spring?
 Don't marry a man to save him.

“ You can pray for his soul from morn till eve,
You can win the angels to bring reprieve
To his sin-bound heart, but you'll always grieve,
 Don't marry a man to save him.

“ God gives woman a right to press
Her claim on man's best manliness.
A woman gives all; should a man give less?
 Don't marry a man to save him.”

The sequel proves that however much affection these misguided women had for these wicked though able men, the life they led, though that of personal kindness from their husbands, was of the supremest misery. When their husbands were from home, they were filled with fear for their safety; and when at home, full of apprehension lest they should be discovered. Outlawed, hunted and hated with their husbands, their lives were anything but happy, and in no degree what they had anticipated. Why should a woman take to herself a name that is a perpetual reproach, and transmit the dishonor to her children?

“Alas! the love of woman!
It is known to be
A lovely and a fearful thing.”

Such was Annie Ralston's.



CHAPTER XLI.

THE ROCKY CUT TRAIN ROBBERY—A BOLD STROKE — ARREST AND CONFESSION OF ONE OF THE ROBBERS.

After the \$10,000 haul at Huntington and the disasters which followed, matters were quiet until the following July. The amount in their possession was not easily expended and there was consequently no urgent need on their part to set the country aflame with the horror of one of their desperate adventures. Meanwhile, their company drew to itself some familiar spirits. It now numbered twelve persons: Frank and Jesse James, the Younger Brothers, Clell Miller, Bill Chadwell, Cal. Carter, Charles Pitts, Sam Bass, Bill Longley, and Hobbs Kerry—almost a small army. This necessitated bolder efforts, for when \$10,000 was portioned among twelve, it would scarcely go as far as when divided between three or four.

Although they were quiet, yet they were not asleep. As a cloud gathers all its strength for the storm; as there is a sensible lull before the tempest begins its furious work; so these men were renewing their strength, and were silently laying a plan which, if carried out, would at once enrich them and terrify society.

It may not be generally known, but we have discovered a fact which will not be disputed, that these outlaws "study up" their cases. No lawyer goes into court better prepared

than a burglar does into a house. No preacher enters a pulpit with a clearer design and aim, than the professional robber into a bank. If your house is to be robbed, the thieves who will make night hideous, know every room and door; who sleeps in this and who in that. There is nothing left to chance. A plan is decided upon and carried out.

This gang had decided to wreck an express train. The plan was prepared in the lead mining regions of Southwest Missouri. Not without some dispute in the camp, however. The idea was given by one of the James Brothers, and opposed by the Younger Brothers; but the counsels of Frank and Jesse prevailed, and the company prepared for their journey and their work.

The train to which they determined to devote their energies, was the Eastern express, which crossed the Laramie River late in the evening, at a place called the Rocky Cut, a little east of Otterville, in Cooper county, Missouri. They disbanded at the lead mines, to go in pairs to the place of meeting. At the hour appointed, they met on the evening of the 8th of July. Within a short distance from the bridge, they found a dense copse where they left their horses in charge of Hobbs Kerry, a vile fellow who had any amount of wickedness, without a grain of courage. First, a *posse* composed of Clell Miller, Charlie Pitts and Bob Younger, are detailed to take the watchman. They must get him away and get possession of his lantern. He, hearing footsteps, cried out with some astonishment, if not alarm :

“Hello! who’s there? What do you want here this time o’ night?”

Swinging his lantern into the faces of his visitors, he was surprised to find the muzzle of a loaded revolver close to his face.

They took him and bound him, and securing his lantern, proceeded to march him off. "What are you going to do with me?" he cried.

"You keep still," they commanded, with fearful oaths and threats.

"But you ain't going to hurt me, are you?"

"What do we want to hurt you for? We want the money on the train; that is all we care for."

Having carried him to a place of safety, and appointed one of their number to keep guard over him, the whole party proceeded leisurely to the bridge.

It was about half-past ten o'clock. Rocks and trees and obstructions of all kinds were piled across the rails. Then they waited leisurely the coming of the train. Shortly a rumbling was heard like distant thunder. It gradually increased in volume. Faint streaks of red light came scintillating along the track; Charlie Pitts seized the lantern of the watchman, proceeded a short distance along the line, and signaled the train to stop. When it arrived at the Rocky Cut it did so. No experienced railroad man could have brought it to a standstill better than he at precisely the right spot.

In a moment the train was boarded by twelve masked men, each one heavily armed with weapons most deadly. In a moment, without the slightest confusion or a word, the engineer and fireman were under the spell of the murderous weapons. To have moved an inch would have moved the

deadly trigger. In a moment guards stood at the door of every compartment covering the passengers, and holding them in awe by their revolvers. In a moment the leader boarded the express car and overpowering the messenger, the safe was opened and seventeen thousand dollars besides jewelry and other valuables, were put into a leather sack prepared for the purpose. Then a shrill whistle was heard. This was a preconcerted signal. At once every robber left the train, twelve men uttered the command to move forward, twenty-four revolvers gave emphasis to the words, and the freight of precious life moved sadly onward, to tell the tale of their danger and preservation, of the robbery and the manner in which it was done, to the civilized world.

This whole transaction did not occupy an hour. If robbery were a fine art, this was artistically done. No noise and no blood, and no discovery.

The robbers went for their steeds. Arranging the treasure among them so as to be best carried, before the first streak of rosy light dawned upon the scene of their crime they were at least twenty miles south of the spot.

At the next depot the alarm was given. With the rapidity of lightning the wires told the story to every city in the Western States. As paterfamilias took his morning paper and his morning meal, he was startled with the heading:

GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY IN MISSOURI—SEVENTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS STOLEN—THE JAMES BROTHERS WITH THEIR GANG OF DESPERADOES DID THE BUSINESS—FURTHER PARTICULARS IN OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Detectives were employed at St. Louis, Sedalia and Kansas

City. Then those of Chicago and the Atlantic seaboard joined them. The railroads and express companies offered large rewards for their capture. The government also took measures to arrest them. But these extraordinary efforts resulted only in the capture of the least important member of the gang, Hobbs Kerry.

The money was divided and the men separated in pairs, each to hide himself or to disguise his identity as well as he could, so as to evade the strenuous united efforts of the government, railroad and express companies for their capture.

It is well known that the boys read the newspapers constantly so that they might learn what the officers were doing, whether any of the party were taken, and to enjoy the fun of seeing their almost superhuman efforts made in the wrong direction.

Only one thing troubled them—"the cub" as they called him—Hobbs Kerry. They knew little of him, and they now began to ask themselves why they had been such fools as to receive him. They thought him so much of a fool that he was likely to be taken, and that if taken they were certain he would "peach." So they determined "not to know the fellow."

Their apprehensions were not altogether wrong. After separating from his companions, Kerry, finding himself in possession of more money than he had ever before in his life, determined upon playing the Prodigal Son. So he crosses the Grand River and goes to Fort Scott, Kansas. Here he arrays himself gorgeously. This done, he seeks the company of harlots, and indulges in riotous living. He found many

most willing to assist. He has a six weeks' debauch. Women, wine and whiskey are his particular vanities. In bagnios, gambling hells, dance houses, he spent his money. When wine went in, wit went out—the little he had. In his cups he spilled a little. A few words he dropped were picked up by one of the harlots who had fastened herself on him. She communicated her knowledge to a detective and sold from her embraces into the custody of a policeman, the poor fool from whom she had extracted a secret that would send him into the penitentiary.

Seeing that he was captured, Kerry confessed everything, and more too. He made a virtue of it, and invented crimes for the sake of confessing them; thus by overdoing it the detectives could not tell what to believe, and therefore they could not work upon any of his statements. Inadvertently he saved the rest of his party, and they felt themselves free to make "other arrangements."

In the record of these grim crimes, it would be strange if we did not find a little humor occasionally. We have intimated that the passengers and trainmen were passive spectators of the robbery. This is so nearly true that it might pass, were it not for the gallant and amusing attempt of the news-boy. Johnny had a pistol of a cheap grade. Well, Johnny did not believe in being robbed, and he wanted to use his pistol. The weapon was not particularly dangerous, but Johnny believed it to be formidable. So he took a position at a window and when the robbers jumped from the platform to the track, Johnny opened fire. First shot hit nothing. When the robbers saw who was firing they good-naturedly

laughed and told him to try again. So he took them at their word, and as the train began to move, Johnny blazed away, and to this day he believes that he killed at least half a dozen of the gang. In this he may be mistaken. If so, we are sorry. If all of the car had had Johnny's spirit there would have been bloodshed, but it would have taught the masked desperadoes that their business was one which men would resist, though the resistance cost life itself.

Up to this time people believed that there were two gangs of robbers, the James' gang driven to it by the government, and another gang wanton and wicked, who committed the grossest crimes and then laid the charges to the account of the former. This affair convinced the public that the two gangs were one, though sometimes working in halves. From this day they lost much of that sympathy behind which they had indulged in their unlawful outrages.



CHAPTER XLII.

The States in which these robbers had hitherto operated were Southern Missouri, Kansas, Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky, Virginia, etc. Two reasons may be adduced for this limitation. First, they were well acquainted with the face of the country, and therefore knew where to hide, whither to flee, and who were friends and who were foes. They also knew the times and seasons that were propitious, or otherwise, for them. Second, they preyed upon society, ostensibly taking revenge for the attitude of the government toward the Southern cause. This gave them a wide tolerance, even if it did not create the deepest sympathy.

The time at last came when these reasons were no longer good. The people began to discover their places of retreat, and their professions of hostility to the government would no longer cover up their crime. The people began to see through it. The enormous outrages which they had committed had multiplied too rapidly. Within a very few years they, commencing at Russellville, Kentucky, had robbed banks at Gallatin and Corydon, Iowa, Columbus, Kentucky, St. Genevieve, Missouri, Huntington, West Virginia, and a number of the gang had done the same for a bank at Corinth, Mississippi. They had also wrecked trains, in some instances taking life, in Kansas, Wyoming, Iowa, Missouri. They had stopped stage coaches, and stolen the proceeds of

and disperse, and no one know of it. How it was done we cannot tell, but it was. They knew exactly the location of every member of the gang. Their plans were so perfect that they could easily throw the detectives off the track, and send them five hundred miles out of the way, especially when they wanted to commit a robbery or murder in another section. It is an old saying that there is no mischief but that you can find a woman at the bottom of it. The woman in this case was their mother, Mrs. Zerelda Samuels. To her sons she was as true as steel. When the book shall be opened and the secrets of all hearts revealed, dark, terrible and mysterious deeds will be found in that guilty soul. There is plenty of evidence to sustain the assertion that this woman was the means of communicating with the whole party.

With her assistance the gang is brought together. In the vicinity of her house the men met and deliberated. She was admitted to their councils, and nothing was done without her approval. Into this council a noted Minnesota outlaw and horse thief, Bill Chadwell, was introduced.

Now imagine these Ishmaelites in the dense forest discussing their condition, the feeling that is growing against them, and the necessity for doing something more in order to live. Among them stands the mother. She urges her sons onward that she might wreak her vengeance upon the detectives who had robbed her of an arm and a child. Hear her repeat what she has often said before:

“I hate all detectives as I hate the devil, and if I were you and had my way, I would send them all to hell before sunset.”

This was the spirit she breathed into that strange and villainous group. Like the witches in Macbeth, she threw the curses into the boiling cauldron. But the detectives were getting too sharp for them, and therefore the consignment of them to warmer quarters was not practicable for the nonce.

Bill Chadwell had been imported for a purpose. They had pretty well explored the Southern States. Policy suggested that they should try their skill further north.

“Never stir an inch till you know the lay of the land, or you are a goner,” was one of Jesse’s judicious maxims. Consequently, with this, Bill conveyed to them “the lay of the land” in Minnesota. He told them of the length of the journey, the kind of people in the State, the names and number of his “*friends*,” who would be silent partners in their crimes, the kind of business that would be most profitable, and the signs that might be used and would be acknowledged throughout the State.

After the submission of other plans, it was unanimously decided to visit Minnesota and plunder certain banks that should afterward be agreed upon, and then return and spend the winter in Texas and Mexico.

Now the consultation is at an end. The gang disbands. For a few days there is the usual preparation. Purchases of ammunition, full equipments of revolvers and knives, are made. Horses and saddles are made ready. This done, they go in couples. Bill Chadwell and Charlie Pitts precede the rest to Mankato, Minnesota, where he has a “friend” there to make ready for the rest of them. The party left the mother’s house about the middle of August, 1876. Frank and Jesse

took one route, Robert and James Younger proceeded by another, while Clell Miller and Cole Younger selected a path by themselves. Never was there a more desperate set of men, more formidable and conscienceless than these. Their names made the heart stand still.

A gentleman, a Missourian, who pretended to know, declares that Cole Younger objected to the plan decided upon. His preference was Canada. He believed, and stated, and gave his reasons for believing, that the cities of the Dominion, Montreal, London, Toronto, and even Kingston, the city of the Ontario State Prison, could be worked more effectually. But he was overruled. It had been safer for them to follow his counsels.

Their journey was uneventful to themselves and others. They drew to themselves no attention, and did nothing to produce notice or comment. On horseback by day they called like respectable men at respectable farm-houses for refreshment; in the evenings they put up at hotels, registered under assumed names, and after spending the night as a gentleman should, paid their bills in the morning and proceeded without leaving the shadow of suspicion that they were men who would not scruple for a moment to take the life of any who would throw upon them the faintest taint of crime.

About the first of September they reached Mankato. They met at the house of Bill Chadwell's friend. Here they held consultation as to which of the many banks of the State they had best rob. The three banks of Mankato seemed to have some claim to the distinction, but it was thought that three banks in a small town, while possibly good for the com-

munity, because competition is the soul of business, yet might not be good for robbery, for none of them would hold stakes high enough for so dangerous a game. St. Peter was passed by because it was not a large place, and the community was not wealthy. St. Cloud was rejected for the same reason. The merits of many others were discussed, but all were discarded with the exception of Northfield, which was supposed to be rich in treasure, for reasons we will give in the following chapter.



CHAPTER XLIII.

THE TRAGEDY AT NORTHFIELD.

Northfield is a charming town in Rice county, Minnesota. It is most pleasantly situated on the Cannon River. About two thousand men, women and children live in it. The country surrounding is exceedingly fertile, and the people of the county supremely industrious.

The inhabitants of the village are, in the best sense of the word, of the better class, mostly from New England. Hither they had come with New England notions and morals. They were not men to be trifled with, by any means.

In the village stands "Carleton College" and the Willis Hall for ladies. This college and the hall were respectively endowed by Mr. Carleton, of Boston and Charlestown, Massachusetts, and Miss Willis, of Boston, afterward Mrs. Carleton, Mr. Carleton sending \$50,000 in cash to Northfield, and Miss Willis \$10,000, for the erection of the buildings that bear their names. It was supposed that at this time much of this money was lying in the vaults of the bank.

At this season of the year the farmers were disposing of their grain and depositing the proceeds in the bank. This, with the college funds, led the bandits to believe that the haul would be exceedingly large. It may be as well for us to note the appearances in their favor.

1. The amount in the bank.

2. Northfield is a college town, and therefore peopled with those least likely to defend themselves with murderous weapons.

3. It is surrounded by a very moral and industrious class, to whom such a desperate attempt would be almost, if not quite, unbelievable. They would be nonplussed. .

And now let us note the facts against them.

1. They were people of principle, and preferred to die in the line of duty rather than to desert their post.

2. They had something to defend—their college and its future, and their churches and homes.

3. Because of their principles they determined to rid their county and State of such desperadoes.

These three facts the gang did not take into account. They had for many years caused men to surrender by a word of command. The enervated Southerners was their conception of all men when they came to deal with these Northfieldians; men who had been cradled on the Eastern coast, made strong in principle and courage by the training of New England, tough as steel by the Minnesota air, to whom home and church and school were the synonyms of all that was most precious in life; they found that they were coping with material in the form of men to which they had been strangers all their lives. But we anticipate. To this town the robbers came.

The bank stands on the corner of the chief block of the beautifully built town; the business men are at dinner. On the other side of the river three other men also are at dinner. The Northfieldians are talking of their college and crops;

these three men are talking of the fall elections. Little did the Northfieldians think that before another day one of their most respected citizens would be at home a murdered corpse, and as little did either of these three think that their party (of which they were but a part) were meeting for the last time on earth, and with probabilities equally slim for ever meeting in heaven.

When the three had eaten dinner at Dundas they paid their bills—they were none other than Robert and James Younger and Bill Chadwell—and set out toward Northfield. At the same time coming from the north were Clell Miller and Charlie Pitts, and from another side three strangers quietly entered and made their way to the bank, tied their horses outside, and when they heard the charging of horses' hoofs and reports of revolvers, and oaths and curses, they entered the building. In a moment it was surrounded by other members of the gang, who threatened the citizens with instant death if any of them interfered, and gave emphasis to their threats by the utterance of fearful oaths, and pointing with unerring aim the most cruel looking shooting irons that had ever been seen in that country, at the heads and hearts of the peaceable inhabitants.

“From without they guard the murderous work within.”

Let us enter and see what is going on. The three brigands jumped over the counter, and seizing Mr. J. L. Haywood, the cashier, demanded that he open the safe at once.

“I will not!” he replied.

Frank drew a fearful looking knife and held it to his

throat, demanding a second time that he open the safe.

"I will not!" replied the brave and trustful man.

"Quick, now," cried Jesse, "or you die like a dog."

"I can't help that," said Mr. Haywood, "I will do my duty, though I die."

"Then die, d—n you," said Jesse, and in less than a second the revolver that was held to his right temple discharged its deadly bullet through the brain of the brave cashier, and he fell dead at the assassins' feet.

Foiled by the cashier, they tried their energies upon Mr. A. E. Bunker, assistant cashier, and the clerk, Mr. F. Wilcox.

"Hold up your hands."

They obeyed.

"Open the vault!" was the command given to Mr. Bunker.

"I do not know the combination."

They thrust a pistol into his face and told him he lied, and threatened him with a fate like poor Haywood's; but something in his manner convinced them that he uttered the truth. Inadvertently turning from him to seek the money drawers of the cashier, he made a bolt for the door and escaped; as he did so receiving a bullet in his shoulder from one of the robbers. They scattered the nickels which they found all over the floor and paid no regard whatever to the poor clerk Wilcox, who came as near being frightened out of his senses as most men do in a lifetime.

Disappointed within, their attention was roused from their failure to some proceedings quite unusual and exciting without. Something new and peculiar in their history was happening. It was in this wise;

A young Dr. Wheeler, as brave a boy as ever trod shoe leather, seeing what it all meant, and being commanded to make himself scarce or he might be hurt, took the hint and being a participant in that quality of bravery that is never rash and always effective, went to his room on the second floor opposite, where he kept an old carbine, which had done good service in killing other objects. Being as good a shot as the robbers, and as cool and steady in nerve as a man could be, he gently opened his windows and took deliberate aim at the heart of Clell Miller. In a moment that curse of Texas threw up his arms and with one wild yell, cried:

“My God! Boys, I’m done for”; fell on his horse’s neck dead.

As another barrel was loaded and the Doctor successful in his operation, he aimed again, and this time Bill Chadwell received the bullet in a vital part. He fell from his horse and groaned out:

“Take my revolvers, and don’t give in,” and died as he had lived, the greatest desperado and horse thief that had been raised in Minnesota.

Others of the brave Northfieldians joined the melee.

Just then a Mr. J. S. Allen, one of the prominent citizens, came into the vicinity of the bank not knowing what had occurred. He was soon met with the threat:

“D—n you, turn back. I’ll blow your brains out if you squeal.”

The situation was fearful for both parties; the robbers had not succeeded in getting anything, but instead they had committed a fearful murder, and two of their fellows were lying dead

in the street. Dr. Wheeler had just prepared his carbine for further use. A Mr. Manning was determined on wounding or killing another; the peaceable citizens were roused, and as one expressed it:

“It was as if hell was let loose, and men of ordinary quiet character sprung into demons in an hour.”

Frank, Jesse, and Cole Younger took in the state of affairs at once, and leaping to their horses, fled from the terrible scene of crime, blood and failure. During the melee, Jim Younger received a severe wound in the shoulder, and lost his horse. Not noticing this the others started off, leaving him alone in the street, when he called out:

“My God! boys, you don’t mean to leave me. I’m shot!”

At this Cole dashed back through a shower of lead, caught the wounded man up and joining the others rode hastily away. But not a moment too soon. Already fifty or more citizens had simultaneously equipped themselves and come to the rescue. When they found the robbers had fled, they followed in hot haste, breathing righteous vengeance upon the miscreants. At their head rode the valiant Wheeler.



CHAPTER XLIV.

THE ESCAPE FROM NORTHFIELD.

The flight from Northfield for a while was very rapid. The horses used by the bandits were always the fleetest and best they could obtain, and this time they needed all the advantage of superior mounting and riding to escape the vengeance they had raised behind them. Their bold attempt to rob a bank under the very eyes of Northfield's citizens, and unprovoked murder of Haywood, a gentleman respected and esteemed by the entire community, had aroused a spirit of revenge in the people there which seemed likely to end the sanguinary career of the outlaws. Within a few hours the whole country was acquainted with the affair, and hundreds of armed men were on the lookout for the fleeing robbers, while Dr. Wheeler, at the head of his party, was pressing steadily on their trail. These efforts were further stimulated by the proclamation of Gov. Pillsbury offering a reward of one thousand dollars for the capture of the entire band, which was subsequently increased to one thousand dollars for each member, or six thousand dollars for the entire band. The fugitives took a southwesterly direction. After getting out of the town they rode hard for about a mile to where a belt of woods concealed them, and then they drew rein for a few minutes to dress their wounds. Here it was discovered that every man in the party was hurt, some dangerously. A little

further on they stopped again and bathed and bandaged their wounds at a little brook which crossed the road; a linen duster worn by one of the men was torn into strips and used for bandages. At a turn in the road near Dundas they met a farmer with a good team of horses. One of theirs was injured, and they proceeded to make a hasty trade with the man. They knocked him into a ditch, cut the team loose, and hurried on. Jim now had a horse and rode by himself, with Cole and Bob at his side for support. In this way they made better time than before. Two miles beyond Dundas they were compelled to stop again. Here Cole went to a house and got a pail which they afterward used to pour water on their wounds.

Jim was now found to be in a terrible condition. The blood flowed copiously from a ghastly wound in his shoulder, and his strength was rapidly failing. At last it became necessary for some one to ride with him to keep him from falling out of the saddle. Cole performed this duty, and in spite of that impediment they made surprising headway that day, reaching Shieldsville before dark.

Shieldsville is a post village of less than two hundred inhabitants, located about twenty miles from Northfield, but the route taken by the bandits increased the distance to more than twenty-five miles. The one who was to guide them through that strange country could not lead them now. Bill Chadwell, who knew every foot of the ground they must traverse, and the only one of the party who was acquainted with the country, lay dead in the street at Northfield, so they journeyed on as best they could, guided solely by their pocket

compasses, and unable through ignorance of their surroundings to avoid dangerous places. As they rode through this little hamlet they shouted to the people to get into their houses and keep quiet, and emphasized their threats by firing off their pistols. This had the desired effect, and it was not long till there was not a person in sight in the little village, and the desperadoes rode on unmolested. But their pursuers were rapidly closing around them. Sheriff Davis with a posse, was behind them; Sheriff Estes and posse were before them, and officers and citizens hedged them on the right and left. From here they seemed to have traveled more slowly. Jim Younger's condition was hourly becoming more critical. He was unable to make his own way and too weak to endure the strain of rapid travel. Besides, the news of the outrage had brought hundreds to the search; the roads and fords were all guarded by armed citizens and they were now compelled to skulk across the country through woods and fields and unfrequented by-ways which, owing to their limited knowledge of the country around them, made their progress painfully slow.

On the night of the 11th they were overtaken by a posse of fourteen men. In the fight which followed one of the robbers lost his horse, but was immediately taken up behind one of the others. The citizens were driven back, and the band made their escape.

Their course now lay due west. At Lake Elysian they were driven out of a patch of timber, but again eluded their pursuers. Everywhere were armed men; all the roads and crossing places, all the fords, were guarded by citizens who

had left their homes, their labor and their business to exterminate the outlaws, as men used to gather in the early settlements to exterminate wild beasts.

In a deep forest, near Kilkenny, the bandits came to a halt and rested through the night. The next morning they resumed their perilous march westward in hope of reaching the border where human habitations were less numerous. Finally they were compelled to abandon their horses and make their way on foot, skulking through thickets and hiding in brush, while their hunters beat the woods around them, sometimes passing within pistol shot of them. All through that terrible march they were compelled to live on green corn and melon and such food as was easily picked up, seldom daring to cook anything for fear of drawing their enemies upon them by their fire.

Once they came upon a young calf and shot it in the head, but it got away, and they dared not pursue it or shoot again. At another time they ventured to shoot a pig, but it too got away. Fate seemed to have marked them for capture or starvation. All this time the blood from Jim's wound was making a certain trail for their pursuers to follow. One night about midnight they reached Marysburg. Here they found a safe hiding place, built a fire and had their first meal of roasted potatoes and corn. In the morning, just as the village clock struck five, they stole away from the Marysburg camp considerably refreshed, and more hopeful of escape.

From there they took a southwesterly course through Blue Earth county toward Mankato. All day they journeyed on with no knowledge of where their route would lead them

except that by continuing in that direction they would ultimately get out of Minnesota, the scene of their first defeat. Thus far they had eluded their pursuers, and it really began to look as if their indomitable courage and endurance would bear them through the danger. But the worst was yet to come. Late that evening they found a good hiding place in a thicket near a cornfield, and here they turned in for a good night's rest. They did not build a fire, but made their supper as usual, from green corn and some muskmelons, and then they very quietly retired. Several times that night they were awakened by persons passing near their hiding place. This proved to be because they had happened to camp near a path which ran through the cornfield to the main road.

At last, when within a few miles of Mankato, they came upon a man named Dunning, who was out in search for them. They captured him, and true to the old rule, some one offered to put him where he could tell no tales. But they had killed one too many men now; the persistence of the pursuit for them was more the result of the unprovoked murder of Mr. Haywood than the attempted robbing, and realizing this they hesitated to add another murder to their terrible record.

Finally it was decided to tie him securely to a tree, where he could not be discovered till they had got away, but Dunning pleaded hard for his life, and implored them not to leave him bound in that lonely place, where he might not be found until after he had starved to death, so, probably with the hope of conciliating their pursuers should they ultimately fall into their hands; maybe from motives of humanity, as they claim,

they let him go. But if a sentiment of humanity prompted them in this, it is a little strange that some such impulse did not exhibit itself earlier, and prevent the murder of Haywood; while, if it was with a desire to conciliate the avengers of the law that they abstained from taking one more life, they exhibited a weakness and lack of acumen hard to account for in men of their experience. They were commencing to be kind too late in life to win much credit for deeds of mercy. However, they made Dunning swear by all the gods in Minnesota that he would not mention having seen them. Of course Mr. Dunning was very glad to accept the terms proposed, and under the weight of a terrible oath he lit out gaily for the haunts of men, and soon his adventure with the boys in the woods was known far and near, and the search was renewed with increased enthusiasm.

They were overtaken and surrounded in a strip of woodland near Mankato, and all the fords and bridges and roads so completely guarded that it was thought impossible for them to escape; but about midnight they suddenly appeared at a bridge, drove the guard off, crossed over and disappeared in the woods.

On the evening of the 13th, six days after the Northfield tragedy, the robbers stole into Mankato once more, but in different plight from that in which they had entered that place but little more than a week before. Then they were free and hopeful of success; now they were hunted and well nigh discouraged. Still they trudged on, trusting to fortune and the skill and cunning which had never yet forsaken them. Just as they reached the confines of the town they were

startled by the shrill whistle of the oil mill. This they supposed was a signal agreed upon by the citizens announcing their approach, and concluding that they had been discovered, they turned aside and skulked through the alleys and by-ways back of the mill, and passed out beyond the town to a strip of thin woods near by. Here they found a melon patch, and then, at the dead of night, surrounded by danger in a thousand shapes, they proceeded to indulge in a quiet feast, maybe their last for all they knew. Afterward they went to a house not far distant and got a chicken, and would have got more, but just then they heard people shouting and calling, and saw men hunting about for tracks. Then they retired to a safer place, and soon pushed forward on their weary journey through the woods along the river.

It was here that the James Brothers, so rumor has it, proposed to kill Jim Younger, whose wounds were beyond doubt mortal, and whose bleeding left a trail by which they would all be finally hunted down. The proposition was rejected with the scorn it deserved, and the band then separated; the James Brothers taking one direction, while Cole and Bob Younger, with their wounded brother and Charlie Pitts, took their sad way together.

From the remarkable skill in woodcraft exhibited by these men, it is more than likely that if they had abandoned the helpless one and looked only to their own safety, they would have escaped, in spite of the strangeness of the country. As it was they came near getting away, burden and all.

But the bandages and blood they left along the way were unerring pointers which they could not always conceal from

their pursuers. Time and time again they waded for miles through streams and marshes to hide their tracks, and for a while it seemed as if they were destined to be successful. All trace of them had been lost, and for a full week after the 14th no indication of their course had been found.

They had reached a point near the Watonwan River, distant, in a direct line, about seventy-five miles from Northfield, but by the route they had taken in their ignorance of the country, they had traveled fully a hundred and thirty miles. It was the 21st of September, fourteen days since the beginning of their flight, a period into which had been crowded more hardships, perils and fatigues than had fallen to the lot of these men since the memorable retreat from Lawrence. Their feet were blistered and so sore that every step was torture; hunger had wrought its effects, and left them weak when they should have been strong. Never since they started had they found a chance to fully satisfy their appetite. The few hasty meals they had eaten had been caught from the fields through which they were driven, and eaten as they hastened on their perilous way. But the end was fast approaching; their tortuous march was soon to be brought to a close; the network of foes, like the coil of a great serpent, was rapidly tightening around them; every hour hastened their doom; every painful step they took brought them nearer to the scene of their last desperate struggle.

On the morning of the 21st a man called at a farmhouse about eight miles west of Madelia and bought some bread. His haggard face and the deplorable condition of his clothes,

which were torn and stained with blood, aroused the suspicions of the family. A boy at the house watched him till he joined three others, and with them took a westerly direction across a field. This confirmed the suspicions aroused; the boy hastily carried the news to Madelia, and within two hours after the man left the farmhouse with his bread, a hundred armed citizens were riding in his tracks.

The party continued to receive volunteers along the way until they numbered more than a hundred and fifty. In the meantime, the four wounded and weary refugees were making their way as fast as they could toward a dense forest which skirts the Watonwan River. They had not far to go to reach it, and it is possible—judging from what they had accomplished in places less favorable—that, with another hour before them, they would have got beyond the limits of practicable pursuit, and escaped entirely.

But the citizens were upon them now, and it was still morning; many hours intervened between them and their trusty guardian—the night. Exhausted with fatigue, weak and stiff with their wounds, they were in poor condition for either flight or defence; but they had never thought of surrendering.

It was about noon when Sheriff Gilispin, who, with four deputies, was riding in advance, spied the forlorn procession at the edge of a swamp which borders the river at that place. Observing their pursuers, the robbers waded into the slough which, for the time, offered them protection, as they could not be followed there by a horse.

The sheriff and his party rode forward as far as the

ground would permit, and commanded the men to surrender. The robbers paid no attention to the order, but continued to wade toward the other side. Seeing that he could not follow them further, the sheriff ordered his men to fire. The range was long and the volley was ineffectual, so the party rode around the swamp with the intention of heading off the robbers. This took time, and the bandits made the best they could of it. They continued to hobble on toward the river, and had gone nearly two miles further before the citizens caught up with them.

They were at the edge of a strip of timber when the sheriff's party opened fire upon them at long range. This they promptly returned, wounding the sheriff's horse and sending bullets so close to the ears of the riders that their enthusiasm was checked for a moment, during which the bold quartette gained the timber, and were soon out of sight.

Proceeding straight on through the wood — which they discovered when too late embraced only a few acres — they came out into a wood just as a wagon containing a party of sportsmen was passing. The bandits sprang forward and attempted to capture the wagon; but the occupants presented their guns, and the unlucky four, supposing the party were pursuers, retreated again into the wood. That sealed their fate. The clump of timber to which they returned was a mere oasis in a desert of danger. On one side was the road, which soon filled with their hunters; on the other was the prairie where they just had left a band of pursuers; wherever they turned was open country, and around them now on every side their enemies had gathered. They were caged,

The citizens who had now surrounded the little clump of trees began to fire into it from all sides; but the game they hunted was too old to be "scared up" by that means, and too cunning to respond to so general a challenge. They were well concealed, and a storm of bullets might have been poured into the place in that promiscuous way forever without hurting anybody, so they kept quiet, and waited for developments.

At last the sheriff organized a party to go in and rout them out. There was nothing especially delightful about the undertaking, yet there were men who volunteered to assist in it. Col. Vaught, George Bradford, James Severson, Capt. Murphy, Ben Rice and Charles Pomeroy, with Sheriff Gilispin, arranged themselves in line, about twenty feet apart, and proceeded cautiously through the brush. When they had gone about fifty yards a man jumped up before the sheriff and fired. The sheriff's rifle, which he was carrying cocked and ready for instant use, went off at the first movement of the bushes, and the man, who afterward proved to be Charley Pitts, ran a few yards, reeled and with a yell that never will be forgotten by those who took part in that strange conflict, fell at the feet of his desperate companions and died. Then the citizens began to close around them, firing continuously as they advanced. The bandits, though greatly outnumbered and exhausted with fatigue, returned the fire with telling effect, but the issue could not be doubtful this time; a hundred and fifty fresh men, brave and fully armed, against that exhausted and hopeless four. A rifle ball went crashing through Jim Younger's jaw, tearing away the

flesh and shattering the bone in a horrible way. But the fight still continued; the brigands would not surrender while life lasted; they all had received shots, but still fought on. At last Cole sank down, after six bullets had lodged in his body and one in his head, and Bob was left to conduct the battle alone. He stood up between his fallen brothers and emptied his revolvers among the citizens; then he took another from Jim and continued to fire till a bullet broke his right arm; shifting the pistol to his left he kept up the defence till the last chamber was empty; then throwing it down, he said: "It's no use to fight any longer; the boys are all shot to pieces."

Then the citizens gathered around them. They were prisoners at last; their long career of crime and freedom had closed forever; those daring spirits who had for fourteen years kept the country in fear and turmoil; who had escaped from a thousand perils and braved a thousand more, until it seemed as if they could not be taken by men, at last were prisoners. They were put into wagons and taken to Madelia, and the news was telegraphed far and wide that the Northfield robbers had been captured. The survivors confessed that they were the Younger Brothers, and thousands came in to Madelia to see the notorious robbers. Women—those sympathetic apologists for crime whenever it takes a brave or gallant form—crowded to their cells and looked admiringly upon those celebrated heroes of a hundred outrages.

They were handsome fellows, despite the terrible ordeal through which they had passed. Pitts and Miller, the only brutish-looking members of the gang, had been killed. Only

the Youngers survived, and they were a fine looking family. Tall, every one over six feet in height, robust and intellectual, they were so different from the accepted description of criminals, especially highwaymen, that it was difficult, while looking at them, to realize their true characters.

Bob, the youngest, was just twenty-one, and a magnificent specimen of manhood. He said the boys had done their best; they had never been taken before, and would have got away then but they had relied upon Chadwell to guide them, and he had been killed before the retreat commenced. He declared that, although they had borne many hardships, when they were captured they were all tough and could have endured a great deal more. They said that they should have killed Dunning, and then they would have escaped; but they did not delight in bloodshed, and were foolish enough to indulge their merciful disposition at the expense of their own safety.

Surgical aid was procured, and the boys were found to be in a terrible plight. Cole had received in all eleven wounds during the last engagement, which, added to some "old ones" which still left their scars on his body, made him present a somewhat checkered appearance. A bullet had lodged under his right eye in such a way that it could not be extracted, paralyzing the optic nerve and causing the deformity noticeable in his portrait. Jim was a total wreck, and was looked upon by the physicians as a hopeless case. A rifle ball had torn most of his under jaw away, exposing the bones and nerves and the lower part of the tongue in a frightful manner. The wound in the shoulder which had troubled him so

much during the retreat was a ghastly sight, and appeared in itself sufficient to cause death; besides, he had a charge of small shot and a rifle ball in his body. Bob was the only one able to stand at the surrender, and he was badly hurt.

All efforts to "pump" the boys after their capture were futile. They would not say anything about their companions; not even those who had been killed.

One day a man visited their cell, and told them that the James Boys had been captured; one dead, and the other mortally wounded.

"What makes you think they are the James Boys?" asked Cole.

"The wounded man confessed."

"Which one?"

"Jesse."

"Which one, I say; the big one or the little one?"

"The little one."

"Did he say anything about us?"

"No."

"Good boy!" said the laconic Cole, and that was all. They were willing to talk about the "big one" and the "little one," but they never spoke a name. The dead were all identified by others who knew them, so that there was no doubt as to who they were.

Clell Miller and Bill Chadwell were the men who fell in the street at Northfield, and Charley Pitts the one killed in the woods at the capture. They were all desperate men, and had won unenviable fame in many preceding robberies. Miller was an ex-guerilla, and was known as a hard fighter.

He first came into notice as a common robber at the raid on the Corydon Bank, and afterward figured prominently in most of the outrages perpetrated by that band. Bill Chadwell had been a resident of Minnesota, but had been suspected or detected in stealing horses there, and was forced to leave the State. He was a rough character, and had never been connected with an affair of such importance before. He was invited to the conference preceding the fatal raid because of his intimate knowledge of the country in which they intended to operate, and his death at the very beginning of the attack was a fatal blow to the hopes of the others. His father identified the body. Charley Pitts, alias Charles Wells, was a noted desperado from Texas. Unlike the Youngers, his face was a faultless index to his soul. The bearded lips and beetling brows did not conceal, but expressed in all their repulsive lines, the desperate character of the man. Ugly as he was wicked, he was known as "The Hyena," and although exposure, hunger, and a violent death had lent an unnatural hideousness to the countenance, it was still easy for those who had once seen the notorious "Pitts" to identify his remains.

As soon as their wounds permitted, the surviving prisoners, Cole, Jim and Bob Younger, were removed to Faribault, the county seat of Rice county. The body of the dead bandit, Charley Pitts, was taken to St. Paul and embalmed.

At Faribault the prisoners were kindly treated and received all the care and attention possible, for which they appeared to be very grateful, saying that they could not understand such magnanimity when it was so undeserved.

Under this treatment they rapidly recovered from the effects of their wounds and exposure. Of course every precaution was taken against any possible attempt to release the prisoners, whose characters and that of their associates demanded the strictest vigilance and a strong guard constantly about the jail where they were confined.

Among the visitors from the old haunts of the captured robbers were James McDonough, Chief of the St. Louis police, and a party of detectives. The prisoners received them with every remark of respect. Cole and Bob had recovered rapidly, and were able to entertain their visitors with some show of ease and good humor. They were smoking and reading newspapers when the party from St. Louis arrived, and entered at once into a friendly and interesting conversation which lasted for about two hours, during which nobody learned anything of importance concerning the prisoners or their companions in crime.

A sister of the captured bandits—Miss Laurette Younger, called “Ret” and “Rettie” by her brothers, accompanied by an aunt, Mrs. Twyman, and a brother-in-law, Mr. R. S. Hall, all of Jackson county, Missouri, arrived in Faribault soon after the capture, and during their stay were frequent visitors at the jail. Miss Rettie was constant in her attendance at the cell of the doomed men, and her grief and sisterly affection were touching in the extreme.

She had heard of the capture of her brothers while at a seminary in Lexington, Missouri, and immediately started on her long and sorrowful journey to the scene of their shame and defeat. She was described as being a young lady of very

prepossessing appearance, with slight figure, light brown hair, regular features, and frank, gentle-looking eyes; and strange to say, it was in the latter where lay the strongest mark of resemblance between that affectionate, innocent girl and those cruel perpetrators of so many crimes. Ye who insist that the eyes are the windows of the soul, must admit that those windows as often conceal as reveal the spirit within.

Upon entering the jail, the poor girl went straight to where Jim lay on his couch, and taking the bandaged head in her arms, and covering it with kisses, she exclaimed:

“Oh, my dear brother, this is terrible! Cole and Robert enticed you to this. It is all their fault.”

Throughout the entire visit she remained at Jim's side, weeping and constantly caressing the wounded boy, and frequently exclaiming:

“Oh, Jimmie, my dear brother! What shall I do without you?”

When the party were leaving the cell, Miss Rettie gave her hand to Cole and Bob, and with a mere bow, passed sadly out. The older brothers, Cole and Bob, were very much embarrassed through the visit. When they were informed of their sister's arrival, they expressed themselves as dreading the meeting with her. Jim, it seems, had always been the pet of the family, and Cole and Bob were more solicitous about his safety during the retreat than about their own. Had it not been for this there is little doubt that they could have escaped.

We will now follow, as far as possible, the footsteps of

the other two robbers through a retreat which, for dangers and hardships, has no parallel in the history of remarkable escapes. The next night after the separation of the bandits in Blue Earth Bottom, the James Brothers broke through a guard of citizens, and made their way in the face of a lively fire to a corn-field. During the encounter they both received wounds, Frank a serious one in the thigh. The corn-field proved to be an excellent place of concealment, and after reaching it their pursuers for the time appeared to have lost all trace of them. They came out at the rear of a farm-yard about midnight, and appropriated two good horses, and reaching the open country, struck out for the border. But they were badly "used up" and stiff from their wounds, and but for their desperate situation, could not have proceeded any further. Occasionally they would stop and "trade" horses, sometimes having to use their pistols to effect an exchange. Several times they called at houses for food, and were told while they received it that the "men folks" had gone out to hunt the Northfield robbers. On the border of Iowa they encountered a posse of their pursuers, and after a running fight, during which two of the citizens were wounded, the chase ended, and the robbers continued their retreat.

By their mode of frequently "changing horses," they now got along quite rapidly, although their bold course exposed them to constantly increasing peril. At times they were completely surrounded, and no chance of escaping seemed to remain; but persistence and bravery which would have won them distinction in almost any other cause, always bore them through, and secured them at least a temporary

respite, although in another hour they might be compelled to face danger in another form.

At one place in a wilderness of heavy timber and thick underbrush which offered them security, they found a good hiding-place, and concluded to rest there until pursuit of them was abandoned. A neighboring farm appeared to extend the hospitality of a well-filled chicken coop, and a field of corn and one of melons especially commended the place to them. There they could rest and care for their wounds, and regain the strength they had lost through hunger and fatigue. But one good meal of roast chicken and corn was all they ever got there. Their pursuers had found their trail, and forced them to leave their comfortable retreat. The robbers had lost their horses, and were again compelled to make their way on foot. But they were now in a country where they could travel more safely, if not so rapidly, that way than on horseback, as on foot they could take advantage of the concealment offered only by woods and fields, which they could not do encumbered by horses. It was necessary now more than ever before for the robbers to avoid the high-ways. Their bold appropriation of all the good horses that had come in their way had aroused the whole country around them, and made caution a necessity. They now traveled entirely at night, and rested through the day. Arriving one morning just before daylight at a farmhouse, they crept into the barn, and concealing themselves under some hay, soon fell asleep. They had not lain long in their rustic bed when the farmer came to feed his horses. For half an hour he worked about the barn, unconscious of his strange and dan-

gerous guests. He took hay from within three feet of the hidden robbers, but fortunately for him, did not uncover their resting-place. All this time the robbers had lain with pistols ready, expecting momentarily to be discovered; but at last the farmer went away, unconscious of the danger he had so luckily escaped. After that the bandits moved further back among the hay and slept till night without being annoyed again, except during the feeding at noon and evening, which, however, was done without much danger to them, owing to their change of position.

The next morning the farmer came to his stable as usual to feed his horses, but there were two less horses to feed. The visitors of the day before had gone; the two best horses in the stable had borne them fifty miles nearer to safety. Here they secured their horses in a thicket and rested till noon, when Jesse went to a farmhouse near by to get something to eat. As he approached the house he saw a number of people in the yard and on the porch, and soon discovered that there was a funeral about to leave the place. He concealed himself until the folks had all got out of sight, and then proceeded to the house. A boy who was left in charge during the absence of the family, upon seeing Jesse—whose appearance had not been at all improved by the exposure he had endured—became frightened, and started to leave the house. But Jesse, whose manner was always winning, spoke kindly to him and asked the lad to get him a drink of water. Reassured by the evident gentleness of the man, the boy started to obey, when Jesse sprang upon him and, drawing a pistol, told him that if he uttered a cry or attempted to

escape, he would kill him in his tracks. Then Jesse demanded to know where the men kept their clothes; being shown the place, he selected two respectable suits, a pair of shirts, a couple of hats, and two pairs of boots. Then tying the boy securely with a cord cut from a bed, and assuring him that if he offered to move from the house he would murder him, Jesse took a loaf of bread and some meat from the pantry, and returned to the hiding-place in the woods.

Time now was valuable. In a few hours the family would return, and then the country would swarm with pursuers. Making a hasty toilet at a neighboring spring, the two men removed the clothes which had so long been marks of description upon them, and donning the new outfits, they rode boldly into the road, and proceeded openly on their way. At the next town they stopped at a hotel, went to a barber shop and got shaved and had their hair cut, and came back to supper. After supper they entered into general conversation around the office stove; inquired the price of land in that neighborhood, and among other things, the conversation naturally turned to the Northfield tragedy, and the horse-stealing which had recently caused so much excitement. Here the strangers became very interesting; they had come through the country where the excitement had been greatest. In fact, at one place, they "went out with the boys for a little while to hunt the d——d rascals. Some one had seen them in the woods near the town, and everybody turned out; but after pursuing the trail all day and part of the night, they found they had been following a couple of tramps." It was their opinion that the robbers were still in the neighborhood

of Northfield. In fact, it was impossible for them to have got far on account of the way the roads had been guarded. "Why," said Jesse, who always did the talking when Frank and he were together among strangers, "within an hour after they left Northfield two hundred of us started out of Mankato by different roads to head them off. That was miles from the scene of the occurrence, and it was just so at all the telegraph stations within a hundred miles of Northfield. Every road and ford and bridge within a radius of a hundred miles was completely guarded before night, and it was simply impossible for those fellows to have gone much further than Shieldsville. It's my opinion that the gang had laid their plans carefully, arranged with friends in the neighborhood, and after the raid made straight for places of concealment prepared beforehand; and if they are ever found it will be within fifty miles of Northfield. That is the place to look for them."

This theory, if not strictly in harmony with the opinion of others, was in a measure plausible, and at least bore every evidence of honesty. There were some present who thought the robbers had got beyond the reach of possible pursuit; others asserted that those engaged in the affair were men who lived in the State, and were then at home or engaged with their neighbors in the hunt for the outlaws. In the meantime the travelers called for their horses, settled their bill, and rode away.

They were once more civilians, and in position to meet and converse with men without danger. Their appearance no longer rendered them objects of suspicion. When oppor-

tunity occurred they sold their horses, bought a new outfit of clothes, and thereafter traveled by rail. At Kansas City Frank was left in charge of a physician, while Jesse, whose wounds were not so serious, continued his journey till he arrived in Texas. Here he was subsequently joined by Frank, and after a quiet sojourn, they recovered from their wounds and the chagrin of their late defeat.

In October, at the meeting of the Circuit Court at Fairbault, Thomas Coleman Younger, Robert Ewing Younger, and James Younger, were arraigned to answer to an indictment for murder in the first degree, and for conspiring to commit robbery. To the charge of murder it was the intention of the prisoners to plead not guilty, but their attorney persuaded them in view of the clemency extended by the law of Minnesota in cases where defendants plead guilty as charged, not to contest the indictment; so at the trial, in answer to the charges entered against them, the three men pleaded "Guilty," and were promptly called upon to stand up and receive sentence, which was that they be taken to the jail at Stillwater and confined for the term of their natural lives.

Upon hearing the solemn words which doomed the culprits to a life of solitude, and consigned them to a living death, the sister of the prisoners gave way to the most violent demonstrations of grief, falling upon Jim's neck and shrieking and sobbing in a frantic manner. The scene was the most affecting imaginable; many eyes were moist which at first wore looks of sternness, and lips quivered with pity which had just been curved in scorn and hatred of the men whose lawless acts had provoked the stern decision.

The prisoners were led from the room to the jail, and the next day were taken to their place of confinement, the penitentiary at Stillwater, where they have since remained living out the days of a monotonous life, shut in from the sight and the interests of men.

It was long thought probable that some attempt would be made by their friends to liberate the Younger Brothers, but nothing of importance was ever developed to that end, and there now seems to be no doubt that they will expiate their crimes as prescribed by the law.



CHAPTER XLIV.

THE JAMES BROTHERS FLY ACROSS THE BORDER—SOJOURN IN MEXICO—ADVENTURES AMONG THE NATIVES.

It would now have been rashness — fool-hardiness — to return to their old haunts. Missouri had long been a safe resting-place for them, but their last outrage had awakened the nation. Hundreds of brave men sought reward and renown in the hunt for those violators of the law, and their home and all their known resorts were watched ceaselessly. Missouri was no longer safe for them; nor did the Union offer them a refuge anywhere in its wide expanse. And so the James Brothers decided to retire from the field of their former depredations and rest, or ply their desperate trade beyond the limits of the law which sought their lives so industriously. With this intention, they met by appointment in Texas, and cautiously took their way to Mexico. There they were in their proper element, surrounded by the thieves and murderers that infest the border of that country, not all of whom were strangers to them, for there they met three members of the old gang, among them Jack Bishop, a noted desperado from the States. These made the band complete and large enough for the most sanguinary operations, and it was not long till they began to look about them for prey worthy of their skill and daring. Carmen was the place they selected for their introductory operations, and it was not long before the opportunity occurred for this.

As this scene in their dramatic lives is laid among less familiar objects than those which have figured in their former exploits, we venture to give some description of their new surroundings.

The American who, for the first time, sees a Mexican town, is at once impressed with its ancient physiognomy. Everything of a modern character seems to have been religiously excluded from its confines. To one who has ever been in Cadiz, in Madrid, in Naples, in Rome, the impress of the southern nations is strikingly apparent in every city and hamlet in that country. There are the straight streets, the open plaza or square, the heavy stone houses with flat roofs, the endless churches with glittering cupolas and extensive, citadel-like cloisters, magnificent aqueducts like those of ancient Rome,—splendor and luxury on the one hand, filth and wretchedness on the other. Here, as in the two Castiles from which the Mexicans obtained their modern architecture, we notice the same absence of trees and the same lack of beautiful parks and gardens, the place of which is ill supplied by dirty and unpleasant environs.

“New Spain” is a most proper name to bestow upon this country, in which is preserved so many of the customs and fashions of its parent land. However, there are features in which the resemblance cannot be traced. In “Old Spain” every town and city has a far-reaching history; almost every building and archway, all the gates and walls and citadels are monuments in stone of the land where they stand, and the people who have walked among them. In Mexico this is not the case. The ancient people whom the Spaniards dis-

placed have almost disappeared from the land, except where their blood is mingled with that of the conquerors, and exert as little influence upon the life and manners of that country as the Indian does upon the customs of American society. Their monuments are few, and their history scant. No one in Mexico to-day seems to care anything about matters dating prior to the Revolution. Scores of people who have dwelt all their lives in the capital cannot tell where Cortes' house was situated; hardly one in the republic could point out where the armed Alvarado leaped over the broad canal, and no one knows, and few care, where Montezuma fell, or where the statue of Tlaloc was worshiped. These true children of the sun are not much interested in matters which do not directly influence their present state. Sufficient unto the day is the history thereof, is in a measure the motto of the ordinary Mexican, and his total indifference to matters relating to the past and future of his country is but a feature of the spirit which causes him to lounge in the shade of his vine and fig tree, and smoke his cigarettes, while foreigners take the gold and silver from his mines.

The "Plaza" is the market place of the Mexican town. It is usually a broad open court in the center of the place; one side is invariably occupied by the chief church, while on the opposite, as invariably are the city halls, or in the principal town of the state, the capitol; the other sides are occupied with the houses of the wealthy people, the under stories of these being usually a colonnade in which are the finest shops, wine and coffee houses, club-rooms, etc. The Plaza is the trading place of the busy, and the lounging place of the idle.

It is the forum of ancient Rome in miniature. It is the headquarters of news, the meeting ground of gossipers and scandal mongers. It is the fashionable promenade; in the Plaza can best be seen the various phases of Mexican life. There congregate the high and low, the rich and poor, priest and layman, laborers on foot, and lordly dons and donnas in sumptuous equipages. In the Plaza also are conducted the drills of citizen soldiery, the firework displays and all public meetings, and here parade the stately processions of the church. Here the pious ladies of Mexico walk before and after "mass," and here the impious young gentlemen of the land come to meet them. Among the many frequenters of the Plaza the stranger cannot fail to observe certain portly gentlemen, obviously easy as to this world's goods, and from their sunburnt faces, and garments cut by the local tailor, unquestionably from the country. These are invariably conservatives, believers in the good old times, and prophets of evil things to come. They hate railways "because they hurt the trade of the carriers," an argument not entirely new, nor peculiar to Mexico, as the average reader of the newspapers of thirty years ago will remember. They also prophesy no good of gas; it is an open violation of the law of God to illuminate the streets when night has settled upon the earth. For it is plain that God designed the night to be dark, else he would have made it light.

The military is an important element in Mexico, and the Mexican soldier, who is always a lazy, good-for-nothing debauchee, and the festive officer, who is always a fop, are permanent features of the Plaza. These worthless parasites

are always rude and overbearing, and frequently insulting to the common citizens; their uniform protects them in their cussedness, and strange to say commands respect even where it most insults. At one time the military absorbed four-fifths of the entire revenue of the country, but though still the moving cause of frequent revolution, it has of late years had its power for evil considerably abridged.

Such is the typical Mexican town, and such of course is Carmen, the place selected by the James Brothers. Carmen is a village of considerable size and importance in Mexico. It is situated in a beautiful valley from which rise ridges of high and rugged hills and mountains. Through it the caravans of traders and the treasure bearers from the mines of Chihuahua all constantly pass.

Carmen is consequently a halting place for these and at times has heaped upon her plaza vast stores of merchandise and mineral wealth. Small parties often passed through here on their way to or from the North with considerable sums of money; these would have been easy prey for the practiced hands of our robbers but the prize was too small; and they left it for the less ambitious thieves of that country, who are content to cut a throat, take a wallet or a watch, and sneak away in the dark. These proud highwayman scorned such booty. They waited for large game. One day a caravan of packed mules laden with silver ore from the mines of Chihuahua moved into the little city of Carmen and halted there for a day's rest. The James Boys, on the alert for just such arrivals, hailed the sight with secret joy. Spotting one of the guards who was leaving his party to make some purchases in

the city, Jesse, who was always chosen for such service on account of a peculiar good-natured manner he possessed which never awoke suspicion and frequently won the confidence and fellowship of strangers—followed the guard till he got an opportunity to engage him in conversation. This soon occurred. The guard, who was an American, met an old acquaintance and they adjourned to a saloon to take a drink. Jesse, who heard the proposition, was in the saloon before they got there and had taken a position at the bar where he was stirring the sugar in a glass of American whisky, when the guard and his friend arrived.

The conversation, which was conducted between the two without reserve, related principally to the destination of the guard's party, which Jesse soon learned was to be Galveston.

"When I get back across the line this time," said the guard, "I'll stay there if I starve. Mexico is a good place for silver and warm weather, and clothes and whisky are cheap here, but I'd rather live where snakes and tarantulas and Mexicans are not quite so thick."

"Well," said the other, "if I owned as profitable an interest in purgatory as you own in Mexico, it would take lots of snakes and bad society to drive me away from it. A share in a mine that turns out 40,000 pounds of silver a month is worth looking after; besides, I don't find the Mexicans so hard to endure. If you will come with me to-night, I will introduce you to one whom I have found decidedly agreeable, and you know I used to be fastidious."

"Yes, I have no doubt of it, another *senorita*. Tom, I'll bet you will marry one of those soft-eyed devils if you stay here

a year. They are treacherous as sin, and I don't like them; still a fellow can endure the women on account of their beauty, even when he knows they are treacherous. We have to be constantly on the watch from the mines to Texas; the road fairly bristles with robbers, and we expect an attack whenever we enter a pass."

Here Jesse, who had shown considerable interest in the conversation, inquired if there really was so much danger to travelers in that country, and remarked that he was with a small party of gentlemen from the States, and had intended to start north in a day or two, but if the peril was so great they would certainly not attempt the journey alone, but would wait for the return of another company who had come down with them and gone through to the mines. These would not probably get back within two weeks, and he was sorry to stay so long in that disagreeable place, but rather than risk their money and their lives they would try to endure the situation till they could leave it safely.

Americans are not very particular about the restriction of their native etiquette in places so far from home. We indulge in great latitude in the way of making acquaintances among our own countrymen when we meet them in foreign lands; the fact that he is an American is a ticket to our confidence when we meet him in Africa, in Europe, or in Mexico, and so Jesse soon won admittance to the convivial company, and after a few "rounds" at the bar, during which the guard discovered that Jesse was a jolly fellow, it was decided that if his party would like to go through with the caravan they would be welcome to do so, as they would add something to

the force, and might be needed in event they ran foul of the Mexican freebooters as several of their companies had done.

The next morning before the sun had risen above the hill tops, while the grass and trees were still drenched in the heavy dew which is a peculiar feature of the tropics, the caravan with its valuable freight moved slowly out of Carmen and took its tedious way north toward Fort Quitman, a small shipping station just across the border in Texas. Everything went smoothly with the little company for several days, traveling in the early morning, resting through the heat of the day, and resuming the march at evening. They were watchful but merry, laughing and singing and telling stories. If any suspicions or distrust of their new companions existed at first it had now totally vanished, and the American gentlemen who were afraid to travel the wild road alone, were admitted to full fellowship. They told good stories and made good jokes, and their genial manner and the good humor with which they bore the hardships, and assisted in the duties of the journey, soon won the respect and confidence of all.

They were now nearing the end of their journey; another day would bring them in sight of the Rio Grande. It had been the intention of the American gentlemen to do nothing until they got within an easy run of the border, and now their time had arrived. The caravan had halted for the day in the shade of a cool forest; the noon meal was over, the men and their beasts had finished the "siesta," or afternoon nap, a common custom in climates where the heat is too intense at mid-day to permit physical exertion, the sun was well on its downward course, and its rays had lost their severity; it was the

hour when life in Mexico shakes off its death-like repose, and resumes the duties it laid down at noon. The little company had risen, the muleteers were busy lashing the burdens upon their beasts; two armed men kept guard over the treasure though this was done now merely by way of formal compliance with customary discipline, for they had passed all the perilous places on the route, and there remained no longer any fear of danger from robbers. Attacks upon caravans were always made at points farther from the haunts of men; in mountain passes, in dark defiles, and at the entrance to deep forests. Upon approaching such places the caravans always increased their precautions, rode close together with weapons ready for instant use, but now they were nearing the confines of civilization; to-morrow's sun would find them on what is known as the border, and would leave them at the margin of the Rio Grande. Another day and night and Quitman would receive their store and end for a space their tiresome march. No robbery had ever been perpetrated here; the boldest bandits had never dared to ply their trade so near the border line; the vigilance heretofore so rigorously maintained had been gradually relaxed as dangers disappeared, until now at times a single guard performed the duties formerly discharged by the entire force. This was the opportunity for action; the signal had been passed from one to the other of the bandits, and all were ready for the word. Jesse and his friends had mounted their horses; the muleteers had finished packing their animals and started toward the place where their arms were stacked, when they were stopped with the cry of

“Halt!”

“ At the same instant two pistol shots rang out, and the two armed guards fell dead.

“ Every man hold up his hands!” cried Jesse, who was now master of ceremonies. One who was a little tardy about obeying the command, was shot promptly by way of example. Resistance was soon seen to be useless. The bandits ranged themselves in front of the stack of guns and took possession of them; then commanding the captives to range themselves in line they made them march away from the place with the warning that if any one attempted to look back they would be fired upon.

Then began a hasty and exciting march, which continued all night. The next morning before sunrise they paused on the banks of the Rio Grande River. Here they secured the services of some Mexican boatmen, and transferring their silver to a fruit boat, disposed of their mules and horses, and took passage down the stream. Arriving at Fort Leaton a small shipping station at the mouth of the Conchos River, the bandits discharged their boatmen, and shortly after found sale for their ore and took their way to some safe retreat where they could live awhile on the proceeds of their last enterprise.



A TRIP DOWN THE RIO GRANDE.



CHAPTER XLVI.

“FRESH FIELDS AND PASTURES NEW”—THE FASCINATIONS OF THE OUTLAW’S LIFE—BRIGANDAGE BEYOND THE RIO GRANDE—MORE MEXICAN EXPERIENCES—FANDANGO AT MATAMORAS—WHAT IT COSTS TO LAUGH AT FRANK AND JESSE JAMES—THE SPRING OF 1877—THE BRAVE MEN OF PIEDRAS NEGRAS.

There is undoubtedly a great charm in an outlaw’s life: The sailor’s life is gay and free, free as the winds that fill his spreading sails, and gay as the sunbeams that dance upon the crested waves. With his bark for his bride, and the tossing waters for his boundless home; above all the blessings of the land, he prefers a “Life on the Ocean Wave.” The gypsy’s life; roaming through woodland and over moor, free from the restraints of civilized life, is picturesque and romantic. The miner’s life; far away among the tall, dark mountains and the everlasting hills, shut out from all genial society, alone with nature and humanity in their roughest, crudest forms, may have for a time points of more than common interest. But the outlaw’s life has fascinations all its own. There is a spice of constant danger that saves it from dullness, and the fact that at any moment the hand of the law may be laid upon your shoulder, redeems such a life from monotony. Once fairly launched into such a career, its charms seem to grow in number and in power. There was

an irresistible fascination in the "Merrie greenwood" of Sherwood Forest for Robin Hood and Little John, and there was more of music for them in the pleasant echoes of the hunter's horn than in all the trumpets that ever blew. These wild children of the hill and valley,—of all times and lands,—have evinced the same great passion for a life free from all limits of custom, and control of law. And the moment they have turned aside from their free, wild life to "settle down," they have invariably found that "settling down" was just the one thing they could not do.

It was so with the brothers Frank and Jesse James. After the terrible Northfield experience, when they escaped almost as by miracle, with their bodies riddled with shot, they too, thought of settling down. They left the old scenes of their wild depredations, and, as has been said, crossed the border. They thought of devoting their time to cattle raising, etc., and so purchased a ranche which they christened by the significant name of "Rest Ranche." But the restless, adventurous life they had led was a poor preparation for the comparatively quiet life of the farm or the ranche.

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that if Missouri had its bandits, Mexico had its brigands. The Mexican cattle-thieves had won quite as great a name for wild, lawless exploits as the train and bank robbers of the West. When Frank and Jesse James crossed the Rio Grande it was not to enter into a region densely populated by law-abiding people, but they were going amongst a people and facing a condition of things that would be sure to offer many a tempting opportunity for the exhibition of their special and peculiar gifts.

The full detailed story of their Mexican exploits will never be told. It is more than probable that Frank and Jesse have both forgotten many incidents of their Mexican life that would have been of thrilling interest to our readers. The truth is they were so constantly in broils and conflicts and hairbreadth 'scapes, that what would be startling and eventful to the ordinary mind, they dismissed from mind and memory as scarcely worth a thought, much less worth recording.

For the sake of its interest we will for a moment digress to narrate a somewhat tragic story concerning one of the early experiences of the James Boys with these half-wild Mexicans. As far back as May, 1870, and just after the Gallatin bank robbery, Frank and Jesse James thinking it best to give the region of that robbery a pretty wide berth for some time, made their way to Texas. And one beautiful afternoon in this merry month of May, they rode well mounted into Matamoras. Matamoras was not a very interesting place in itself, but Mexicans are light-hearted and gay, and they are not dependent on any trifling circumstances for their delight. On the night in question, a fandango was announced to be held, and nothing loth, Frank and Jesse determined to attend and have their share of the fun.

A Mexican fandango is a sort of fancy ball on a small scale. The dancers are masked during a part of the entertainment, with small masks large enough to hide actual identity, and yet small enough to reveal a considerable portion of the face. At a certain hour the order of unmasking is given, and then most of the dancers unmask, though it

is left entirely to the option of the dancers whether they unmask or not. The night came, and with the night the fandango. The hall was brilliantly lighted, and soon the olive-hued señoritas and gay hidalgos began to congregate. It would seem as if half Matamoras had turned out to the ball. The band was in good tune, and very soon a large proportion of the company was tripping on the light fantastic toe. The scene became inspiring. With Mexicans as with Spaniards, dancing is a perfect passion. They can dance, and they will dance, and circumstances and time agreeing, nothing in heaven above or on the earth beneath will hinder them from dancing. The dancing became all but universal, and Frank and Jesse caught something of the spirit of the scene, and before long they had secured partners, and were dancing their best. Frank and Jesse had their good points, but they could not do everything. They could fire off a gun or pistol with the deadest of all dead certainties; they could ride the wildest horse that could be brought to them; but they could not dance. They were never intended for gallant carpet knights. Their movements were awkward, angular and absurd. They dragged their fair partners along with such violence that all other dancers were careful to keep clear of them, and the poor frightened Mexican damsels whom they whirled around, seemed to be afraid lest the dance should end in some fearful crash. The on-lookers were amused, and some of the bolder spirits of the fandango broke out in open laughter at the American guys who seemed to have gathered their notions of graceful dancing from a herd of untrained elephants. The wine flowed freely, the fun was

growing fast and furious. Frank and Jesse found no difficulty in getting partners, and with a perversity natural to them, because they could not dance they determined they would dance. It was growing late, or rather early—some-where among the “wee small hours ayont the twah”—when two young Mexicans, just ripe for mischief, began to mimic with exaggerated contortions the awkward dancing of the robbers, and in so doing they made Frank and Jesse the objects of universal merriment. They were laughed at most uproariously by the whole company. This was too much for the boys. No man cares to be laughed at unless he is a professional clown. Frank and Jesse James didn't mind being shot at; but they wouldn't be laughed at. And so before the rippling laughter had time to subside, down went one of the boldest of these mimics, under the strong hand of Frank. Thus another kind of ball was opened at the fandango of Matamoras. The first blow was answered in a moment by a fierce looking hidalgo, who struck Frank a terrific blow in the cheek, and sent him sprawling in a most unceremonious manner, into the midst of a bevy of Mexican damsels, who screamed with sudden terror. Jesse, who took in the whole situation at a glance, concluding that the time for action had arrived, drew his revolver, and shot the Mexican dead who struck his brother Frank. This was enough. The Spanish blood began to boil. Frank and Jesse made for the door, but stiletos gleamed and flashed, as did the angry eyes of the outraged Mexicans. Frank and Jesse were both struck and stabbed; but deadly as are these glittering weapons, they are poor and useless where revolvers come. The

doors were blockaded, but the Missouri boys forced a passage with their pistols. In less time than it takes to tell, four Mexicans lay dead on the threshold, and six others were groaning with fearful wounds. Frank had a very narrow escape. A furious Mexican had marked Frank for his prey, and was aiming a blow with a dagger at his heart. Jesse's quick eye caught the movement, and in a moment he sent a pistol ball through the Mexican's brain, who reeled for a moment, and then with one wild yell, fell back dead.

Frank and Jesse escaped from the hall, and made for their horses. It was just breaking day. Turning for one moment to look behind, Frank, who had seized a large bludgeon to be used if needed, saw three hidalgos in hot pursuit. They were somewhat exhausted with their running, all of which Frank was quick to perceive, and turning upon them with almost superhuman strength, he laid the three Mexicans stunned and motionless at his feet. By this time the company had rushed out of the hall; but Frank and Jesse mounted their horses and fled. They were hotly pursued. There was nothing for it but to make a bold plunge into the Rio Grande, which they did, and swam safely to the further shore.

On the whole that was the liveliest fandango Matamoras had ever seen; and though the James Boys had made no reputation as graceful dancers, they had certainly taught their Mexican friends a lesson that they were not to be laughed at with impunity.

They had paid a dollar each the night before for their tickets to the fandango.

"Frank, old boy," said Jesse, smarting from certain

wounds he had received, and dripping with the waters of the Rio Grande, "guess we got our dollar's worth."

"You bet!" was Frank's laconic reply. The boys had to go into quarantine at a little town called Concepcion. Here they remained under surgical care for nearly three months, so perverse were the wounds they had received at the fandango of Matamoras.

We come back now to the chronological order of our narrative. It is the springtime of 1877. We are once again among the Mexicans. There is a spot on the River of the North that enjoys the unwholesome notoriety of "Rogues' Meeting-Place." The geographical name of this spot is Piedras Negras. At this point there gather from time to time all the worst elements of Mexican outlawry. Brigands from the passes of the Sierra Madres; thieves from Matamoras; cut-throats from Saltillo, and smugglers from all the border line. Frank and Jesse, as if moved by what Americans call "manifest destiny," came to this spot in the beauty of the early Mexican springtime. Their coming was by no means welcomed by the surly denizens of Piedras Negras. The brothers knew pretty well the character of these men, and had no special desire to try conclusions with them; and so they rode quietly and leisurely through the village, not forgetting, however, to keep their weather eyes wide open.

They had not gone far when a company of these half-drunken Mexican raiders—thinking probably that there was a good chance for a haul—followed. Frank and Jesse quickened their pace, but they soon saw they were followed by fourteen of these wild raiders, howling and yelling and firing

off their pistols in the most random fashion. The Missouri boys paused a moment, and instead of flying before their enemies—a course they never took unless it was absolutely necessary—deliberately faced their foes and resolved not to kill any of them at first, but just to give them a taste of their quality, and so they fired with that unerring aim that never seemed to fail; they fired four shots in rapid succession, and four of the drunken raiders fell to the ground, each with his right arm shattered and broken. The Mexicans, in a perfect terror of alarm, turned their horses and fled back in hot haste.

Frank and Jesse could not resist the temptation of following. Shots were freely fired. Bullets rained upon them to their hearts' content. The brim of Frank's hat was ventilated by a shot which, coming with a little surer aim, might have ended Frank's career. They left two greasers dead upon the road, as indications of the sort of men they were. That night, as they were crossing a stream much swollen by the spring rains, they were surprised by a company of ten brigands in secret ambush on the other bank. Jesse was slightly wounded in the shoulder. The brothers charged into the hiding place of their foes, and gave them no quarter. The whole gang fled save one, and he would have followed his companions, only that he lay dead among the bushes. So ended the brief visit of the brothers to the "Rogues' Meeting-Place" at Piedras Negras.

CHAPTER XLVII.

“SHOULD AULD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT?”

THE BOYS MEET WITH AN OLD COMPANION—MEMORIES OF
OTHER DAYS REVIVED—THE FANDANGO AT MONTCLOVA
—MORE BLOODSHED—A MIRACULOUS ESCAPE.

“There was a sound of revelry by night;

* * * * *

And bright the lamps shone

O'er fair women and brave men.”

Our heroes are still in Mexico. In the course of their travels they reached the city of Montclova, in the district of Coahuila, and here to their gladness and surprise they met an old friend and companion of their earlièr days. It would serve no good purpose to mention the name of this gentleman in these pages, so we will call him Mr. Smith, and to distinguish him from the great family of Smiths, we will give an aristocratic twist to his name and call him Mr. Smythe. The greeting of Mr. Smythe was most cordial and friendly. He gave his old-time friends the heartiest and warmest of welcomes. Years had passed since they had last met, and these years had wrought many changes. Mr. Smythe, at the close of the war, turned away from the wild guerilla life that he had led, and settled down quietly to plain, hard, honest work. He found in Mexico a pleasant home, and soon won the re-

spect of many people in Montclova and the district. As years passed on he wooed and won a Mexican damsel.

“And they two were wed,
And merrily rang the bells,
And merrily passed the years.”

Few positions could be more desirable than that Mr. Smythe had won for himself in Montclova.

It was a very great but a very pleasant surprise to Mr. Smythe to meet his old friends, and though he had wholly abandoned that old wild life, it did not hinder him from giving Frank and Jesse James a thorough, genial welcome for the days of “auld lang syne.” He took them to his house and treated them as most honored guests.

One of the Mexican methods of showing hospitality is by giving a semi-public reception or fandango in honor of their guests. One would have thought that the memory of the fandango at Matamoras would have made the boys a little cautious of any more experiences of the kind. But caution was not their great point. And nothing would satisfy their old-time friend but that they must have a grand fandango. A very little prudence would have shown the folly of this course. There was a large reward offered for the boys by the authorities of Missouri, and Captain Macy still held Governor Pillsbury's offer good of one thousand dollars each for the capture of Frank and Jesse James.

Spite of all this the fandango was arranged for, and with the night came the festival. The scene was most brilliant. A large number of guests accepted the invitation; the grace,

and valor and beauty of Montclova society were present, for this old friend of the James Boys was very highly esteemed in the city. The host and hostess played their parts well, and were evidently delighted with the success of the entertainment. For a time all went well. The music rose and the music fell, and graceful forms glided on in the mazy dance. Amongst the guests were a young lieutenant of the Mexican army and an American gentleman from Matehuala. They of course knew that the fandango was given in honor of the two traveling friends of the host. No sooner had they set eyes on the two chief guests of the evening than they began to hold whispered conversations apart. This did not escape the quick eye of Jesse, who began to suspect that there was mischief in the air. From the moment Jesse's suspicions were aroused he watched these gentlemen narrowly, and the result was that his suspicions were confirmed.

Frank was enjoying himself in making love to a fair *senorita*, with little thought of any danger near, when Jesse managed to acquaint him with his thoughts. Frank took little heed of Jesse's words; he was too much absorbed in his pleasant occupation, and he thought Jesse was making too good use of a vivid imagination.

But Jesse was not mistaken. It transpired that both these gentlemen owed the boys a serious grudge. One of them had lost a brother at the hands of the boys in 1865, and the other a very dear friend not more than a year before. They waited for a little time to make assurance doubly sure, and when they were convinced beyond a doubt that these honored guests were none other than the Missouri bandits, they quietly

left the place of entertainment. Their departure was noticed by Jesse, who once more warned Frank to keep on the alert.

The Lieutenant and his companion made their way directly to the barracks near the plaza, where a detachment of the Mexican army was stationed, and laying before the authorities their information, they soon persuaded the Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel that they were on the track of the notorious outlaws. There was no time to waste. There was a reward of \$50,000 for the capture of the bandits; it was now or never. It was near midnight when orders were given for the arrest of the strangers. A guard and detachment of eighty men were immediately ordered out, and proceeded quietly to the scene of the festivities.

The merriment was at its height, when suddenly the doors were thrown open, and without a moment's warning a stately military officer strode into the ball-room followed by a military guard. Their presence was the signal for the wildest consternation. The gallant hidalgos were annoyed at this unlooked-for interruption. The ladies were panic-stricken, and their fair faces blanched with fear. What could all this mean? The music was hushed, and for a moment there was an awful pause. The only calm and seemingly undisturbed people in that assembly were the two strangers in whose honor the assembly had gathered.

The officer walked up briskly to Frank and Jesse, and in the name of the Mexican government demanded their surrender. He expressed his sorrow at having to perform so unpleasant a task under such circumstances, but he was a soldier and must obey orders.

"Will you surrender?" he asked, for he saw a dangerous laugh rippling over the faces of the two brothers.

"Never!" was the prompt but calm reply of Frank.

With that the officer gave a signal to his guard to move up.

"Stop!" said Jesse, in a voice of stern command.

The officer waved his hand for the guards to halt a moment. That moment's halt cost him his life.

"We have a proposition to submit; will you hear it?" continued Jesse.

"If it means surrender, yes," replied the officer.

"It is this," said Jesse; "allow these ladies to retire and we will discuss the matter with you."

"I shall be compelled to take you by force," said the officer, little dreaming how thoroughly prepared these men were for a bloody fray.

As he talked of forcê, Jesse smiled a grim, sardonic smile.

"Let the ladies retire, I say!" shouted Jesse, in a tone that betrayed his impatience. Jesse, with all his faults, was greatly averse to entering into a conflict in the presence of ladies. The ladies were greatly excited, and not knowing who these outlaws really were, they felt that this military invasion was a shameful outrage, and it would have taken very little to have persuaded them to have flung themselves a fair bodyguard between the brothers and impending danger. For these young American gentlemen had been really so very entertaining all the evening.

"Let the ladies retire, I say!" shouted Jesse in tones of thundering command. The ball-room was immediately cleared of the fair Mexican ladies. An awful pause.

"Now," said the officer, "lay down your arms and surrender. I assure you, resistance is utterly useless. You see I have an ample guard to enforce these orders. The house is surrounded; you cannot escape. In the name of the Mexican government I command you to surrender."

That was the officer's last command. Before the words had died in the air, he lay a corpse at Jesse's feet. Jesse's aim was always sure, and this time was quick and fatal. The officer fell dead without a groan.

In the midst of the consternation the guard rushed forward to the aid of their fallen leader. But they rushed upon their own death.

It was the time for action, and Frank and Jesse understood it well. One look at each other was enough; they each understood the sign. Their pistols flashed again.

One, two, three! Short, sharp and quick, and the three soldiers who would have succored their chief lay bleeding to death at his side.

The scene was ghastly and horrible. The warm life blood of the victims was flowing in streams about the floor, the guests were paralyzed with terror, and the rest of the guard became demoralized and fled.

Frank and Jesse rushed into the street. The panic spread to the outside guards; they fired, but fired only aimless and random shots. Frank and Jesse escaped with only a few scratches, and with a daring that seems almost demoniacal, they turned and charged the guard with their revolvers. The guard in abject terror fled for their lives, leaving Frank and Jesse masters of the situation.

But the hunt was up. Montclova writhed in horror. The sleeping city was startled into wild excitement. The streets were thronged with bewildered men, women and children, the alarm drums were beat at the barracks, the bells rang from the old church tower. The whole community was horrified. The wildest reports spread abroad. According to rumor all the ladies at the fandango had been remorselessly murdered in cold blood; the soldiers had been overpowered and murdered. Everywhere the wildest excitement prevailed. In the thick darkness of the night the whole military force of the city marched in line to the scene of the tragedy. But they were too late. Frank and Jesse had mounted their horses, and were galloping away with break-neck speed.

The darkness was dense, and favored the fugitives; they escaped to the mountains, and there for a long time they remained in secret. Not until long after the affair did they venture out from their hiding place.

They had had all the fandangos they wanted. Not that they blamed themselves in the Montclova matter in the least. They were never very much perturbed about the shedding of blood, but in this case they felt that the conflict was none of their seeking. And the wonder is, not that four men died as the result of the fray, but that the number was not much larger. In all their future wanderings Frank and Jesse James gave Montclova a very wide berth.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

STILL AMONG THE MEXICANS.

PALACIO'S BAND—A DESPERATE STRUGGLE WITH CATTLE THIEVES—DEAD GREASERS IN THE CACTUS PATCHES—“FOOD FOR THE VULTURES”—THE TRUSTY WINCHESTERS—BACK TO THE PECOS VALLEY IN TRIUMPH.

There were not sufficient banks and railroads in Mexico twenty years ago to make train and bank robbing a great success. But Mexico had her greasers and cattle thieves, and in the prosecution of various raids they were just as careless of human life as the train and bank robbers of the West. Amongst these wild hordes of cattle thieves was a band under the leadership of Juan Fernando Palacio, who rejoiced in the notoriety of being the most bloodthirsty and relentless of all that vile robber brood that infested Piedras Negras, Eagle Pass, Meir, and all the region lying on the banks of the Rio Grande. Palacio had been a faithful and reliable assistant of the once famous Cortinas, the “Robber Governor” of the State of Tamaulipas. His faithful servitude had fitted him admirably for the position of command, and now he found himself the trusted chieftain of a band of thirty wild, reckless men.

The valley of the Pecos was rich and well watered, and the flocks and herds grew and thrived in rich abundance. In this quiet valley Frank and Jesse James were living in qui-

etude, and were fast gathering wealth from their industrious management of their ranche. Palacio was resolved to make a clean sweep of this quiet valley. He thought himself equal to the task of utterly discomfiting the "cow boys," as he sneeringly designated the dwellers in the Pecos. But he reckoned without his host, as he soon found to his cost.

It was the autumn of 1877, and Palacio called to his aid a noted and daring murderer who rejoiced in the name of Jarus Almonte. This notorious outlaw led on a raid in which three "cow boys" were killed on various ranches, and their cattle driven across the Rio Grande. This raid had been accomplished mainly by forced night marches. During the daytime they would take shelter in some lone chapparal, and then as night came on would march on silently and unseen.

In this raid Frank and Jesse's cattle had been stolen, and they were the last men in the world to sit down quietly under such a humiliating insult. It was a dangerous thing to make enemies of these old guerillas of Missouri. Their plans were soon completed. They were soon on Palacio's trail. On a quiet evening in October they came to El Paso. It was quiet and peaceful. The robbers had passed through the village and were on their way to a place of shelter. They made their way to a patch of chapparal, in the valley of an affluent of the Rio Pecos. Here they felt secure and went to sleep in fancied safety. But their sleep was brief and troubled. They had left their trail for three miles or more on the sand, and Frank and Jesse had followed up the scent eagerly and surely. They reached the camp of the sleepers,

and taking in the whole situation, prepared for instant action. Their policy was that of quick surprise, and quicker action, without a thought of quarter. Suddenly their pistol shots rang out in the early morning air, dealing out death and destruction before the greasers were wide awake enough to reach out for their weapons. Dazed and bewildered, the Mexican outlaws thought themselves surrounded by a vast horde of avenging foemen, and in their consternation took to flight. The pistols of Frank and Jesse kept up a quick, sharp fire, and one after another the flying raiders fell before their unerring aim. Such as were successful in escaping, fled to the mountains in sheer alarm, and so saved their miserable lives. The robbers fled and left all their spoils behind them. Ten robbers lay stark and dead amongst the cactus patches, and others fell in unknown places.

The corral was immediately broken up, and the boys turned the vast herds of cattle homeward.

Palacio and Almonte were not with the camp when the James Boys so unceremoniously disturbed its quiet. When the tidings reached them they concluded that their ill-fated followers must have been assailed by a large company of "*Grino Diablos*" or avengers from the Pecos Valley. When they learned that all this rout and slaughter had been effected by two men only, they were furious, and swore by all their gods they would be avenged. They were stung and humiliated at the thought of such a shameful defeat.

They quickly organized a band of twenty-five, and set out in pursuit of our heroes, who had headed the cattle homeward. Such a daring deed had never been heard of, and

come what would, they would be even with them. They boasted of what they would do when they caught them. But the old advice is always good—"First catch your hare and then cook it."

On they journeyed, and at last came in sight of the vast herds of cattle moving slowly backward to their homes. It was toward evening when the Mexicans came in sight of their prey. They did not venture an immediate attack, but after a brief council, five men were detailed to capture and make a full end of the daring "cow boys" from the Pecos Valley.

The Boys had certain faithful and reliable allies in the shape of long-range Winchester rifles. No sooner did the pursuing Mexicans come in sight, than Frank and Jesse detached their rifles from their fastenings, and each one singling out his man, fired; instantly two of the greasers fell to the ground. Their comrades seeing their fate, turned like cowards and fled, but Frank and Jesse followed; fastening their reins between their teeth, they gave chase. Two more of the five fell dead, and one only escaped to the summit of the hill.

Jesse, not quite content, proposed to ride to the ridge of the hill "just to see what those other devils were about." For that there were "other devils" on their track, he did not doubt for a moment. Arrived at the summit he saw fifteen of these enraged Mexicans coming up the hill.

"Come along, you devils!" he cried in wild derision, "I'm waiting for you."

With that he leveled his trusty Winchester again and

emptied one more of the Mexicans' saddles. The raiders fired back, but their balls fell short.

"Again, again, again,
And the havoc did not slack."

Three more of the fierce pursuers fell dead from their horses, and one of the fiery mustangs shared its rider's fate. By this time Frank reached the brow of the hill just in time to see the balance of that valiant host beat a hasty retreat.

"How many are down?" asked Frank.

"Oh! only four men and a horse," answered Jesse, with a grim smile.

"That's business," said Frank.

"Yes, I guess I've given the vultures a feast for one night, anyhow," responded Jesse.

The boys rested for a little and began to talk of their next move. For after all, these Mexicans might have fled only to secure increased forces, and what they most feared was a night attack, for these greasers had the reputation of being devils to fight by night, and they had these great herds of cattle to take care of, and they were in no way disposed to leave the cattle, after all the hard fighting they had gone through.

As they sat on their horses debating the state of affairs, they remembered they were a good hundred miles away from any available help. The sun was just beginning to set, when the quick eye of Frank discerned something in the far distance.

"See," said Frank, "what is that in the distance? Is it a herd of buffaloes, or are they men on horseback? What do you think?"

Fortunately they had a good field glass with them; after careful scrutiny, Jesse concluded they were mounted men.

“Texans, Mexicans, Lipans or Comanches? Which do you say?” asked Frank.

Whoever and whatever they were, they were more than two miles away, and it seemed to be by the merest chance that either Frank or Jesse had caught sight of them. But then “fortune favors the brave.” Their look was long and careful. At last Jesse broke out:

“Soldiers!—And Federal soldiers at that! By the Eternal! Well, I’ve seen the time when I wouldn’t have cared to meet a company like that, but I’m confoundedly glad they’ve come this way to-night. You are welcome, my gallant braves. I shall get a nap in peace to-night, after all.”

It was agreed that Jesse should ride forward and inform the officer in command of the shameful conduct of Palacio’s band. He spurred his horse forward. The Mexican raiders who lay in ambush, probably divining Jesse’s purpose, fled as quickly as their mustangs would bear them away.

The soldiers Frank and Jesse saw in the distance, proved to be a detachment of McKenzie’s command. With some little exaggeration, and with the air of a greatly wronged and injured man who desired to live at peace with all men, Jesse detailed the shameless conduct of these Mexican ruffians, upon hearing which the cavalry followed them in hot pursuit.

The boys were now left in undisputed charge of the cattle, and wended their way in peace to the Pecos Valley. On arriving there, they returned the cattle to their various own-

ers, telling their own tale as to the means and modes they had put in operation. The brothers were henceforth regarded all through that region of country as heroes and gentlemen. They were the redressers of wrongs, they were the avengers of a vile robber brood. And so the terrors of Missouri were the pride of the Valley of Pecos.



CHAPTER XLIX.

A BRIEF BUT ROMANTIC CHAPTER.

BASTENADO AND HIS TRIBE—THE FAIR ALICE GORDON—
FRANK AND JESSE TO THE RESCUE—AN EARLY BREAK-
FAST DISTURBED—ALICE GORDON RESCUED—BASTENADO
KILLED—BACK TO THE PECOS VALLEY

Frank and Jesse James were not only gathering fame and honor amongst their Texan friends, but they were fast coming to be regarded as protectors of the Pecos Valley. The robbers and greasers the other side of the Rio Grande would think twice before they ventured too near the men who had given them such unmistakable evidences of their skill and bravery.

Beside all this, they were gradually acquiring wealth. Whatever they did they did with their whole hearts, and there can be little doubt that if they had devoted themselves thoroughly to the raising of cattle they might soon have acquired in a legitimate way more solid wealth than all their nefarious practices ever brought them. They kept their property well in charge. Their ranche was the envy of many who had been much longer at the work than they had. Their horses were especially their pride and delight. Of all the animals that ever went into Noah's Ark, or ever came out of that very remarkable old vessel, the horse is amongst the most beautiful. It must have been the sight of the graceful curving neck of the

fiery steed that gave Hogarth the happy thought that "a curve is the perfect line of beauty." Horses, like children, are very sensitive to kindness, and Frank and Jesse were both passionately fond of their horses. All along either side of the Rio Grande there were no horses to compare with those of the brave boys of the Pecos.

It was no uncommon thing in those days for Frank and Jesse to take long journeys from home. Their absence caused no surprise. It was quite common in those regions ten years ago for men to wander widely from home. And Frank and Jesse were no exceptions to the rule.

Returning home after one of these absences they were met with quite a romantic story, that opened the door to a still wider romance.

Another band of Mexican robbers under the lead of the infamous Bastenado, had crossed the Rio Grande and had made a very successful night raid on the herdsmen of the valley. The operations of Bastenado had been swift and well-managed, and he and his followers were fast making their way to the river. The river once crossed, they would be comparatively safe. But there's many a slip between the cup and the lip. There was "one more river to cross," but most of this brood were doomed to leave their rotting carcasses on the Texan side of the Rio Grande. The element of romance in this raid was the fact that the robbers had borne away with them, in their rough captivity, Alice Gordon, the pride and beauty of the vale.

All the valley was in wild consternation at this brutal outrage; the most dreadful and diabolical things were imagined.

Alice was the sole comfort and stay of her aged father. Old Gordon was a crabbed old Scotchman. He had fallen on evil times in the East and the loss of his "siller" had soured him. He had sought the quietude of the plains, where he might be away from the scene of his disasters, and grumble away to his heart's content. The only pleasant feature of the old Scotchman's home was the genial face and kindly, graceful manners of his only daughter Alice. She was the charm of his household; and the old man's grumbling was forgotten in the bright smiles and merry laughter of the winsome Alice. Besides the Scotchman and his daughter, there was a devoted negro boy named Joe, who had an uncommonly easy time of it. He bore the constant complainings of his old master patiently, and what he lacked in reverence for him, he made up in worship of his daughter. He thought if ever there was a human angel in a pink dress and a straw hat, it was Alice Gordon. And it must be confessed that Joe's estimate was generally shared by the people of the valley.

The news that Bastenado and his accursed band had not only robbed the ranches of their cattle, but had borne Alice and Joe away into captivity, spread like wild-fire. The only consolatory point in the whole affair was the fact that the robbers had taken Joe along with them. What motive they could have in this course, it was hard to tell. But there was one grain of comfort in the fact, for every one felt that while Joe lived, little harm could come to Alice.

When Frank and Jesse returned home the fever was at blood heat. The people were organizing a pursuit. The coming of the brothers was a great relief. They felt sure that

they would know what was best to be done. Frank and Jesse had no time to give advice, much less to stop and organize. They looked well to their guns, mounted their horses, and were soon far away in hot pursuit of the robbers. The knights of old were not more gallant than these warriors of the Texan plains.

Early on the morning of the third day they came upon the whole company. It needed wisdom as well as bravery in this crisis. A rash and untimely onslaught might endanger the life of Alice, and to save her was the first and chief end of their enterprise. So they took in the whole situation.

The robbers were enjoying an early breakfast, when the boys, unseen, first espied them. It was indeed a pretty pastoral scene. Just such a scene as an artist would love to sketch. The cattle were slacking their thirst at a little stream. The robbers were enjoying themselves most heartily, laughing and joking, and making the hillsides echo with their merriment. A little distance from this group of greasers, Alice Gordon sat, wearied and sad, and with a look of blank despair clouding her fair face. Her faithful servant, Joe, was vainly imploring her to take something to eat. Jesse's eyes flashed fire; the swift compression of his lips revealed that the pitiful face of the captive, Alice, had inspired him with fresh daring.

But the situation was most serious. Here were thirty armed bravadoes, and only six men had followed Frank and Jesse on the perilous task of recapture. Eight against thirty! But if hell had gaped between him and Alice, Jesse would have made a dash for Alice.

The command was given into the hands of Jesse. His little company put their reins between their teeth, and with a loaded revolver in each hand, each man picked out his man. A wild yell from Jesse was the sign for action. The eight men sprang on the astonished greasers. The firing was quick and sharp, and in less time than it takes to tell, half the robber brood was killed. The rest, horrified and alarmed, made for their horses and fled, supposing themselves to be thoroughly surrounded. The dastardly Bastenado led the retreat, and as he gained his horse, he turned and aimed his pistol at Alice Gordon, who had fainted at the terrible scene. But Jesse was too quick for him, and before he had time to fire he sent a bullet through his craven heart, and Bastenado fell dead on his horse's neck.

Six only of that wild band escaped to tell their Mexican comrades across the Rio Grande of the fury of those Texan devils on the other side the Rio Grande.

The cattle were headed homeward, and the return to the Gordon ranche was quite a triumphal procession. Poor Joe was beside himself with joy, and mixed piety and profanity in a strange manner.

"You jes bet," he said, "I kep my sight open all de time, cause I felt in my bones de Lord would deliber us from dem dam Mexican rascals."

Joe had never left Alice's side for a moment during their captivity.

At last the home of Alice was reached, and poor old Gordon said that now he had got Alice safe and sound back again, he'd never grumble any more.

Frank and Jesse were the heroes of the hour. Their gallant exploits were trumpeted through all the quiet valley, and it was very well understood for years after that in that region of country, "No greasers need apply."



CHAPTER L.

A BIG TIME AT BIG SPRINGS—THE STOCKMEN IN CAMP AT OGALLALA—\$100,000 HAUL—THE RED BANDANAS—LEACH ON THE SEARCH—ARREST AND DEATH OF JIM BERRY—THE MYSTERIOUS UNKNOWN. .

The scene changes. We leave behind the quiet valley of the Pecos, the land of the pampas and the Aztecs, and come once more within the range of busy, bustling civilized life.

Big Springs is the name of a railroad station situated about twenty-three miles west of Ogallala, between Keith and Cheyenne counties, Nebraska. This quiet little spot is chiefly noted for its fine mineral springs, from which it receives its name. Big Springs became suddenly notorious. It was the scene of the most successful of all the train robberies ever attempted. This robbery took place on the night of the 17th of September, 1877. The train came from the Pacific slope. The robbers had evidently become possessed, in some unaccountable manner, of the information that this particular train was to carry a large amount of money. As a matter of fact the safe in the express car contained \$62,000 in gold belonging to Wells, Fargo & Co. Besides all this, the Union Pacific express not infrequently brings along a large number of the wealthy class; and if a train is to be robbed, the richer the passengers, the greater the chance of costly spoils.

No sooner had the ill-fated train come to a stand-still on the night in question than a band of seven men, their heads enveloped in red bandana pocket-handkerchiefs, and each with a loaded revolver in his hand, boarded the train. The first step they took was to guard the engineer, and under assurance of instant death if he moved, keep him quiet. Another portion of the gang went to the express car. They got possession of the safe, and cleared it of all its valuable contents, including the \$62,000 above referred to. This booty secured, and placed in a sack, the robbers completed their work by going through the train, crying:

“Hold up! Hold up! Any resistance will be punished with instant death.”

The affrighted passengers thought wisdom the better part of valor, and valuing their lives as of greater worth than all their possessions, they yielded. If a passenger showed any sign of opposition, a shot fired up at the roof of the car, or through the open window, gave evidence that the robbers meant business, and was sufficient to bring the objector to his senses. Happily no lives were sacrificed on this occasion. Albeit, the robbers must have made a haul of close upon \$100,000, beside valuables in the shape of jewelry and the like. When the robbers had perfected their work, they rode away silently over the plains, and left the train to proceed on its course.

The news of the robbery spread with great rapidity, and caused wide-spread consternation and alarm. Nervous people began to feel, as well they might, that traveling was a very dangerous experiment, especially in this district. In the

old days, the Quakers of Philadelphia used to make their wills when they contemplated a journey to New York. And it was fast coming to this, that men would prefer to go any journey by land or sea, rather than a journey through this bandit-infested country.

A vigorous effort was set on foot to find out, if possible, the perpetrators of this shameful outrage. There were seven men in the raid, and each man had on a red bandana handkerchief, hiding his face. That was all that was known. Not much of a clue, to be sure; but deep-laid conspiracies have often been traced to their sources from less definite hints.

It transpired that two days before the raid of the train at Big Springs, a party of seven men, purporting to be "stockmen" on their way from the Texan plains to the markets of Chicago and cities further east, encamped in the immediate neighborhood of Ogallala. It was now September, and they spoke of their intention to drive their herds onward, so that they might get through with their business, and then return to Texas in time for the spring trade. As it afterward turned out, this band of so-called "stockmen" was composed of confirmed bandits and robbers. Amongst the rest there were Jim Berry, of Portland, Callaway county, Missouri, an old-time guerilla of Anderson's days, who was often spoken of as the "best man in Callaway." Besides Berry there were Jack Davis, of Fort Smith, Arkansas; Billy Heffridge, a Pennsylvanian of bad repute; Jim Collins, of Brule, a well-known Texan desperado, and the notorious Sam Bass. Here were five out of the seven, but who were the other two?

A very simple circumstance connects these "stockmen" with the raiders of the train at Big Springs. One day, just before the robbery, some of the cattlemen came into Ogallala, and visited the chief village store, which was then kept by Mr. M. F. Leach, a man of some considerable insight into character, as the sequel proved. Amongst the visitors to the store was Jim Berry, who purchased a number of red bandana pocket handkerchiefs. Of course there was nothing very remarkable in this; greasers were accustomed to buying this particular kind of dry goods, just as butchers used to be to the traditional blue apron. But the bandanas came at last to bear most damning testimony against the assumed "stockmen."

After the robbery the whole region of Big Springs, Brule and Ogallala were on the alert. Mr. Leach no sooner heard that the robbers wore bandana masks, than he immediately thought of the hard-looking crowd that had made their purchases at his store. Mr. Leach, who had done a little in the detective line in his time, was not slow to seize the clue these remembrances suggested. As if crime must leave its footprints behind it, a remnant of one of the bandanas was left at Big Springs. Mr. Leach was sure it was a piece of the identical goods he had sold a few days before. Leach was now employed to follow the robbers. He had no sooner started out than he met Jim Berry, who said in a half-bantering tone:

"Well, are you going out after those fellows?"

"Yes," said Leach, "that's exactly what I'm after."

"I wonder what they would give me to go along with

you. I guess I might be of some service to you," said Jim, in reply.

Leach was on his guard, and told Jim that he could make no definite promise, but he was sure of one thing, that he would receive a very liberal compensation for any service he rendered.

The "stockmen" did not desert their camps near Ogallala until two days after the robbery. Leach's curiosity led him to go and view the deserted camp, and there he found a piece of a torn bandana that exactly corresponded with the piece found at Big Springs. Leach was now sure of his men, and set after them in real earnest. He came so near on one occasion that he saw them count the money and divide the spoils. He sent forward to Fort Hayes for military help, feeling sure the robbers were heading for Buffalo, Grove county, Kansas. At Buffalo the soldiers and some of the robbers had a sharp tussle, and Billy Heffridge and Jim Collins were killed.

Jim Berry's fate was a sad one; but he had only his folly to blame for it. After some little time he made his appearance at Mexico, Audrain county, Missouri. He had been out in the Black Hills, he said, and he began showing a very large number of twenty dollar gold pieces. This aroused suspicion, which, however, might never have gone beyond suspicion had not Jim taken to drinking. "When the wine's in, the wit's out." Some of Berry's old pals were pressed into the service of search, and it was mainly through the use they made of Bose Kazy that he was caught.

On Saturday evening, Oct. 14, 1877, within a month of the Big Springs robbery, Berry was taken by Sheriff Glas-

cock. He was fairly trapped into the woods, and the sheriff gave this command:

“Boys, if you see him, halt him; if he shows fight, shoot him; if he runs, shoot him in the legs. Catch him at all hazards.”

So the net was drawn round “the best man in Callaway.” After a long ambush, Berry came in sight. Glascock fired but missed him. The next charge sent seven buckshot into Berry’s left leg. Jim was brought to bay, and in an agony of pain implored his enemies to kill him outright.

Glascock gave no heed to this request, but ordered that Berry be carefully searched. The result of the search was astonishing. His belt was found to contain five \$500 packages of gold. His pocket-book contained \$304. In all there were \$2,804, beside a large quantity of jewelry on his person. After the search, Berry was removed to Bose Kazy’s house, and a physician was sent for.

Next morning Sheriff Glascock and John Carter went to the house of Berry, thinking they would find more money, or at least that they would be able to learn something from Mrs. Berry.

But Mrs. Berry was a match for them, for a time at least. She would know nothing. Had not seen him for several days. Thought most likely he had left the country. Was in fact expecting to hear from him every day. At last the sheriff pulled out the watch he had taken from the wounded man, and asked her if she knew that. Before she had time to reply, the little girl that was clinging in terror to her side, cried out;

“Why, that’s papa’s watch!”

The sight of the watch was enough. The whole story was now plain to her; Jim was arrested. She listened to the whole story of his capture.

“And so you say Jim’s taken!” said Mrs. Berry. “Poor Jim, poor Jim, I never thought he would be taken alive, never! never!” and with that she burst into passionate tears.

“But tell me where he is,” she added, “for I know he wants me now, poor Jim! poor Jim!”

With all possible speed Mrs. Berry hastened to the bedside of her suffering husband. The wounds soon became dangerous, gangrene set in, and on the Tuesday evening after his arrest, he died. His last hours were cheered by the tender ministries of love. His faithful wife never left his side, but soothed and cheered him to the last. His life had been a rough, sad life, but it closed in great peace and calm.

Of the seven men who robbed the train at Big Springs, four came to an untimely death in a short space of time. The name of the seventh has never been divulged. Was it Jesse James? A thousand hints point in that direction, but they are only hints at best.



CHAPTER LI.

A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOME OF THE BANDITS—CURIOSITY ABOUT THE PRIVATE LIVES OF THE NOTORIOUS—A YOUNG GEORGIAN YEARNs FOR A SIGHT OF THE BOYS—A WEARY PILGRIMAGE WELL REWARDED.

There is nothing more natural on the part of curious people than a desire to know some of the inner life and private habits of public men. The smallest detail is enough to give very considerable satisfaction. You may enjoy the friendship of a policeman, but you never know him as you ought till you have seen him in plain clothes. You may be on friendly terms with a person, but you can never be said to know much about him, or to be really intimate with him till you have seen him in his shirt sleeves. The more popular or notorious the man, the more curiosity desires to peep behind the scenes. It is not to be wondered at that morbid curiosity longed to know something of the inner life of Frank and Jesse James. But the secrets of their private lives have been well kept. The ubiquitous, and generally irresistible newspaper reporter—to whom modern society is indebted for more lies than counted—has shown a subtle wisdom by keeping clear of the renowned outlaws. Not that the average newspaper interviewer is not brave and bold, not to say most annoyingly impudent, but he is wise as well as persistent; he knows a line must be drawn somewhere, and he prudently draws a

line at such men as Frank and Jesse James. It would be interesting to know something of the home-life of the boys, but then it must be remembered that during a large portion of their history they had very little home-life. The caves and rocks and wild woods of Kentucky and Missouri and the Indian Territory, sheltered them. They were for years wanderers on the face of the earth. And even when they seemed disposed to give up their wandering career, they found that no settled place was long safe. All guesses about their private life are just guesses, and nothing more. And yet their frequent visits to the old homestead and their evident warm and filial attachment to their mother, Mrs. Samuels, goes to prove that they were by no means devoid of the social instinct. And had they been born under happier stars, had their young days been surrounded by more genial and kindly associations, they would in all probability have turned out peaceable, home-loving men.

They were moreover, men of marked reticence. They knew how to keep their own counsel, and even their most intimate allies and associates knew comparatively little of their private life. They never wanted for friends, but they did not choose to wear their hearts upon their sleeves for every passing man to peck at.

A story of some romantic interest is told of a young Georgian, who was smitten with strong ambition to become personally acquainted with the James Boys. Spite of the earnest entreaties of his friends, he determined to find out the rebels at whatever cost. It was his good fortune to know an intimate friend of the boys, who was persuaded after a good

deal of pleading to give the young Georgian a letter of introduction to Frank and Jesse. Armed with this passport to their favor he set out to visit them in their Texan home. A description of the route was given him, and a minute portraiture of the personal appearance of the bandits.

As the story goes, the young adventurer found the journey long and irksome, and he seems to have been more than once on the point of giving up his fool-hardy enterprise. For it would seem that he had no motive in the world but to satisfy a morbid desire to see these renowned desperadoes.

One lovely afternoon, worn out with fatigue and almost ready to abandon his search, he crossed a narrow stream and urged his way to the summit of an adjacent hill, when to his surprise, and not a little to his terror, he saw two well-mounted, well-armed horsemen approaching him at rapid rate. He confessed to feeling not a little "shaky" as he saw that each rider had a repeating-rifle swung to his shoulder, and a holster swinging from his saddle-bow.

"I'm in for it now, sure enough," he said to himself as the riders drove on apace, and he began to curse his folly and wish himself back in Georgia.

"Up with your hands!" shouted one of the riders, as he came within hailing distance.

Up went the young Georgian's hands without a moment's delay. He had no thought that these were the men he had been seeking, but thought they were highwaymen of the district.

"What are you doing here?" asked one of the riders, in a surly, ominous tone of voice.

For a moment the young man turned deadly pale, then thinking that the best way was to be frank and open, even with such desperate-looking men, he said with a good deal of timidity in his voice:

"I am seeking Mr. Harold Johnson and his brother,"—which was the assumed name of the boys—"I have a message for Mr. Johnson here with me now from an old friend."

"What in hell do you know about Mr. Johnson?" said the foremost rider, who proved to be Frank James.

"I have never seen the gentleman in my life, but I have a great desire to see him and his brother," answered the affrighted youth.

"When were you last in St. Louis?" asked Frank.

"I have not been in St. Louis for five years," was the answer.

Frank and Jesse were both on the alert, and one after another they fired sharp, short questions at the young man.

"Do you come from Chicago?" asked Jesse.

"No, I never was in Chicago in my life," was the reply.

"Do you know Allan Pinkerton?" was the next question.

"No, I do not," was the answer.

"Well, where in thunder do you hail from?" was Frank's impatient question.

"I come from Georgia," said the youth, "and I have a letter from Colonel Albison, for Mr. Harold Johnson; do you know him, or could you kindly direct me to him?"

"You can give me the message and I will see he gets it," said Frank.

"But I want to see him myself," was the response. "I

have come a long way on purpose to see him and his brother, and I don't want to go back without seeing the two brothers."

"Do you know, young man, you are running that nose of yours into a good deal of danger? You had better be very careful how you act. Remember you are in Texas, not in Georgia."

Meantime Jesse had held the young man under cover of his pistol, and no doubt at the first sign from Frank would have fired, and thus have brought the young Georgian's adventure to a sudden close.

"I wish you would read this letter which I have brought," said the youth, for by this time it began to dawn upon him that he had found the objects of his search.

Jesse took the offered letter and read it carefully. As he read his countenance changed, and passing it to Frank, said: "I guess this is all right, old man."

"So you are a relation of Colonel Albison, are you?"

"I am," the young man replied, considerably relieved by the turn affairs had taken.

"And so you are very anxious to see the James Boys, are you?" said Frank. "Well, I must say you are rather plucky. Most people would rather not see those very interesting young gentlemen, but what there is left of the James Boys you see before you. But you must clearly understand that we are the only men who are properly qualified to carry fire-arms in this district, so you had better hand over yours to our care till you are quite ready to return. You see, young man, this is a very wicked world; so wicked that we can't trust anybody."

The young man had only one pistol, which he at once gave into the hand of Frank, who put it into his belt after a moment's examination.

"So you wanted to feast your eyes on the *notorious* outlaws," said Jesse, with a smile. "Well, what do you think of us? Ain't you a little disappointed? You see we are a good deal like most other men. We don't wear horns and we haven't split feet, and we don't spout fire and brimstone, as you have no doubt been led to understand. We've had a hard time of it. We have been hunted from State to State, and have been shamefully wronged and abused. I tell you it's a pretty hard life, young man."

On the invitation of Frank the young adventurer was invited to Frank's home, for Jesse and his family were only visiting with Frank. The home of the elder bandit was really a very desirable abode. It was beautifully situated near a large grove, to which at a moment's notice it would have been easy for the inmates of the house to escape and find ambush and shelter.

Arrived at the house, our young hero was cordially welcomed by Frank's wife. But of the private inner life of that strange home he has nothing to tell. The boys were not communicative. They had few questions to ask. And to all questions asked of them they gave the briefest answers.

The young Georgian had gained his point. He had seen the brothers. But that was all. He had learned little or nothing of their private home life. For even with their most trusted and confidential friends the boys were generally on their guard.

CHAPTER LII.

LITERARY REMAINS OF JESSE JAMES.

RETICENCE IN SPEECH AND WRITING—LETTERS REVEAL THE AUTHOR—JESSE'S PRIVATE LETTERS—LETTERS TO THE NASHVILLE BANNER—LETTERS TO THE KANSAS CITY TIMES.

There may seem something rather out of place in speaking of the "literary remains" of an outlaw. But as a matter of fact there are few things of more importance in the summing up of a man's character than the letters he writes. To a very great extent a man writes himself in his letters. Words have a tolerably fixed meaning, and down in black and white they remain, to-day and to-morrow, and the next day the same. A good handful of genuine letters of Frank and Jesse James would go farther toward helping to a real understanding of their character than all that has been written.

But the boys, who were reticent in speech, were much more careful in the matter of writing. They knew that words might die in the air, but anything written might live to an inconvenient old age. Hence they were not much given to the use of pen and ink.

There are, however, a few letters extant written by Jesse James, and though they are not of any great value as throwing light upon the devious career of their author, they will

be read with all the more interest now that his wayward, troubled life is ended. The letters are here inserted, with such notes and comments as may serve to make them somewhat intelligible.

LETTER I.

This letter is sent from Texas, and was sent to a "friend" in Missouri, who was not without very considerable influence in Clay county. Its purpose is clear upon the face of it. The wanton murder of Mr. Askew had created a very bitter feeling throughout the whole neighborhood. And this letter was intended, no doubt, to give some one who had a good name in the neighborhood the authority to deny Jesse's complicity in the said affair. The attempt to throw the blame of this murder on Pinkerton's men was useless. Pinkerton's men could have had no motive in the world for murdering the worthy old gentleman. Jesse here makes a mistake as to the date. But the mistake is shrewdly made. Very likely he was in Texas in May, but Askew was murdered in April. Here follows the letter:

COMMANCHE, TEXAS, June 10th.

DEAR JIM:

I hear they are making a great fuss about old Dan Askew, and say the James Boys done the killing. It's one of old Pink's lies, circulated by his sneaks. I can prove that I was in Texas, at Dallas, on the 12th of May, when the killing was done. Several persons of the highest respectability know that I could not have been in Clay county, Missouri, at that time. I might name a number who could swear to this, whose word would be taken anywhere. It's my opinion Askew was killed by Jack Ladd and some of Pinkerton's men. But no meanness is ever done now but the James Boys must bear the blame for it. This is like the

balance of the lies they tell about me and my brother. I wish you would correct the lies the Kansas City papers have printed about the shooting of old Askew, and oblige

Yours faithfully,

JESSE.

LETTER II.

This note is very characteristic. It does not require very much reading between the lines. The underlined words make the purport of the letters very plain. It was a queer kind of "cattle" the boys were waiting to drive.

FT. WORTH, March 10th, 1877.

DEAR ———:

The beeves will soon be ready. As soon as the roads dry up, and the streams run down, we will *drive*. We expect to take a good bunch of *cattle* in. You may look out. There will be plenty of bellowing after the drive. Remember, it is business. The range is good, I learn, between Sidney and Deadwood. We may go to pasture somewhere in that region. You will hear of it. Tell Sam to come to Honey Grove, Texas before the drive season comes. There's money in the stock.

As ever,

JESSE J.

LETTER III.

This letter was found in Colorado, and is purported to have been dropped by one of Jesse James' warmest allies. There is very little reason to doubt its authority. It speaks for itself, and represents how calmly and coolly Jesse looked upon that terrible raid of Palacio's band. It was certainly a rather calm way of describing that unequal combat, to call it "a little fun."

REST RANCH, TEXAS, Jan. 23.

DEAR JACK:

We had a little fun on the other side of the line lately. A lot of Greasers came over and broke up several ranches. Some of us were

down that way, and the "cow-boys" wanted us to help them, and we done it. Some of our cattle had been taken, and I don't owe the yellow-legs anything good, anyhow. Well, we left some half a dozen or more for carrion-bird meat. We brought the cattle back. I was confounded glad we met some cavalry out after raiders. There was a big lot of them motley scamps, and we would have had a pretty rough time, I expect. But the sneaks got back as fast as they could. You would have enjoyed the racket.

As ever yours,

J. W. J.

LETTER IV.

Letter four is the last of the personal letters to hand, although there can be no doubt that it would be comparatively easy to gather a large correspondence together now. The following letter is vouched for by Marshal James Liggett, who knew Jesse and his handwriting quite well. The letter is without date, but it was no doubt written to George Shepherd shortly after the Glendale robbery:

FRIEND GEORGE:

I can't wait for you here. I want you to wait for me on Rogue's Island, and we will talk about the business we spoke of. I would wait for you, but the boys want to leave here. Don't fail to come, and if we don't buy them cattle, I will come back to you. Come to the place where we met going South that time, and stay in that neighborhood till I find you.

Your friend,

J.

Besides these letters of a private character, there are three others that deserves a very careful perusal; whether they originated with Jesse, or whether they were suggested to him by others, matters little. They were intended to influence the public mind through the medium of the press. The dates are probably designedly wrong. The first of these appeals to the reading public was made through the columns of the Nashville *Banner*, of July 10th, 1875. The communication

was ostensibly in answer to certain statements of the Nashville *Union and American*, and run as follows:

RAY TOWN, MO., July 5th, 1875.

GENTLEMEN:

As my attention has been called recently, to the notice of several sensational pieces copied from the Nashville *Union and American*, stating that the James and Youngers are in Kentucky, I ask space in your valuable paper to say a few words in my defence. I would treat these reports with silent contempt, but I have many friends in Kentucky and Nashville that I wish to know that these reports are false and without foundation. I have never been out of Missouri since the Amnesty Bill was introduced into the Missouri Legislature, last March, asking for pardon for the James and Younger Boys. I am in constant communication with Governor Hardin, Sheriff Groom, of Clay County, Mo., and several other honorable county and State officials, and there are hundreds of persons in Missouri who will swear that I have not been in Kentucky. There are desperadoes roving round in Kentucky, and it is probably very important for the officials of Kentucky to be vigilant. If a robbery is committed in Kentucky to-day, Detective Bligh, of Louisville, would telegraph all over the United States that the James and Younger Boys did it, just as he did when the Columbia, Kentucky bank was robbed, April 29th, 1872. Old Bly, the Sherman bummer, is keeping up all the sensational reports in Kentucky, and if the truth was known, I am satisfied some of the informers are concerned in many robberies charged to the James and Younger Boys for ten years. The radical papers in Missouri and other States, have charged nearly every daring robbery in America to the James and Younger Boys. It is enough for the Northern papers to persecute us without the papers of the South, the land we fought for for four years, to save from Northern tyranny; to be persecuted by papers claiming to be Democratic, is against reason. The people of the South have only heard one side of the report. I will give a true history of the lives of the James and Younger Boys to the *Banner* in the future; or rather a sketch of our lives. We have not only been persecuted, but on the night of the 25th of January, 1875, at the midnight hour, nine Chicago assassins and Sherman bummer, led by Billy Pinkerton, Jr., crept up to my mother's house and hurled a missile of war (a 32-pound shell) in a room among innocent women and children, murdering my eight year old brother and tearing my mother's right arm off, and wounding several others of the family, and then firing the house in seven

places. The radical papers here in Missouri have repeatedly charged the Russellville, Kentucky, bank robbery to the James and Younger Boys, while it is well known that on the day of the robbery, March 20th, 1869, I was at the Chaplin Hotel in Chaplin, Nelson county, Kentucky, which I can prove by Mr. Tom Marshall, the proprietor, and fifty others; and on that day my brother Frank was at work on the Laponsu Ranch in San Luis Obispo county, California, for J. D. P. Thompson, which can be proven by the sheriff of San Louis Obispo county, and many others. Frank was in Kentucky the winter previous to the robbery, but he left Alexander Sayer's, in Nelson county, January 25th, 1868, and sailed from New York City, January 16th, which the books of the United States mail line of steamers will show. Probably I have written too much, and probably not enough, but I hope to write much more to the *Banner* in the future. I will close by sending my kindest regards to old Dr. Eve, and many thanks to him for kindness to me when I was wounded and under his care.

Yours respectfully,

JESSE JAMES.

Our collection of Jesse James' letters ends with the two following epistles which he contributed to the *Kansas City Times*, during the excitement that was awakened by the train robbery at Rocky Cut, near Otterville, Missouri. Few letters ever contributed to a newspaper ever caused a wider sensation. It seems always to have been a point with Jesse to have suggested some perpetrator of the crime he desired to repudiate. And his worst and bitterest scorn was always reserved for Pinkerton's men.

JESSE'S FIRST LETTER TO THE KANSAS CITY "TIMES."

OAK GROVE, KAN., August 14, 1876.

You have published Hobbs Kerry's confession, which makes it appear that the Jameses and the Youngers were the Rocky Cut robbers. If there was only one side to be told, it would probably be believed by a good many people that Kerry has told the truth. But his so-called confession is a well-built pack of lies from beginning to end. I never heard of Hobbs Kerry, Charles Pitts and William Chadwell until Kerry's arrest. I can prove my innocence by eight good, well-known men of

Jackson county, and show conclusively that I was not at the train robbery. But at present I will only give the names of two of those gentlemen to whom I will refer for proof.

Early on the morning after the train robbery east of Sedalia, I saw the Hon. D. Gregg, of Jackson county, and talked with him for thirty or forty minutes. I also saw and talked to Thomas Pitcher, of Jackson county, the morning after the robbery. These two men's oaths cannot be impeached, so I refer the grand jury of Cooper county, Mo., and Gov. Hardin to those men before they act so rashly on the oath of a liar, thief and robber.

Kerry knows that the Jameses and Youngers can't be taken alive, and that is why he has put it on us. I have referred to Messrs. Pitcher and Gregg because they are prominent men, and they know I am innocent, and their word can't be disputed. I will write a long article to you for the *Times*, and send it to you in a few days, showing fully how Hobbs Kerry has lied. Hoping the *Times* will give me a chance for a fair hearing and to vindicate myself through its columns, I will close.

Respectfully,

J. JAMES.

JESSE'S SECOND LETTER TO THE KANSAS CITY "TIMES."

SAFE RETREAT, Aug. 18, 1876.

I have written a great many articles vindicating myself of the false charges that have been brought against me. Detectives have been trying for years to get positive proof against me for some criminal offense, so that they could get a large reward offered for me, dead or alive; and the same by Frank James and the Younger Boys, but they have been foiled on every turn, and they are fully convinced that we will never be taken alive, and now they have fell on the deep-laid scheme to get Hobbs Kerry to tell a pack of base lies. But, thank God, I am yet a free man, and have got the power to defend myself against the charge brought against me by Kerry, a notorious liar and poltroon. I will give a full statement and prove his confessions false.

Lie No. 1. He said a plot was laid by the Jameses and Youngers to rob the Granby bank. I am reliably informed that there never was a bank in Granby.

Lie No. 2. He said he met with Cole Younger and me at Mr. Tyler's. If there is a man in Jackson county by that name, I am sure that I am not acquainted with him.

Lie No. 3. He said Frank James was at Mr. Butler's, in Cass county. I and Frank don't know any man in Cass county by that name. I can prove my innocence by eight good citizens of Jackson county Mo., but I do not propose to give all their names at present. If I did, those cut-throat detectives would find out where I am.

My opinion is that Bacon Montgomery, the scoundrel who murdered Capt. A. J. Clements, December 13, 1866, is the instigator of all this Missouri Pacific affair. I believe he planned the robbery and got his share of the money, and when he went out to look for the robbers he led the pursuers off the robbers' trail. If the truth was half told about Montgomery, it would make the world believe that Montgomery has no equal, only the Bender family and the midnight assassins who murdered my poor, helpless and innocent eight-year old brother, and shot my mother's arm off, and I am off opinion he had a hand in that dirty, cowardly work. The detectives are a brave lot of boys,—charge houses, break down doors and make the gray hairs stand up on the heads of unarmed victims. Why don't President Grant have the soldiers called in and send the detectives out on special trains after the hostile Indians? A. M. Pinkerton's force, with hand-grenades, will kill all the women and children, and as soon as the women and children are killed it will stop the breed, and the warriors will die out in a few years. I believe the railroad robberies will yet be sifted down on some one at St. Louis or Sedalia putting up the job and then trying to have it put on innocent men, as Kerry has done.

Hoping the *Times* will publish just as I have written, I will close.

JESSE JAMES.



CHAPTER LIII.

THE ROBBERS AT WORK AGAIN—THE LONELY FLAG-STATION AT GLENDALE—DETERMINED CONDUCT OF THE RAIDERS—\$35,000 IN TEN MINUTES—VALIANT CONDUCT OF WILLIAM GRIMES—AN IMPORTANT DISPATCH.

After the direful tragedy of Northfield, the heroes of these pages thought it best to relieve the western borders of Missouri of their presence. They wandered afar to broader fields and pastures new. For three years they wandered over the rolling plains of Texas, and along the banks of the Rio Grande, making, as we have seen, occasional excursions into Mexican territory, where they got all the fandangoes and fights they wanted. When three years had passed away, and nothing had been heard of the boys of Clay county, the hearts of the Missourians took cheer, and they began to hope that they had transferred themselves permanently to some distant scene. Three years was a long time for Missouri to be free from outrage and bloodshed. But the peace and order in which the people were trusting, was to come to a sudden and violent end. The old battle-ground of the guerillas that had been quiet so long was soon to echo again to the sharp crack of pistol and gun.

Lafayette, Cass and Jackson counties had been infested in other days by a wild band including, beside the James

Boys, the old guerilla warriors Quantrell, Todd, Anderson, Younger, Pool and Clements; and now the boys were gathering again to their old stamping ground.

Glendale is one of the loveliest spots in the lovely county of Lafayette. In the spring-time, or the autumn especially, this whole region is exceedingly beautiful. Well wooded and watered, its trees grow in wild luxuriance. Glendale is the name of a lonely flag-station on the Kansas City branch of the Chicago & Alton Railway, about twenty miles from Kansas City. It was on a lovely autumn evening, October 7th, 1879, that one of the most daring robberies ever known took place. The outlaws could not have chosen a more secure and secret spot for their nefarious operations. Right in the heart of the lonely hills, the victim train would be cut off from all help. And the dense, dark woodlands afforded a most accommodating shelter for the fugitives.

The population of Glendale was exceedingly limited. A very industrious canvasser would have been able to take the census in a very short time, for Glendale consisted of the flag-station, a post-office and a general store, in connection with the post-office. There was no blacksmith's shop with its ringing anvil; no church with lofty spire, nor yet that absolute necessity of modern civilization, a saloon. The male population of Glendale, all told, would not make up a baker's dozen.

Mr. Anderson was the postmaster and store-keeper of Glendale, and on this particular October evening the worthy Scotchman was standing at the door of the post-office, "just haeing a crack qe ken" with the rest of the male population,

for with the exception of Mr. McIntire and a gentleman who was visiting him on business, the whole of the men-folk of Glendale were congregated round the postoffice.

Conversation had wandered on through various subjects, the crops, the weather, and various equally interesting themes, when suddenly a stranger appeared upon the scene, tapped Mr. Anderson upon the shoulder, and said in a strange, commanding tone:

“I want you.”

“What do you want with me?” asked the postmaster, evidently not a little surprised.

To this question no immediate reply was given. The stranger stepped aside for a moment, and after a sharp, shrill whistle, said in a commanding tone:

“Here, boys!”

The summons was responded to by six masked men with loaded revolvers and wicked-looking knives in their hands. The leader of the gang then addressed the idlers round the postoffice, who stood perfectly astonished by the sudden change affairs had taken:

“Now, take care, make tracks out of this.”

“Where are we to go?” asked Mr. Anderson, who saw that anything like resistance was wholly useless.

“To the depot,” was the sullen answer. And to the depot the little company filed, beginning finally to surmise what sort of business was on hand.

“What do you want with us at the depot?” asked one of the small company.

A very natural question, and very curtly replied to:

“You’ll know all in good time,” was the only answer vouchsafed.

At the depot Mr. McIntire was busy at work in the office, preparing for the night mail. Mr. W. E. Bridges, Assistant Auditor of the Chicago & Alton line, was up-stairs drinking tea with Mr. McIntire’s venerable mother.

No sooner had the little company arrived at the depot than the gang of raiders was joined by eight other masked desperadoes, the leader of the robbers only being unmasked. The leader, whoever he was, wore a long dark beard, but whether real or not, was hard to tell. As he reached the door of the depot, he sauntered lazily in and said:

“I want to send a message to Chicago.”

“All right,” said Mr. McIntire, but before he could touch the instrument, he was seized from behind.

“You are my prisoner,” said a ruffian who had him in a vicious grip.

In a moment the telegraphic instrument was smashed to atoms, and all the connecting wires were broken. Meantime, the little company from the postoffice were ordered to sit down, with the threat that if they were not “clever enough to keep still, they would be minus their heads in a very few moments.” Then turning to the imprisoned agent, the leader said:

“I want you to lower that green light, young man, and be quick about it.”

“But,” said the agent, “the train will stop if I do.”

“That’s the alum! Precisely what we want it to do, my buck, and the sooner you obey orders the better. I will give

you a minute to lower the light," said the bearded leader, at the same time thrusting a cocked pistol in the face of the agent.

The mandate was enforced by the presentation of a cocked revolver, which the bearded man held within a couple of inches of the poor fellow's face.

The agent saw that there was nothing for it but obedience or death. The order was obeyed with the reluctance with which a conscientious man puts his hand to such work, but the agent was powerless to resist, and he obeyed the order. Before doing so, however, he was asked if there was anybody up-stairs. On the information that Mr. Bridges and his mother were taking tea, three of the masked villains were detailed to settle their business. The command was obeyed, and Mr. McIntire was relieved of all the money he had, and a handsome gold watch. The venerable lady was in a perfect terror of alarm, and on bended knees pleaded with the robbers:

"For God's sake, spare my boy; he has done you no harm."

She was assured that no harm would come to them if they would be quiet, but if they made the slightest attempt to raise an alarm they must take the consequences.

All the prisoners were firmly secured, the green light was lowered, and the gang of robbers had only a few moments to wait for the oncoming train. An awful silence reigned; the poor wretches held in such perilous durance seemed almost afraid to breathe.

At last the train came on. Seeing the signal for stopping,

Mr. Gorman, the conductor, stopped the train, and just as it drew near the station he jumped off and was proceeding to the little station for orders, when he was accosted by two masked men who took him prisoner, presenting their revolvers as arguments for his silence.

The work of the robbers now proceeded with lightning speed. Two armed men made for the cab of the locomotive and made prisoners of the engineer and fireman, who were both assured that instant death would be the price of the faintest show of resistance.

“And now hand me out that coal hammer of yours,” said one of the men to the fireman.

“What do you want with my hammer?” asked the fireman.

“Never mind what I want with it; hand it out and be quick, or by God you’ll never use a hammer again.”

While the conductor, the engineer, and the fireman were thus held in captivity, a detachment of the gang went to the express car; having secured the fireman’s heavy hammer they began battering in the door of the car.

Great honor is due to Mr. William Grimes, the brave and trusty custodian of the car. At the first stroke of the hammer he suspected mischief and quick as thought rushed to the safe and took out a package containing \$35,000, which he put in a valise, hoping to escape with it before his enemy gained admission. Laudable as was his purpose, he was too late. Two of the band confronted him at the door of exit.

“Here, you,” said one of them, “give me the key of that d—d safe, and be quick.”

“I will not,” said Grimes, “you must take it, if you want it.”

It was but the work of a moment to fell Grimes to the ground with the butt end of a gun; and he may thank his happy stars that he was only stunned and not killed.

The safe was rifled, but little was found in it. The suspicious looking valise that rolled from the hand of the unconscious Grimes caught the attention of one of the gang, and was speedily emptied of its contents.

Meantime, others of the gang were walking on either side of the train firing off pistols to keep the passengers quiet. Not a passenger attempted to resist. The whole time was taken up in hiding their valuables in all sorts of likely and unlikely places. The train only waited ten minutes, but to the alarmed men and women on the train these ten minutes seemed an age. There was no intention evidently of robbing the passengers. In that brief space of time these desperadoes had secured between \$35,000 and \$40,000, besides some other valuables, without doing any further damage than breaking in the express car door and destroying the telegraphic instruments at Glendale station.

The train moved on; the robbers had secured the prize without adding other murders to their already lengthened list of crimes. It is said that before they left the scene of their exploits they once more visited the station and left the following dispatch, which the leader begged Mr. Bridges with mock seriousness, to send to the editor of the *Kansas City Journal*. Whether the interesting document ever reached that journal

we are not informed, but it may interest our readers to peruse a copy of it, which is herewith appended:

“BLUE SPRINGS, MISSOURI.

“We are the boys who are hard to handle, and we will make it hot for the boys who try to take us.

“FRANK JAMES,

“JESSE JAMES,

“JIM CONNERS,

“COOL CARTER,

“JACK BISHOP,

“And three others.”

Whether this dispatch be genuine or not, there is but little doubt but that Frank and Jesse James were ringleaders in the Glendale fray.



CHAPTER LIV.

MARSHAL LIGGETT IN PURSUIT.

HOW TO SECURE JESSE—GEORGE W. SHEPHERD—SKETCH OF HIS LIFE—ON THE TRACK OF JESSE—SUNDAY AFTER-NOON IN THE WOODS—A RACE FOR LIFE.

The robbery at Glendale was not only the subject of local interest, but became the theme of wide-spread comment. That Frank and Jesse James were leaders in the raid was universally believed; but some very serious questions were being asked. "How," for example, it was being asked, "did these robbers come to the knowledge that a large amount of money was to be carried on this particular train?" That they did know, there seems very little reason to doubt. Many unpleasant things were being said as to the connivance of officials with the robbers; and the efforts of the detective forces only aroused suspicious laughter. That a whole State should be kept at bay by a mere handful of outlaws, seemed absurd and preposterous.

The various railway companies became really anxious, and large rewards were offered, but offered in vain, for the capture of the miscreants.

Major James Liggett, the marshal of Kansas City, set to work in downright earnest after the robbers. Cool of brain and brave as a soldier should be, he set to his task. Quietly and patiently he went to work. It came to his mind that

Jim Cummings, Ed Miller, and one or two other suspicious characters had been seen in the neighborhood a few days before the Glendale robbery. Little by little scraps of information led the major to conclude that the gang was the old lawless gang, and that they were still hiding somewhere not very far from the borders of Western Missouri. It required men of intimate and minute knowledge of the geography of the district to search with any prospect of success. The whole region is full of hills and valleys, wild rocky glens and secret fastnesses such as provide safe hiding places for the retreating fugitive. It transpired that the robbers, after a brief stay in Clay county, took a southerly direction to the Indian Territory. Major Liggett felt that he was baffled, but he was by no means disposed to give in. He came at last to the conclusion that the only possible way to stop these depredations was to capture the leaders. But how to capture the leaders? That was the point of difficulty. All ordinary means seemed to have utterly failed. The time was come when extraordinary means must be tried, and it was determined if possible to reach Frank or Jesse, but especially Jesse, if possible, through the help of one of the gang.

George W. Shepherd was fixed upon as the likeliest of the gang to render the necessary help. Shepherd was now following a peaceful occupation in Kansas City. But he had lived a strange and troubled life. He was the son of a respectable farmer of Jackson county, Missouri. He was at the time of the Glendale affair about thirty-seven years old. In his early days he manifested a somewhat wayward disposition. While quite young he left home and proceeded to

Utah, where he joined the army at that time, operating against the Mormons, under the command of General Albert Sydney Johnston. After two years' experience in Utah, he returned to his early home and set to work at the farm along with his brothers. He kept quietly at the work of the farm till the war broke out, and then, fired with ambition to champion the cause of the South, which in those early days seemed full of promise, he was one of the very first who answered the call to arms. He enlisted in Company A, under Captain Duncan of Rosser's regiment. For a time he knew the rough side of a soldier's life, and became inured to many hardships. He took part in the battles of Wilson's Creek and Pea Ridge, and engaged also in smaller skirmishes in Missouri and Arkansas. Later on the Confederate Army, under the command of General Sterling Price, was ordered to the east of the Mississippi. George Shepherd then returned to Jackson county and very shortly afterward he became a member of Quantrell's lawless band of guerillas. And he was not long a follower of the intrepid Quantrell before he became signalized as one of the bravest of that brave company. In the terrific charge upon the garrison, at Independence, early in 1862, he took his part. The story of the burning of the Tate House, at Santa Fe, is one of the most romantic of all the records of the guerilla warfare. There never was such an exhibition of determination on the part of men from whom all hope of escape seemed cut off. The Federals had surrounded and fired the house in which the followers of Quantrell had taken refuge. The only alternative was surrender or death. They were not greatly afraid of death, but "sur-

render" was a word not to be found in the vocabulary of a guerilla. There were seventeen of Quantrell's followers in the house, among whom were Quantrell, Geo. W. Shepherd, Cole Younger, Steven Shores, John Jarratte, James Little, Hoy Haller, and others. These men fought their way through fire and flame,

"And death shots falling thick and fast
Like forest pines before the blast."

Quantrell led the way, followed by George Shepherd. They all escaped, and the only men whom the Federals held, were three men who surrendered at the first demand of the Federals.

George Shepherd had another narrow escape in 1862, from the house of John Shepherd in Jackson county; and shortly afterward, when on a tour collecting ammunition for Quantrell's camp, he and Cole Younger were closely pursued, and though they eventually escaped, they each bore away buckshot enough concealed about their persons to keep them in remembrance of the fray. In short, Shepherd was Quantrell's most trusty lieutenant. And Quantrell, who was not given to much flattery, declared that Shepherd was one of the bravest men who had ever followed his flag. But Shepherd was eventually captured, and served a term in the Penitentiary. On his release he seemed to have but little fancy for the old wild life, and was quietly settled down in Kansas City, when the Glendale robbery took place.

The question may be asked—Why should Major Liggett hit upon Geo. W. Shepherd as the appropriate medium through which he should lay hands on Jesse James?

The answer is, that the Major was made aware of a lurking feeling of dislike on the part of Shepherd toward Jesse James. Right or wrong, Shepherd believed that he owed the death of a much valued nephew to Jesse's unerring pistol some thirteen years before. There had never been from that time any real confidence between the two, although their mutual dislike had never broken out into open rupture.

Shepherd was working at a dry-goods store in Kansas City, when Major Liggett sent for him. The coldness existing between Shepherd and Jesse, seemed at first sight to present an insuperable difficulty in the way of Major Liggett's plans. But this was to be overcome by strategy. The Major caused it to be circulated that Shepherd was involved in the Glendale robbery, and bogus strips of newspapers were provided Shepherd, to show that he too was being hunted down by Liggett and his detective forces.

Armed with these newspaper clippings, Shepherd went down to the Kearney homestead and had an interview with Mrs. Samuels.

"Why George, whatever has brought you here?" said the stern-faced mother of the bandit; "you are about the very last man I should expect to see at Kearney."

"Well," said Shepherd cautiously, for he could not mistake the look of suspicion in her eyes, "the truth is I am tired of this trying to live an honest life. Everywhere I go I am spotted. So I've just made up my mind that I might as well have the game as the name. So I mean to join Jesse and trust to luck and a swift horse."

"Is that so?" said Mrs. Samuels. "But what has made

you turn back to the old life just now? You know that they are hunting Frank and Jesse like dogs this very moment about that Glendale affair."

"Yes," answered Shepherd, "that's not all. I am hunted too about the same business, and I haven't been nearer Glendale than Kansas City for eight months. But it's always the same. Give the best dog in the world a bad name, and it's all up with him!"

"You hunted, too, about Glendale!" said Mrs. Samuels; "why you surprise me."

"Well, look at these papers," said Shepherd, handing the bogus slips to Mrs. Samuels.

The result of the interview was that George D. Shephêrd was led blindfolded to the hiding place of Jesse. His reception was by no means cordial, but these bogus newspaper clippings sufficed to convince the gang that Shepherd was really being hunted. He soon got into the secrets of the gang, and managed to get Jesse to go back on the quiet to Kansas City to settle up some private business. He took an awful oath he would divulge nothing, but immediately return to his comrades.

He went to Kansas City and told Major Liggett everything about the plans of the boys, and put him distinctly on their track, then returning to the camp of the outlaws.

The bandits were encamped on Rogues' Island, in the Marias des Cygnes River, not far from Fort Scott. A plot was formed for the robbing of Stewart & McArthur's bank, at Short Creek, on the following Sunday. Shepherd was welcomed back. The plan of the authorities was to take Jesse and his friends in the act of robbing the bank. Jesse was in

the town early in the morning of the Sunday on which the bank was to be robbed. Jesse was much surprised to see certain soldiers about early in the morning, and smelling danger, all his plans were instantly changed. All the plans of Shepherd were frustrated, and the whole camp seemed to be disorganized. In the afternoon they were riding in scattered fashion through the woods; Jesse was a little ahead, when George W. Shepherd, impatient of delay, called out:

“Damn you, Jesse James, thirteen years ago you killed my young nephew Frank Shepherd, and now by heavens I’ll be even with you.”

Jesse, thunderstruck, wheeled round and clutched for his pistol, but he was too late; Shepherd’s pistol flashed fire, and Jesse fell heavily to the ground. He paused a moment, saw no sign of Jesse’s rising, put spurs to his horse and then began a race for life.

Away went Shepherd, crashing through the underwood, with Cummings tearing after in hot pursuit. Blackamore followed in the chase, but was soon left behind. Cummings gradually gained upon Shepherd, till there was nothing for it but make a stand and fight it out then and there. A shot fired into Cummings’ side persuaded him that it would be wise to return, which he did after a three miles’ ride. Cummings returned with a shattered rib, but he had left Shepherd a memento of the day’s doings in the shape of a bullet which lodged in the calf of Shepherd’s right leg.

Shepherd thought for a time that Jesse must be fatally wounded. But it is very questionable if he was wounded at all. It served his purpose, for a while at least, to be thought

dead. And whether he believed it or not, Mrs. Samuels gave it out that "poor Jesse was gone at last!"

But Jesse was spared for a still more humiliating death.



CHAPTER LV.

STILL IN PURSUIT OF THE GLENDALE ROBBERS.

ALLEN PARMER—MARRIES MISS SUSAN JAMES—HOME IN TEXAS—ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE GLENDALE ROBBERY—JESSE STILL UNCAUGHT—WAS HE REALLY DEAD?—A SUMMER AFTERNOON IN PRINCETON.

Amongst others charged with being accomplices in the Glendale robbery, was Allen Parmer, of whom this history up to this point has known but little. His early days were passed in Jackson county. There was not much in Allen that gave promise of the dauntless desperado, but notwithstanding his mild appearance he was very early admitted a member of Quantrell's band. He took part in that dreadful sack of Lawrence narrated in the earlier parts of this book. He evinced a most indomitable courage. In the bloody conflict at Centralia he took a conspicuous part. Through all those wild raids in Kentucky he had his share. When the war ended, and peace once more blessed the land, he returned to a peaceful life and became a silent partner with J. W. Shauhan, in the commission business in St. Louis. The business, however, was not very successful, and Parmer is said to have been a considerable loser in his first commercial venture. For five to six years after this he led a wild, wandering life, journeying through Texas, Colorado and the Indian Territory. He came finally to regard Texas as his home. In the year 1870 he re-

turned to Jackson county, and wooed and won Susan, the sister of Frank and Jesse James. The newly wedded pair at once removed to Arkansas, and there for a time they lived in peace and comfort, Mrs. Parmer teaching school at Sherman. A little while after this Parmer journeyed 120 miles further West, and established a ranche near Henrietta, Clay county, Texas. Here he lived in ease and comparative prosperity. He was passing altogether out of public sight and notice, when the Glendale robbery took place. But he was destined once more to be brought into temporary notoriety.

William Grimes, in his testimony concerning the Glendale robbery, in describing the man who struck him the blow that stunned him, drew a portrait so like Allen Parmer that suspicion at once fastened upon him. Deputy Marshal Whig Keshlear was dispatched to Texas by Marshal Liggett, to arrest Parmer on a charge of having part in the robbery. Every effort was made by his Texan friends, who evidently believed him innocent of any complicity in the robbery,—to prevent his being taken as a prisoner to Missouri. But all technical difficulties were overcome, and under a requisition from Governor Phelps of Missouri, he was brought a prisoner to Kansas City on the 23d of November. He most emphatically and vehemently denied any part whatever in the robbery. He was lodged in Jackson county jail, and was kept there a little over a month, after which he was discharged, the authorities not being able to find any evidence whatever by which they could connect him with the Glendale robbery. Parmer affected to be greatly incensed at this harsh and summary treatment, and threatened a suit against the authorities for false imprisonment.

But wiser counsel prevailed, and after a good deal of useless fretting he returned to his Texan home.

As yet Marshall Liggett's efforts to secure the Glendale robbers had been wholly unsuccessful. And it is quite clear that Jesse James was a man of more than ordinary capacity, or he would not have been able to elude the vigilant search that was made for him.

It is however probable that, after the conflict in the woods with George Shepherd, on that memorable Sunday afternoon, the hunt after Jesse was considerably abated. Shepherd had the impression that Jesse had been fatally wounded. And the news that he was dead gained ground, and was favored no doubt by Jesse's relatives and friends, partly with the view of putting his pursuers off the track. Mrs. Samuels gave out that "poor Jesse was dead," though she did not act as one suffering from a very painful bereavement. Indeed, there are many who think they have very good reason for believing that Jesse was quietly resting, unwounded and unhurt from Shepherd's dastardly shot, in the old home at Kearney

Where Jesse spent Christmas of 1879 is hard to tell. Soon after the fray with Shepherd in the woods, the whole gang divided spoils and agreed to separate, till another roll-call should summon them to active service. Where the boys went, and how they spent the few months that followed, is not known, and in such a case it serves little purpose to inquire. According to some testimonies they were drinking the mineral waters at Saratoga one day, tipping champagne with Wall Street brokers the next, and lolling at their ease

in the marble hall of the Palmer House on the third. But these are all flights of fancy. As a matter of fact, it was for months very questionable whether Jesse was dead or alive. And Frank, who was much quieter in disposition than his younger brother, was not heard from.

In July of this year, 1881, an event transpired that gave the general impression that if Jesse had really died of the wound he received from Shepherd's pistol, he had managed somehow to rise again.

Riverton is a well-to-do village, situated on the southwestern corner of Iowa. Messrs. Davis & Sexton were the highly esteemed bankers of the village, and Riverton being in the midst of a prosperous agricultural district, they managed to do a thriving little business. They were plodding men, of quiet, industrious habits, not very likely to set the world on fire, and yet they had managed to make a snug little competency. On the afternoon of this July day two well-mounted, respectable-looking strangers came to Riverton, and having hitched their horses in an alley at the rear of the bank, they leisurely sauntered round for a little, and at last entered the bank.

Mr. Sexton was alone, and looking up from his desk, saw two strange gentlemen before him. He arose immediately and said in his usual kindly manner:

“Good afternoon, gentlemen; what can I do for you?”

“Would you have the kindness to change this five dollar bill? we want some silver,” said the younger-looking of the two.

“Certainly,” said the banker, taking the bill from his

hand. Turning to comply with this request, and in the act of making change, he thought he heard something unusual, and turning to see what it was, he was amazed to see a long dragoon pistol held straight before his face. He started and turned pale, but before he had time to utter a sound, the ruffian who held the pistol said:

“Throw up your hands and keep silence, or you’re a dead man.”

The terrified banker was spell-bound. Up went his hands mechanically, the right hand clasping the bill he was in the act of changing.

Quick as thought, the other stranger rushed behind the counter, and cleared the safe of all its bills and gold. Mr. Sexton was ordered to show them the back way out. The robbers then sprang to their horses, and fled away across the open timber lands with all possible speed. The robbers had got away with \$5,000, or to be quite accurate, deducting the \$5 bill, which Mr. Sexton still held as a memento of their visit, they had made just \$4,995 by the afternoon’s transaction.

Nobody could prove, but everybody believed, that these enterprising gentlemen were none other than Messrs. Frank and Jesse James, their way of doing things was so much after the fashion of these renowned outlaws of Missouri.

After this little Riverton episode, people began to say to one another, “Well, you see Jesse James was not killed, after all,”

CHAPTER LVI.

MAMMOTH CAVE STAGE ROBBERY—ANOTHER STAGE ROBBERY—THE CONCORD COACH—FRANK AND JESSE TO THE FRONT—THE LOGICAL DRIVER—\$1,136 HAUL—“GOOD-BYE, GIVE MY LOVE TO THE GIRLS.”

The grandest sight in Kentucky, and indeed one of the grandest sights in all the world is the wonderful Mammoth Cave. A celebrated writer says that “the Mammoth Cave, if less majestic, is not less wonderful than the world-renowned Falls of Niagara.” Pilgrims from all lands visit this remarkable natural phenomenon. And in the summer and autumn the stage drivers do a rousing trade. The visitors to the cave are for the most part of the wealthy class, with whom money is not of the first importance. Their well-lined, corpulent pocketbooks have more than once formed a sore temptation to the robbers who infest the neighborhood. In the month of September, 1880, one of the last and largest of these stage robberies took place. For a long time it was only a matter of surmise as to the identity of the robbers. But subsequent revelations have made it clear beyond all doubt that Frank and Jesse James were the robbers.

From all the details it would seem that they were in a merry mood on this September afternoon. They seem from first to last to have regarded the whole affair as a capital practical joke.

The distance from Cave City to the Cave is about eight or ten miles. This distance is traversed by the Concord stage. About mid-way between the city and the cave is a dense wood, where the loveliest scenery abounds. And here a magnificent hotel, a sort of half-way house, suggests the propriety of halting for refreshments. And not infrequently the passengers spend an hour in rambling about this charming and romantic spot.

On the evening in question, the Concord stage had started on the second half of its journey. The company consisted of Miss Rountree, Hon. R. H. Rountree, Mr. R. S. Rountree, of the *Milwaukee Evening Wisconsin*; Mr. J. E. Craig, Jr., of Lawrenceville, Ga.; Mr. S. W. Shelton, Calhoun, Pa.; Mr. S. H. Frohlichstein, Mobile; Mr. G. M. Parsley and Mr. G. W. Welsh, both of Pittsburgh. The company had had a pleasant day at the Cave, and were now returning in a pleasant mood back to Cave City.

They had come to the verge of the wood, when suddenly the driver descried two horsemen riding at an easy pace toward them. These well-mounted, well-armed gentlemen were our redoubtable heroes, Frank and Jesse James. Approaching within hailing distance of the stage Jesse cried out in a commanding tone:

“Halt!”

And instantly a pair of revolvers were pointed at the driver's head. The driver knew that these men meant business, and at once brought his horses to a stand-still. He was ordered to come down and stand by the door of the stage. He at once obeyed, and suspecting from the first the men he

had to deal with, he begged the travelers to come out. He knew it was no use to attempt a parley; and so he urged the terrified occupants of his coach not to stand upon the order of their coming out, but to come out at once.

“You see,” said he, “they’ll have your money, anyhow, and if you bother ’em they’ll have your life as well as your money.”

“Come out of the stage, please,” said the rider who had first commanded the halt.

The passengers looked through the windows and saw there was nothing for it but to obey. The ominous revolvers presented at full cock were arguments that helped the driver’s logic mightily.

Mr. R. S. Rountree, with the sagacity that is part of every editor’s character, seized the passing moments of parley to hide his belongings—a pocketbook and a gold watch—which he did successfully under the cushion of the stage.

Miss Rountree, the only lady of the party, was permitted to retain her seat.

The gentlemen were placed in single file. Jesse held the whole company under cover of his dreadful pistols, while Frank, ordering every man to “hold up,” went through the crowd, searching every pocket. The money and all valuables, watches, chains and rings, were taken. They were generous enough to return railway passes and papers that they could not use. They then with mock seriousness begged their victims not to regard them as highwaymen.

“Oh! dear, no, nothing so vulgar! They were only moonshiners who were unduly pressed by an unreasonable govern-

ment, were compelled to leave the country, and of course they could not go without money. And, therefore, though much against their principles, they were compelled to levy toll after this fashion. They were extremely sorry if they had given any undue annoyance. It might be some consolation to know that they had taken toll from the out-going coach that very afternoon, and Mr. George Croghan, one of the owners of the celebrated cave, had contributed the handsome sum of \$700."

Frank then apologized to Mr. Craig of Georgia. He hated to take his money, for he loved all Georgians. He had fought in a Georgia regiment in the late war.

"But then you see," said Frank, "I have no option, and needs must when the devil drives."

Turning to the only lady of the party the impertinent robber inquired her name.

"Miss Rountree, of Lebanon," said the lady, scarcely able to hide her disgust.

"Indeed!" said Frank, his face quite lighting up with a smile, "why then you'll probably know some friends of mine. I have some very dear friends in Lebanon. Do you happen to know the Misses Smithers who live there?"

"Yes, sir, I do," replied Miss Rountree.

"Dear me," added Frank, "what a coincidence! Nice girls the Smithers' girls, ain't they? Real jolly girls! No nonsense, you know, but real out and outers! I wish you'd give my love to them when you see them. Tell them not to be afraid, I'll make all this right."

By this time the passengers were ordered into their

places, and the driver was charged by Jesse to "Drive on, and not look behind him." As the old stage rumbled along Frank shouted a farewell to Miss Rountree, and said: "Be sure and give my love to the girls."

When the coach was fairly on its way the impoverished passengers began to count their losses. It was found that jewelry to the amount of about \$200 had been taken, and the following sums of money: J. E. Craig, Jr., Lawrenceville, Ga., \$670; Hon. R. H. Rountree, Lebanon, \$55; S. W. Shelton, Calhoun, Pa., \$50; S. H. Frohlichstein, Mobile, \$23; G. M. Parsley, Pittsburgh, \$33; G. W. Welsh, Pittsburgh, \$5.

So the bandits were richer by about \$1,136 for their brief, daring raid.



CHAPTER LVIII.

ROBBERY AND MURDER—WESTONVILLE—THE OLD BATTLE-FIELD — MURDER OF WILLIAM WESTFALL — M'MILLAN KILLED BY A STRAY SHOT—THE BAGGAGE-VAN ROBBED—THE ROBBERS ARE HUNTED IN VAIN.

After a period of comparative quiet, the old battle-field of the James Boys rings again with their unerring revolvers. It was in the midst of the glorious summer time that this startling tragedy and robbery we are about to detail, took place. A universal sorrow was darkening all the land. From Cape Cod to the Golden Gate, the great republic was mourning the assassination of its chief center. A dastard whose name deserves to be consigned to oblivion, fired what has proved to be a deadly shot at General James A. Garfield, one of the noblest men and purest patriots who ever sat in the presidential chair. On the morning of the 2d of July the shots were fired that echoed round the world, and doomed the nations to universal sorrow. The excitement incident upon this shameful event was at its height, when the whole of Western America was startled by a new sensation. Another of those desperate train robberies had taken place, and this time bloodshed was added to plunder.

The robbery took place on Friday evening, July 15th, 1881. The scene of the robbery was Westonville, a village of some three hundred inhabitants, situated in Daviess county,

Missouri, about fifty-three miles from Kansas City. About a mile east and north of Westonville, the railroad crosses Big Dog Creek, a tributary of Grand River. The whole region is full of that picturesque beauty amid which the robber-brood seemed generally disposed to do their dreadful work; not that they chose these scenes for their beauty, but because these regions always afforded ample hiding places when the work was done.

The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific train left Kansas City about 6:30, on the evening in question. It had proceeded quietly on its way without any special experience until it reached Cameron. At that station four men boarded the train. They had all the look of rugged farmers of the district. At any rate there was nothing about their appearance that attracted special attention. At Westonville three more passengers got on the train. There were now seven men on board, bent on awful mischief. Whether murder was included in their programme as a positive item, will now never be known. But murder, most deliberate and cold-blooded, did become part of that night's awful doings. Three of these men were in the smoking car as the train steamed out of Westonville. The night had grown dark; it was now nine o'clock. The other four of the band stood on the platform of the baggage car, gaining thus sure command of the fireman and the engineer. William Westfall, the ill-fated conductor of the train, began to collect the tickets. His task was nearly accomplished, when a burly man in a linen duster and with a black beard rose, and pointing his revolver at Westfall, said:

"You are my prisoner; you are the man I want,"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when the sharp crack of a revolver was heard, and Westfall turned for a moment, gasping something inaudibly, and then rolled against the side of the car, only to receive another shot, which made the fatal work doubly sure. He staggered out to the platform and rolled out to the ditch a dead man.

Shots still were fired, and a luckless stone mason in the employ of the company, coming to the door to see what all the tumult was, was instantly killed by a stray shot from the reeking revolver.

A scene of indescribable terror ensued. Amid the consternation, some one pulled the bell rope for the train to be stopped. The engineer, a man named Wolcott, promptly obeyed the signal. But this did not suit the plan of the robbers. Two of their number rushed to the engine and threw the throttle-valve wide open, while the engineer and fireman were driven to the cow-catcher in terror of their lives.

From the smoking car to the baggage car the battle was now transferred. Messenger Charles Murray had charge of the U. S. Express Company's safe. Baggage man Frank Stumper was also in the car on a chair near the door. It was the work of a moment only, to burst into the cars. The chair on which Stumper sat was thrown over, and he was dragged out by his legs with unceremonious command.

"Come out of this you — — — —; come out or you're a dead man."

Into the car the raiders rushed, taking Murray by the throat.

"What do you want here?" he said, "this is no place for passengers,"

At this provocation one of the number seized Murray and swung him round and threatened to "knock hell out of him if he was sassy."

The safe was rifled of its contents. The leader of the band had a sack at hand into which he poured the golden treasure. It appeared to him that there ought to be more money, and so he asked Murray how much money there was.

"I don't know," said Murray.

"Then you ought to know," said the leader. "What the devil do you do here in charge, without knowing? Come now, be quick! I want all you have, every cent! And if you give me any more trouble, I'll kill you, by God!"

Murray said, "You've got everything but those silver bricks."

"Oh, d——n your silver bricks," was the rejoinder. "You might as well give up. We have killed your conductor and engineer, and we are going to kill you; so get down on your knees. There are twelve men in this gang, and we've got full possession of the train."

While this work was going on in the cars, others of the gang went through the train firing off revolvers and swearing frightful oaths, that if the passengers stirred or spoke they would shoot them dead.

The panic of suspense was awful. Big stout men crawled to the floor and tried to get under the seats. Others tried to hide in the Pullman car, where one devout old lady was heard amid all the tumult praying aloud that the good Lord would turn the hearts of these wicked men, and spare the lives of the passengers.

For the most part the women were much more courageous

than the men, the latter hiding their valuables in all conceivable places; utilizing the water-cooler, the spittoons and their boots as secret hiding places for jewelry, watches and pocketbooks, while others held up their valuables as a sacrifice to appease the avarice of these miserable ghouls. One poor wretch, scared well-nigh to death, notwithstanding he was armed, pulled out his revolver and laid it on the window-sill, saying: "Here, anybody can have this; I don't want it." One passenger in the Pullman car took the precaution to hide all his money in one of the pillows, which, perhaps, was the safest and wisest place under the circumstances. The prevailing idea was that the robbers were going through the train to plunder and murder every passenger, if need be. But this was not their purpose. To keep the passengers terror-stricken for a little time was all they wanted of them.

But why was William Westfall so shamefully murdered? It is generally believed that only a motive of the bitterest revenge moved Jesse James—for there is no moral doubt that Jesse was the leader of this band, and the murderer of Westfall—to this dreadful deed. It was reported to Jesse by those who were likely to know, that Westfall had been very active in the aid he had rendered to Pinkerton's men on many occasions, and that Westfall was the leading spirit of that cruel fray at Kearney, when the bombshells were thrown into his mother's house, and his half-brother was killed.

If Jesse held these opinions, they would be justification enough for him to kill a thousand Westfalls. He would consider it a work of righteous retribution.

It has been most distinctly denied by friends of Westfall that he ever had anything to do with this sad scene at Kearney. Westfall was a highly respected man. He was born in McLean county, Missouri, early in the year 1843. He spent his young years on a farm, and then went clerking for a time. In 1867 he was proprietor of a small confectionery establishment at Kidder, in Caldwell county, Missouri. Shortly after this he married Miss Eliza Sweeney, whose maiden home was near Gallatin. He was connected with the Hannibal & St. Joe Railroad, and he soon rose from brakeman to conductor, which position he retained till 1878. He was for a brief spell on the Central branch of the Union Pacific. It was in March, 1879, that he entered the service of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Road, in which service he died.

The funeral of Westfall and of McMillan, the murdered stone-mason, brought thousands of people together, who testified their deep sympathy for the mourning families.

At this Westonville affair the outlaws managed to gather \$2,000 as the spoils of their enterprise.

After the robbing comes the running. And while there needed much daring to secure these large spoils, there needed a good deal of courage and prompt action, when the terrible work was done, to escape in safety. With every robbery the public mind became more and more exasperated. And so the perils of flight became greater. But these men could and often did ride sixty miles in an hour. And there can be little doubt that long before the general public were made aware of their latest exploit, the boys were many miles away.

Sam Coffman, an old rough rider, was always willing to magnify the riding power of the boys; but when he did so, it was one word for the boys and two for himself.

“How far could Jesse James and his gang ride in sixty hours?” was asked of Sam Coffman.

“Well,” he replied, after a careful calculation, “they might get in five hundred miles, but they could put in four hundred miles easily. I have done that myself when I was in a hurry. You see, those fellows plan their robberies a long time ahead, and have everything fixed. They have relays of horses every fifty miles or so, and all good stock, fast and gamy. They could have made the Panhandle country of Texas in sixty hours or thereabouts.”

A gentleman in connection with one of the Kansas City journals, details a somewhat interesting interview with Billy Hudspeth, a well-to-do farmer of Sin-a-bar township, near Kansas City. And though there may be but little truth in the story, it goes to show what sort of feeling there was amongst certain people relative to Frank and Jesse James.

“I’m accused of being Jesse James’ friend and confidant, and all that sort of thing,” said Farmer Hudspeth, “but people don’t understand me. Now, for instance, I was out in the field one Sunday morning, doing some work, getting ready to go to church. I had a fine thoroughbred horse hitched to the fence, saddled and bridled, when who should ride up but Jesse James. Of course I says, ‘Good-morning, Jesse.’

“‘Good-morning,’ says he, jess so.

“Then says he, ‘That’s a good horse you have. How much will you take for him?’

"I didn't want to sell the horse, but I knowed he'd take him any way, so I says \$200.

"Says he, 'I'll give you \$300. I've only got \$100 with me, and I'll give you the other \$200 when I meet you the next time.'

"I was blamed glad to get the \$100, so I says 'All right,' and he went away. In about two weeks he came riding along, and hands me the \$200. It's none of my business where he got it, and you bet your life I don't ask.

"Next week, maybe, he comes along with Jim Cummings and the gang, and says he wants to stop all night. Do you suppose I am going to say, 'You can't stay here; you're train robbers, and you can't come in?' Not much I don't. I say, 'Come in, Jesse; come in, Jim, Dick, Ed; how's your mother and the folks? Make yourself at home'; and my barns and stock and family are safe. I pay my taxes, and help pay the county marshal, and I'll be damned if I turn out and do his work for him after paying him. He hasn't any barns, or stock or family to risk."

The day after the Westonville robbery a most vigorous pursuit was set on foot, but the robbers were not caught.

Governor Crittenden felt determined, however, that the matter should not rest, and so convened an informal meeting of representatives of railroads and express companies at the Southern Hotel, St. Louis, to take such steps as were necessary. These various companies offered sums as reward for the capture of Frank and Jesse James, amounting in the aggregate to \$50,000, to which Governor Crittenden added \$5,000 on behalf of the State of Missouri.

CHAPTER LIX.

FURTHER LIGHT ON THE WESTONVILLE ROBBERY—A SUGGESTIVE LETTER FOUND—TESTIMONY OF EYE-WITNESSES—MR. FRED HENKEL OF CHICAGO, AND MAJOR ANTHONY OF DENVER, INTERVIEWED.

Further light was shed upon the Westonville robbery than was afforded the public by the telegraphic and newspaper reports.

On the evening of Sunday, the 16th of July, within about forty-eight hours of the robbery, a couple of lovers were leaning over the bridge at Dry Creek, a short distance from the spot where the raiders took to their horses after their work was done. They were breathing the oft-told tale, with many vows of eternal fidelity, when the downcast eyes of the bashful maiden discovered something white fluttering near a moss-grown stone.

“Oh, see! Willie,” she said; “what is that?”

Like a gallant knight Willie secured the fluttering waif, and to his surprise read the following letter, which he at once handed to the nearest police authority. Of the genuineness of the epistle we know nothing. We give it to our readers for what it is worth:

KANSAS CITY, July 12, 1881.—CHARLEY: I got your letter to-day, and was glad to hear you had got everything ready in time for the 15th. We will be on hand at the time. Bill will be with me. We will be on the

train. Don't fear. We will be in the smoker^o at Winston. Have the horses and boys in good fix for the feast. We will make this joust on the night of the 16th inst. All is right here. Frank will meet us at Cameron. Look sharp, and be well fixed. Have the horses well gaunted. We may have some riding to do sometime. Don't get excited, but keep cool till the right time. Wilco (evidently meant for Wilcott) will be on the engine. I think it best to send this to Kidder. Yours till and through death,

ALECK.

Whether this was a letter from Jesse or not we cannot tell. There are, however, other sources of information concerning that night's work that are most reliable and trustworthy. Mr. Fred Henkel of Chicago, and Mr. Anthony of Denver, Col., were passengers on the train. They have most courteously consented to tell the story of that eventful ride. Their testimony is free from all those exaggerations that frequently attend such narrations.

Mr. Henkel of Chicago, says:

“I think that it was about twenty minutes past 9 o'clock. I had just had my supper, and was enjoying a cigar in the smoking car. I think that the station is Princeton, Missouri, where we had our supper, somewhere between Cameron and Winston Station. About the time we arrived there we noticed a crowd of rather hard-looking characters about the station. They were together in groups of twos and threes. When we were through supper they yelled ‘All aboard.’ The first we knew the train was flying along at a rapid rate, and a man, very large, thick, heavy-set, with a black beard, short but thick, came in, followed by a couple of others. He was dressed, as far as I could notice, in a linen coat and a straw

hat, and the other parts of his clothing I don't recollect. The trio came in by way of the front platform of the smoking car, and one of them, the man with the black beard, had a revolver cocked in his hand. He muttered something, and commenced firing at the conductor. He ran out, and the others crowded up to him."

"Which way did the conductor run?"

"He ran toward the rear platform out of the door, where I heard more shooting. We all ran back to the sleeping car where we belonged, and threw ourselves on the floor. I only saw the gang at the station while they were in knots, and I should suppose that there were at least a dozen of them. I should think that there were four of them who came into the smoking car. After the trouble was over we found the conductor's lantern and his brains on the rear platform."

"Was the train stopped?"

"No; we were on a stop when the bandits got on. The robbers held possession of the train. Three of the gang jumped on the engine, and with cocked revolvers compelled the engineer and fireman to submit. They couldn't do anything else. They were armed, but they couldn't get a chance to use them. In the excitement they crept away from their captors and put out the headlight. They also put the air-brakes on, so that the speed was slackened. At Winston, to which they ran the train, one of the brakemen jumped off and telegraphed the death of the conductor and the stonemason, McMillan. The jig was up, and the robbers ran away."

Major Anthony of Denver, Col., gives a more extended account, of which we gladly avail ourselves:

“I have no doubt,” says Major Anthony, “that the gang fully intended to go through the whole train. The first man who entered the smoking car, and who fired the first shots at the conductor, cried out, ‘Hands up!’ as he advanced. The others seemed taken aback at the large number of people they found on the car, and looked from one to another and hesitated. The one who had entered the car looked around him after he had fired a couple of times, and seemed to be surprised that he was alone, and then backed out of the car, waving his revolver as he did so to keep the passengers from rising upon him.”

“The passengers were considerably scared, were they not?”

“Yes. I’ve been in one or two tight places before, and did not feel particularly scared. I was in the sleeper, and called out for every man in the car to get his weapon and prepare to do his duty. Not a soul, however, had one on the car. Then began the fun. It was amusing to see the fellows going down for their watches, and money, and other valuables, and hunting for places to hide them in. One man, who seemed in an agony of despair, called out, ‘They can have all the money I own,’ at the same time diving under a seat. All sorts of places were utilized as hiding places for money, etc. Men pulled off their boots and shoved their wads or watches into them. Spittoons were used for the same purpose. I popped my money into the pillow—a pretty safe place, I think. The men on the car were terribly frightened—much more so than the women. The idea prevailed that the robbers were shooting through the windows at the pas-

sengers, and as many as could find snug refuge under a seat stowed themselves there, and remained there until long after the firing was over. On the other hand, not a woman seemed to be a particle excited. It was wonderful how coolly they took it. They now and then asked for an explanation of what was going on, and for pretty definite information as to when the affair was likely to end; but when, naturally enough, they found their curiosity could not be satisfied, they remained calmly in their seats and awaited future developments.

“There was one great danger which we escaped, as it were, by a miracle. When the car stopped it did so not 200 yards in front of a high trestle. When the robbers had command of the locomotive they urged the train along at a tremendous rate of speed. Had this speed been kept up while the train was running along the trestle, it would, so railroad men tell me, have jumped the track to a dead certainty, and become a total wreck, with a great destruction of life. The brakeman, Cole, however, by his opportune opening of the air-brake, slackened the train up and averted the calamity.”

When Mr. William Pinkerton, of the Chicago detective department, was asked his opinion as to the authors, he unhesitatingly said:

“The work was undoubtedly done by Jesse and Frank James, who are the only survivors of the famous James and Younger gang, the remainder being dead or in the Penitentiary. Jesse James lives in Clay county, Missouri, and he can gather a party to rob a train in Clay county in about two days' time. He has a thorough knowledge of the country, and can be secreted by the citizens for months to avoid arrest.”

CHAPTER LIX.

JESSE'S LAST RAID!

GLENDALE AGAIN—MR. JACKSON, OF KANSAS CITY—WHO WAS HE?—THE PLEASANT SEPTEMBER EVENING—THE TRAIN BOARDED—TESTIMONY OF EYE-WITNESSES—HAZELBAKER & FOOTE—A TWELVE THOUSAND DOLLAR HAUL.

Glendale once more! And now for the last time we have to record the skill and awful daring of Jesse James as a train robber. It is a long lane that has never a turn, and Jesse sets out on his last raid, though there is nothing to indicate to him that his days are numbered.

Jesse had been living for some time in Kansas City, where he rented a neat frame house on Woodland avenue, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets. He had previously lived in Nashville, under the name of Mr. Charles Howard. In Kansas City he assumed the name of Mr. T. J. Jackson. Of all places Kansas City seems the very last place in which one would have thought Jesse would have taken up his abode. It was daring the worst. It seemed as if he was actually inviting capture. But Jesse knew pretty well what he was about. And the probabilities are that if Jesse had been content to live quietly in Nashville or Kansas City, or Texas, he might have been living yet. He was not well known as to personal appearance; there was no reliable portrait of him, by which

even the most acute detective could have identified him. If he attracted any attention at all amongst his immediate neighbors in Kansas City it was only that kind of wonderment in which gossiping people always indulge concerning the people who are very quiet and find it enough for them to mind their own business. Mr. Jackson paid cash for everything, so there were no collectors calling. He didn't seem to have many visitors. He did not work for a living; when he went out it was at night. So the wise-acres shook their solemn heads and said with many a solemn nod and knowing wink, "Gambler!"

Jesse would have been quite content to have been taken for so respectable a personage. And as long as that conclusion satisfied their curiosity he would have been quite content.

The memory of the Westonville tragedy was still fresh in the minds of the people, when another raid was made. It was the pleasant autumn time:

"The leaves were paling yellow
And trembling into red;
And the free and happy barley
Was hanging down its head."

On Tuesday morning, September 6th, 1881, a passenger train started out from Chicago, on the Chicago & Alton road. The train was well loaded, and the Pullman cars carried rather more than its usual complement of ladies and gentlemen bound westward. Some were going on business, and others were returning from their summer tours, refreshed with their wanderings, and prepared to face the winter's work.

The day had been very beautiful, and but for occasional clouds of dust that penetrated everywhere, the journey had

been very pleasant. It was about 9 o'clock at night as the train swept along in the region of Glendale — the scene of the famous robbery of 1879, when Jesse James led the robber band. The sleepers were made up; the ladies were about to retire; the gentlemen were standing on the platform, and were enjoying a quiet smoke in the moonlight, when the train was suddenly brought to a standstill, and was boarded by twelve masked men. They rushed in like wild tigers, howling, yelling and cursing as though they were just let loose from Pandemonium. Foote, the engineer, was ordered, on pain of instant death, to "come out of that," and as the order was enforced by two revolvers held before his face, he obeyed, and was quickly followed by John Steadman, his fireman. They were then told that they must take the coal hammer and break open the express car. There was nothing for it but to comply. All the robbers wore white masks but one, and he wore a red neck-kerchief, and declared himself to be Jesse James, and indicated that he meant business, and so assured them that they had better be spry. Foote and Steadman were then escorted to the express car, which was in charge of Mr. H. A. Fox, messenger of the United States Express Company: As soon as he heard the pounding commence, he suspected that there was mischief ahead. He immediately opened the door, and was ordered along with his baggage-man to come out, which he did. He betook himself to the roadside, but was soon re-called and made to open the safe. It would seem that the safe did not contain as much as the raiders anticipated, and so they took vengeance on the unoffending Fox, and belabored him about the head with the

butt-end of a pistol. They made him give up his pocket-book and his watch. He was successful, however, in regaining his watch sometime afterward from a pawn shop in St. Louis.

In the meantime, the other members of the band were taking up a collection in the cars.

"We are coming in and going through you," said one of the gang, "so d——n you, be quick, and hold up your hands!"

Hazelbaker, the conductor, and Burton, the brakeman, as soon as the train began to slack, scented danger. They went through the cars, warning the passengers on peril of their lives to keep quiet. Having done this, they remembered that the freight train was following fast, and if it was not flagged, the whole train might be wrecked. With a most heroic courage and thought never to be forgotten, these brave men, through a drizzling rain of shot, and at the imminent peril of their lives, went and flagged the fast following freight train.

Happily we have Mr. Hazelbaker's own account of the adventure. He shall tell his own story:

"When I reached the sleeper, I told Burton, my brakeman, to flag the train following. I knew there was a freight right after me, and would wreck my train, and I knew that that train must be stopped. Burton said he did not like to go, but the brave fellow went just the same. We dropped off together, and they began to fire at us. I think there were probably twenty shots fired at us altogether. We finally succeeded in flagging the freight train just in time. The gang swore a great deal, and seemed to center all their wrath on

him, threatening his life if he continued to run on that line. The leader, who said he was Jesse James, put a pistol under the nose of the conductor, and said:

“D——n you, smell of that; that’s the pistol I shot Westfall with at Winston.”

The robbers were greatly incensed because the Governor of Missouri had offered a reward for their capture. And one of the masked men threatened with many an oath:

“Now listen you ——, the next reward that’s offered, we’ll burn your d——n train, and don’t you forget it! We will cut the Pullman loose and save it, because Pullman is white, and never offered a reward; but we will make a bonfire of your train, as sure as you live.”

In answer to further questions, Hazelbaker said:

“From their talk it appeared that the robbery was a piece of dare-deviltry, in revenge for the Winston reward being offered. They constantly shoved pistols under my nose, and reminded me of Westfall’s fate. After they left us we pulled out, and as quick as we could.”

“How many were there?”

“There were six in the sleeper, and four or five outside.”

“Did they expose themselves?”

“Not at all! I could see their forms, but absolutely nothing of their features. The leader, supposed to be Jesse James, had on a white muslin cloth with holes cut in it around his head, as if he had made a mask of a handkerchief. The others wore masks of dirty cloth or calico. They were all slender men, except the leader, who was a tall, well-built man.”

“Could you identify any of them?”

“No, and there lies the trouble.”

“How much money do you suppose they got?”

“I could not tell. They took from each passenger between \$1 and \$300, and maybe got a couple of thousand. I don't know how much was in the express car.”

It is believed, however, that the gang secured about \$2,500 from the express car, and from the passengers about \$4,000 in gold; and in jewelry, comprising watches, diamond earrings and brooches, and the like, they obtained what would mount up to about \$12,000, in the aggregate.

The conductor managed to hide most of his money, but Fox has a different story to tell:

“When they robbed the safe of everything,” he says, “I ran back into the smoking-car, and hid most of my money. The robbers came in and ordered me, with an oath, to lie down. I did so, and they shoved a gun up to my head and told me to fork over. I said my money was under the cushion. They told me to get it, and I got it in a hurry, you bet. It was somewhere in the neighborhood of \$15.”

The work of the robbers was speedily over, and then

“They folded their tents like the Arabs,
And as silently stole away.”

But no narrative of this eventful night would be complete without the story of the engineer, who was known among his comrades on the line by the name of “Choppy Foote.” This is his story:

“Between three and four miles east of Independence is a

deep cut, over which the Missouri Pacific track crosses the Chicago & Alton, and it was just before entering the deepest part of this cut that I saw a pile of stones, probably five feet high, on the top of which was a stick to which was attached a red rag, and behind the whole stood the leader of the robbers. Of course I stopped. I was then approached by four of the gang, besides the leader, who said, 'Step down off that engine, and do as I tell you, or I will kill you.' He then told me to get the coal pick, which I did, after some parleying, but as a revolver was pointed at my head, I could not refuse to obey.

"They then marched myself and John Steadman, the fireman, to the express car, and ordered me to break the door down, which I did. Messenger Fox had hidden in the weeds by the roadside, but they swore they would kill me if he didn't come out, and so I called for him and he entered the car with two of the robbers, who forced him to open the safe and pour its contents into a sack.

"They were disappointed at not getting more booty, and knocked Fox down twice with the butt end of a navy revolver, cutting his head in a fearful manner. They then marched us to the coaches, where they kept us covered with revolvers while they robbed the passengers. After the last car was gone through, they marched us back to the engine, when the leader said: 'Now, get back there. We will remove the stones. You have been a bully boy, and here is a little present for you,' and he handed me two silver dollars. I told them I would remove the obstructions, and the entire gang skipped over the embankment, and were out of sight in a twinkling.

"In going through the passengers, each one was made to

hold up his hands, and what was taken from them was put into a two-bushel sack, which was nearly full of watches, money, and other valuables. They didn't take anything from me.

“The train was stopped only a car length off. When I came back one of the robbers said: ‘Have you lost anything?’ I answered: ‘Fifty cents.’ He gave me \$1.50 for interest. Then I heard one of the robbers say to the engineer: ‘Choppy Foote, you're too good a man to keep up this business; here's \$2 to buy a drink in the morning, and drink it for Jesse James. I warn you you'll be killed if you don't leave this road. We are going to tear up and burst the Alton & Rock Island roads, for they have been offering rewards for us. We've no grudge against the Pullmans, and will switch off their cars and burn all the rest. I am the man who killed Westfall at Winston. He was too smart, and drew a revolver.’”

Thus from eye witnesses and chief participators in the scene, we have a thoroughly reliable account of the Blue Cut raid of 1881.



CHAPTER LX.

THE LONG LANE BEGINS TO TURN.

THE HUNT THROUGH CRACKER NECK FOREST—PART OF THE GANG CAPTURED—WHERE WAS JESSE?—JOHN LAND'S CONFESSION—DEATH OF WOOD HITE.

“Turn fortune, turn thy wheel,
Lower the proud;
With thy wild wheel we go not
Up nor down,
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.”

Fortune's wheel had revolved through many changeful years in favor of Frank and Jesse James. But there was to come a change. The fickle goddess that had been all smiles, now gathered frowns upon her hitherto radiant brow. The long, long lane was coming to a turn at last.

The Blue Cut robbery showed up the whole community. And the railroad and express companies, the police and detective forces, felt ashamed and humiliated. Governor Crittenden was determined to leave no stone unturned to wipe this disgrace from Missouri.

A stampede begun in downright earnest. The Cracker Neck district was searched with such diligence that the vigilants said they did not think a rat could escape them. The hunt was long and earnest; there were over two hundred men in hot pursuit. The hunters meant business, and it was not very

long before their efforts were rewarded by the arrest of Creed Chapman, John Bugler and John Land. Marshal Murphy and Whig Keshlear did most of the arresting, and it was said they came very near arresting Ed Miller, the brother of Clell Miller who was killed at Northfield in that memorable raid.

But Jesse James was not caught. He said he could never be taken alive, and he never was. A Missouri gentleman asked Mrs. Samuels if she thought Jesse was really in that Blue Cut raid, to which the wary mother of the bandit replied:

“How could he be? Don't you know that George Shepherd killed him? I'm surprised at you asking such a question!”

But where was Jesse? For more than twenty years he had led a wild rover's life, but his days were numbered. The murders he had committed were almost numberless. It is probable that it would have been very difficult for Jesse himself to tell how many men he had killed. He had defied the utmost vigilance of the legal authorities for years. He had lived for years a charmed life, although he had borne many a mark of the bloody frays in which he had been engaged. But while he was a match for detectives and policemen, he had no talisman to insure him against treachery amongst his professed friends and comrades.

But we anticipate. The robbers, after the raid at the Blue Cut, in September, 1881, fled to the old house of refuge in Cracker Neck Forest. The spoils were partly divided and Jesse fled to Clay county to his native home. The arrest of part of the gang has been referred to. The prisoners were confined in the jail at Independence, and every effort and in-

ducement was made to secure a confession. But there "is honor among thieves." But it's just as well not to trust that honor too far. A confession was drawn from the well-digger, John Land, although the confession was declared to be a "pack of lies" from first to last. It was not this confession but a subsequent quarrel and murder among the robbers that led to Jesse James' ignominious death.

After the Blue Cut robbery, Wood and Clarence Hite returned to their Kentucky home. The young stepmother had a special aversion for Wood, though neighborhood gossip said that she entertained a tender regard for the gallant Jesse James. Wood had also incurred the hatred of Dick Little, with whom they had once had a shooting match in old man Hite's barn-yard, in which neither combatant was hurt, and neither covered himself with glory. The hatred of this man and of this woman cost Wood Hite his life, and the murder of Wood Hite incidentally hastened the fate of Jesse James.

Wood Hite was killed, according to the testimony of Mrs. Bolton, a sister of Bob Ford, on the first of December, 1881, by Dick Little and Robert Ford. His body was found with a bullet hole in his right temple, at the bottom of a well, not more than a hundred yards from the home of the Fords, in Ray county, Missouri. The inquest was not held till the 5th of April, 1882. Mrs. Bolton gave the evidence that marked her brother and Dick Little as the murderers.

CHAPTER

GATHERING GLOOM.

GOVERNOR CRITTENDEN WORKING IN SECRET—THE MYSTERIOUS LODGE—DICK LITTLE SURRENDERS—LITTLE'S CONFESSION.

The gloom began to gather on the path of the ill-fated Jesse. He was not aware to what extent efforts were being made for his capture. Had he but known he might have fled to "fields afar," and saved himself. Not that he was growing absolutely careless. But he made frequent visits from Kansas City and then from St. Joseph to the Kearney homestead, and took little or no care to assume any sort of disguise, notwithstanding \$50,000 were offered for his head.

Ever since the murder of Westfall, Governor Crittenden had been secretly at work. He abandoned all idea of securing either Frank or Jesse by aid of police or detective. The policy pursued by Marshal Liggett of Kansas City he felt sure was the right policy. Jesse must be taken through his friends or not at all, but he was by no means disposed to show his hand to anybody. He expressed himself to a gentleman who was greatly interested in the matter, in the following terms:

"Do you think that you are at last on the track of Jesse James and his gang?" was the question proposed.

"I do," replied the Governor, "and I will capture him—"

dead or alive. He may rest assured of that. He is an extraordinary man in his line, and would have made a valuable man to society had he chosen an honest life. He is a natural-born leader of men. In this instance he is like many bad men, but I think his career is about ended. His old friends are leaving him, as his association is dangerous to their liberties. The big reward I offered for Frank and Jesse has had a happy effect. The cupidity of man is only equaled by the force of the 'root of all evil'—money. Remember what I say, I will sooner or later capture these gentlemen of the pistol and the brush. They have about completed their bloody circle."

"Are you satisfied with your efforts in the direction of suppression?" asked the Governor's friend.

"Well, I have good reason to be, I think," responded the Governor. "I think the result shows good work. Two in the penitentiary for twenty-five years each, two in coffins, five in jail in Independence on their way to the penitentiary, two more under the control of the officers of the law, leaving only the old leaders, Frank and Jesse James, both of whom, I hope, will soon be beyond the limits of their own freedom."

The Fords were the medium through which the governor hoped to secure the outlaws. They were pledged to secrecy, and well supplied with funds. They were moreover so involved themselves, that treachery now to Governor Crittenden's instructions would end in utter and hopeless ruin to them. They had been at their work since November, 1881. They moved slowly, but they moved surely. They were on Jesse's track beyond a doubt. But they were not disposed to strike the blow until they were quite sure.



GOV. CRITTENDON.

One day in the early spring,—February 16th was the exact date,—Governor Crittenden was busy with his official duties at Jefferson City, when a heavily veiled lady came to his office and asked for an interview. The courteous governor was somewhat surprised when he found that the object of the lady was to find out on what terms an outlaw might surrender with any sort of safety to himself. But we will give the governor's own account of the affair:

“On the 16th of February, a mysterious woman appeared at my office and asked me upon what terms an outlaw could surrender. I said it was owing to the man. Frank nor Jesse James could surrender under no assurances of immunity from punishment. If any others of the gang came in with an honest intention of abandoning their nefarious life, and with a full determination to assist the law officers in capturing Jesse and Frank James, ready at all times to go in pursuit of them and, if necessary, die in the effort to capture them, he could come in, and I would use my influence for his protection; but not until I was fully convinced of the sincerity and honesty of his intentions—no reservations in behalf of any old friend, sympathizer, or actor.”

The coming and going of this strange visitor was not wholly unnoticed, and many began to guess and surmise what could be the purpose of the visit. When it leaked out that the visit was in connection with some question of outlawry, busy-tongued people, who knew nothing of the facts, began to explain the visit according to their fancy, as is their constant habit.

The veiled lady was said to be Mattie Collins, the alleged

wife of Dick Little, the accomplice of Jesse James. But this Governor Crittenden absolutely denies. He never knew Mattie Collins, never had an interview with her in his life. The lady in question, who had interviewed him on the question of the terms of an outlaw's surrender was—well, it was nobody's business who she was. So the busy-bodies were nonplussed.

The issue of this interview was soon known, for in two days afterward—Feb. 19th, 1882—Dick Little surrendered to Sheriff John R. Timberlake, of Clay county, Missouri, and on the 22d of that month he was taken to Jefferson City, and all the testimony of the officials goes to show that Dick Little was tired of his wild life, and made a genuine surrender. With his surrender there came a long and detailed confession. Of that confession very little is known. Of course enterprising newspapers, with reporters of highly wrought imagination, have published supposed copies of Little's confession. But they are one and all false. It is not likely that the governor, who is intent on signaling his term of office by sweeping Missouri clean of this robber-brood, would permit that confession or any part of it to get abroad. The character of that confession can be guessed, but it can only be guessed. It is pretty clear, however, that Little was so thoroughly acquainted with all the history of the gang that if he were disposed, he could tell all that was important to be told concerning its plans and movements, and that he has done so to the entire satisfaction of Governor Crittenden, is abundantly evident. Indeed, the governor has volunteered the following statement:

“The confession is a voluminous one, and took two days and a half to write it down. It has been shown to nobody, and will be kept a secret until such time as I deem it advisable to give it out. It is entirely under my control. No one aside from myself and two or three others know a word of what it contains. Little is not accessible to reporters. He has been ordered not to talk to them. The reason for not making Little’s confession public is that it implicates a great many people who are supposed to be in good standing in the community.”

The last clause of this statement is very suggestive. If ever the whole of this confession is made public, there will be strange light thrown on a subject that has long troubled the Western States, and it will form a strange chapter in the history of Missouri. But it is hardly to be expected that the whole confession will ever be made public. If the ends of justice do not demand it, there is no reason why it should. It was noised abroad that the Governor had already pardoned Dick Little, but this was absurd, as the governor himself shows.

“I have not pardoned Little. Such talk is all bosh. I pardon not before conviction. I hope he will be of much service to the State. Sometimes criminals turn State’s evidence and do much good. I will always encourage the lesser criminal to convict the greater. That is not only a custom, but is the law, and is worthy of observance.”

CHAPTER LXII.

NEARING THE END.

JESSE REMOVES FROM KANSAS CITY—MR. THOMAS HOWARD OF ST. JOSEPH—JESSE'S RAGE AT LITTLE'S CONFESSION—LAST VISIT TO THE KEARNEY HOME.

Though there was no pressing reason why Jesse should leave Kansas City, his natural restlessness, and the knowledge that the authorities were always on the lookout for him, suggested to him the propriety of another move.

On the 3d of November, 1881, Jesse's household goods were packed up, and with his wife and two children, and Charley Ford, he bade farewell to Kansas City, never to see it again.

He journeyed to St. Joseph, and arriving there on the 9th of the month, he rented a house at the corner of Lafayette and Twenty-first street; he took the house in the name of Mr. Thomas Howard, and paid a month's rent in advance. On the day before Christmas he moved again for the last time. The house in which he met his sad fate was on Lafayette and Thirteenth streets. It was a neat plain frame building containing seven rooms. It was painted white, with the usual green Venetian blinds. There was a yard with stable and woodshed capable of accommodating two horses. The house which was comparatively new, was situated just in such a way as to serve Jesse's turn in case of a sudden surprise. It was placed on the

top of a hill commanding a view of the city and surroundings in three directions. Immediately on the west side was a tolerably dense piece of woodland, which in case of an emergency could be reached in a moment, and would serve as a safe place of ambush. The neighborhood was highly respectable; the World Hotel was within two or three blocks of Jesse's door. Here he spent his last Christmas day making merry with his little children, little dreaming how soon they would be made fatherless.

As at Kansas City, so at St. Joseph, the life of Mr. Thomas Howard was very quiet and unobtrusive. The winter months passed very quietly, and Jesse was but very seldom seen. He was in the habit of keeping close indoors during the day, and all the visits made to the city were paid after nightfall; and then the journey was short, and the return home was speedy. The nightly errand was for his favorite journals, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Cincinnati Commercial* and the *Kansas City Times*; in the perusal of which he spent most of his time. The neighbors took little interest in the new family. If they said anything at all, it was to the effect that the "Howards" were very quiet people.

Some stories are told of Mrs. James' intense devotion to her husband and children. How that herself of Presbyterian views, she was a frequent attendant at the Presbyterian church, while her two children, Jesse Edward and Mary were scholars in the Sabbath school. And in the evenings she might be found reading to her little ones, and teaching them their hymns and prayers. Yet this must have been a sad life, after all. Every day was a day of anxiety, and every strange sound

startled her. There was \$50,000 offered for her husband, and the father of her children, dead or alive! Talk of a skeleton! That was no skeleton, but a real, live terror. And do what she would, she could not rid herself from its horrible thralldom.

When Jesse heard in the end of February that Dick Little was arrested, and had made a confession, he grew furious. What sort of a confession he had made of course he did not know. But he knew that whatever it was, he was involved, and he was shrewd enough to know that when a man begins confessing he has to go on, and he is not unlikely in order to save his own neck to make out a very black story of those with whom he has been an accomplice.

If Dick had been arrested, and a confession had been wrung out of him, it would have been another matter, but to surrender and volunteer a confession!

"D—n his cowardly soul!" was the first wild cry of anger that broke from his lips when he heard the news.

"Hush! Jesse, hush!" said his troubled wife, "do be patient!"

"To hell with patience!" said Jesse. "I wish to G—d I had him here, I'd teach him how to confess! I'd give a thousand dollars for his dirty scalp this moment. And by heaven, I'll have it before a month's out, or I'll know."

Jesse grew more and more uneasy, and if he was not really alarmed, he was more than usually restless. All this time Charley Ford was living at Jesse's house, and it must have been anything but a pleasant time for him. Jesse was not very communicative after the news of Little's surrender. A settled gloom seemed to have got the better of him. He grew

if possible, more and more bitter against Dick. And when he allowed himself to talk of Little and Shepherd at all, he generally wound up by saying that "hell was too good for treacherous pals." The "honor amongst thieves" theory was losing weight with Jesse.

Another influence was beginning to work with Jesse. Funds were getting low. Never was there a surer illustration of the old adage "Easy come, easy go," than in the case of Jesse James, and what is true of him is probably true of the whole band. It has been stated that during the long years of their nefarious operations, the James gang could not have taken at one time and another, from trains and banks and stages, in money and in jewels, less than \$275,000 worth of property. And yet all told, Jesse was not worth more than \$600 or \$650 when he was living at St. Joseph in February, 1882. His failing coffers added to his disturbed state of mind.

In the middle of March, Jesse made the move to journey home. The reluctant winter was just giving place to jocund spring. The farmers were stirring about in their fields, the barren hedge-rows were breaking out in bud and blossom. These fields were the scenes of his early boyhood, but what a life he had lived since he first gazed on their vernal beauties. What a life it might have been, compared with the strange, sad story the changeful years had witnessed! How little Jesse thought as he drew near to the old homestead at Kearney, that before those spring blossoms had ceased their blooming, he would lie sleeping under the grass, with a bullet through his brain! But so it was. An inexorable fate was darkening his path—he was to reap as he had sowed.

Of the details of that last visit home, we know little. Whether he was planning another robbery, as is averred, we cannot tell. Mrs. Samuels was evidently uneasy. The surrender of Dick Little and his confession somewhat unnerved her iron spirit. There was danger in the air. Nearly all Jesse's old companions were dead or in prison, and even Jesse was not like his former self. Frank was far away and very ill, and she was growing old, and sad, and desolate. It was during this last visit that he met Robert Ford, and talked over another bank robbery. The general outline of the raid was resolved upon, but the details were left for further consideration.

So Jesse returned to St. Joseph, bringing with him Robert Ford, his friend and ally, to be a guest beneath his roof, and soon to be his murderer!



CHAPTER LXIII.

THE TRAGIC END OF JESSE JAMES.

THE PLOT DEEPENS—A SCHEME TO RAID THE PLATTE CITY BANK—THE EVENTFUL 3D OF APRIL—JESSE OFF HIS GUARD—THE FATAL SHOT.

As far back as January, 1882, Robert Ford, who had long been working under the orders of Governor Crittenden, became convinced that there was no possibility of capturing Jesse James alive. He was too alert, too wide awake for that, so Ford proposed to Police Commissioner Craig, of Kansas City, that he should make a full end of Jesse. The proposition startled Mr. Craig by its coolness, for young Ford seemed no more excited about a deliberate proposition to kill Jesse James than he would have been by a proposition to drive a herd of cattle to market. Mr. Craig was perplexed, and at his wits' end. His judgment coincided with Ford's reasoning, but the proposal was so deliberate and cold-blooded! It was at last agreed to have a consultation with Governor Crittenden. On the 13th of January, Bob had a secret interview with the governor. But it was not until the night of February 22d that the final arrangements were made. On that day, Governor Crittenden visited Kansas City, to be present at the ball of the military company which was held in celebration of Washington's birthday. But the real purpose of his visit was to conclude these terri-

ble arrangements. What the precise nature of these plans was is not known. It is suggested that the first intent was for Ford to go back to Ray county, and raise a small party who should watch the home of Jesse, and on his first convenient appearance, surprise and kill him. Anyhow, Jesse was to be killed. The plan of a party of vigilants was abandoned.

Robert and Charles Ford finally engaged under the promise of the shelter of the law, to take the life of Jesse James. On the evening of Sunday, March 26th, Jesse and Bob returned from Kearney. Charley Ford was already an inmate of the house. The young men went under the name of Johnson. From this luckless hour, when Robert Ford crossed the threshold of Jesse James, in St. Joseph, the outlaw's death-watch was set. And yet Jesse had not the remotest thought of treachery. He seemed to give ungrudging confidence to both the boys. One day in the ensuing week—the last week of his ill-spent life—Jesse made Bob a present of a costly ivory-handled revolver, as a token of regard, asking him to take great care of her, for, said he:

“She's a daisy, and never misses fire.”

It was with this very revolver that Jesse was shot dead.

During this eventful week Jesse unfolded a plot for another bank raid. It appeared that the Burgess murder trial was fixed to take place in Platte City on Tuesday, the 4th of April. Jesse's plan was to examine the premises of the Platte City bank on the night before, and if the examination was satisfactory, to make a dash for the money in the bank next day, when the majority of the citizens would be in and about the court house, excited about the murder trial.

Robert and Charles Ford both fell in with the arrangement, and would no doubt have gone with Jesse to Platte City on the day in question, had not that very morning offered the opportunity of which the treacherous Ford availed himself to put an end forever to the bandit's wild career.

Jesse's intention was to get all the money he could from the Platte bank scheme, and then move out to Nebraska. He was already in correspondence with Mr. J. D. Calhoun, of Lincoln, as the following letter—the last Jesse ever wrote—will indicate.

JESSE JAMES' LAST LETTER.

MR. J. D. CALHOUN, Lincoln, Neb.—Dear Sir: I have noticed that you have 160 acres for sale in Franklin county, Neb. Please write to me at once, and let me know the lowest cash price that will buy your land. Give me a full description of the land, etc.

I want to purchase a farm of that size, provided I can find one to suit. I will not buy a farm unless the soil is No. 1.

I will start on a trip in about eight days to Northern Kansas & Southern Nebraska, and if the description of your land suits me, I will look at it, and if it suits me I will buy it. From the advertisement in the *Lincoln Journal*, I suppose your land can be made a good farm for stock and grain.

Please answer at once.

Respectfully,

THO. HOWARD,

No. 1318 Lafayette St.,

March 2d, '82.

St. Joseph, Mo.

To this epistle an answer came, speaking in most glowing terms of the land, and of the social, religious, and educational advantages of the neighborhood. And but for the secret stratagem of the Ford Brothers, Jesse might now be farming in Nebraska.

IN HANDS OF INDIANS.



But as Robert Burns says,

“The best laid schemes o’ mice and men
Gang aft a’glee.”

Monday morning, April the 3d—the day on which the boys, with Jesse, were to set out for Platte City—was one of those exceedingly fine days that sometimes come in the early spring-time to tell us summer is on the wing. Breakfast was over. Jesse’s wife was busy with her household cares, and the little children, Jesse and Mary, were playing just outside of the door. Jesse and Charley Ford had been to the stable to groom the horses preparatory to their night’s adventurous ride to Platte City. Robert Ford had remained in the house. On returning Jesse went into the room that was used as his bedroom, and tossing his coat and vest on the bed, said:

“It’s an awful hot day, Bob.”

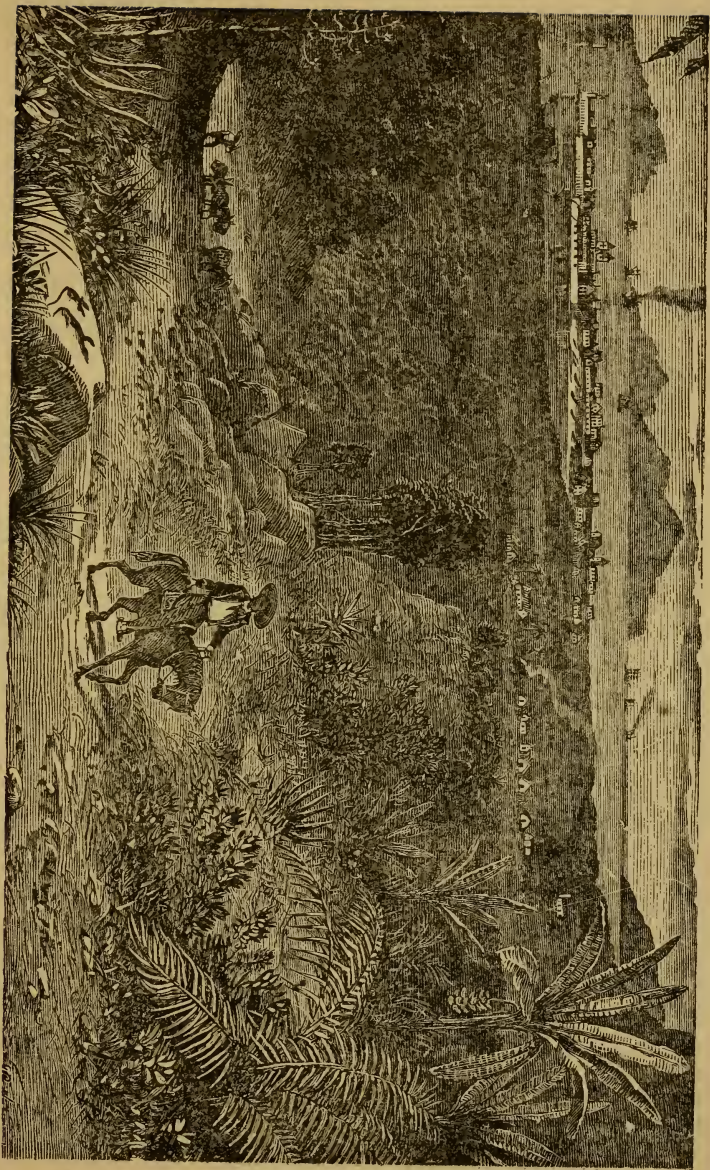
“Yes,” said Bob, “it’s quite a summer morning.” To which Charley assented, saying that he was quite warm with currying the horses.

Jesse had on a belt in which he carried two forty-five caliber revolvers, one a Smith & Wesson and the other a Colt. He looked at these for a moment, and said:

“I guess I’ll take off these pistols; somebody might see them if I walk about with them in the yard, and they might think it queer.”

If Jesse could have caught the telegraphic look that passed between the two brothers at this announcement, he would never have unbuckled that belt. Not a word was spoken, only one quick, furtive glance; but that was enough. They

FRANK JAMES IN MEXICO.



felt the hour and the opportunity had come, and they watched with anxious, eager watchfulness.

The belt with the pistols was flung upon the bed, and Jesse without a thought of suspicion began dusting the pictures in the room. Duster in hand he mounted a chair to dust a picture with his back toward the boys. The opportune moment had come. Robert Ford grasped his revolver, a click was heard, Jesse turned his head sharply, but it was too late; a ball went crashing through Jesse's brain.

He fell with a heavy thud to the floor, the blood oozed in a crimson stream from the gaping wound, and in less time than it takes to tell, Jesse James, the terror of Missouri, lay dead!

The shot had been instantly fatal, and all the bullets in Charlie's revolver, still directed at Jesse's head, could not more effectually have decided the great freebooter's fate. The ball had entered the base of the skull and made its way out through the forehead over the left eye. It had been fired from a Colt .45, of improved pattern, ivory-handled and silver-mounted.

The quick ear of Jesse's wife caught the sound of the shot, and she rushed in with alarm, to find her husband lying in a pool of blood, gasping in vain for breath.

"Oh! my God! My God!" she cried, "what shall I do? Speak to me, Jesse! Speak, darling, do!"

But she cried in vain. She fell on her knees and lifted Jesse's head to her breast. But it was too late. A brief spasm, a sharp twitching of the lips, and all was over!

Meantime, Robert and Charles Ford fled. Revolver in hand, they were in the act of leaping over the fence, when Jesse's wife called to them:



SHOOTING OF JESSE JAMES

“Come back! Come back, you villains! Robert, you have done this! How could you? Oh! my God! my God!”

Charles Ford tried in vain to persuade Mrs. James that the pistol-shot that made her a widow, and her children fatherless, had been fired accidentally.

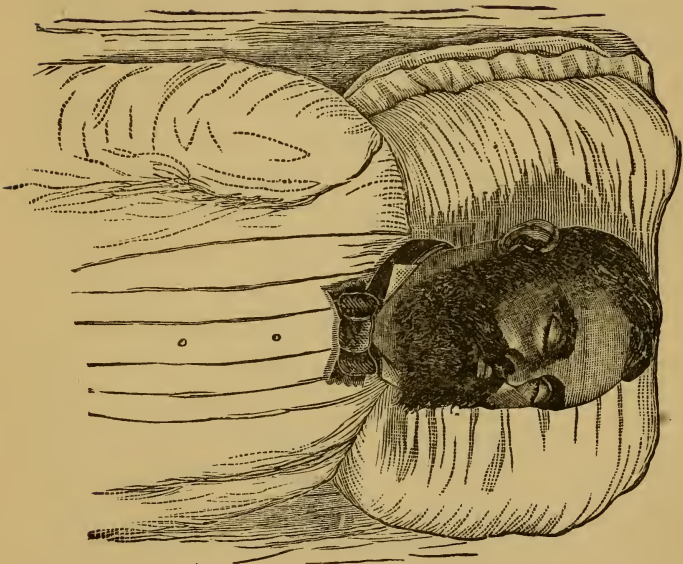
“Gone off by accident! No, I guess not!” said Mrs. James, with a look that Charles Ford will not be likely to forget.

Back went Mrs. James to the awful scene. She tried in vain to staunch the blood that still was flowing from the wound.

The little children, ignorant of what was going on, came in from their play, and the scene that ensued was heart-rending.

“Poor papa! poor papa!” cried the terrified children, as they clung to their broken-hearted mother.





JESSE DEAD.

CHAPTER LXIV.

AFTER THE TRAGEDY AT ST. JOSEPH.

WILD EXCITEMENT ON THE NEWS OF JESSE'S DEATH—
THE PUBLIC INCREDULOUS—BOB FORD'S STORY—OPINIONS
OF AN OLD CONFEDERATE.

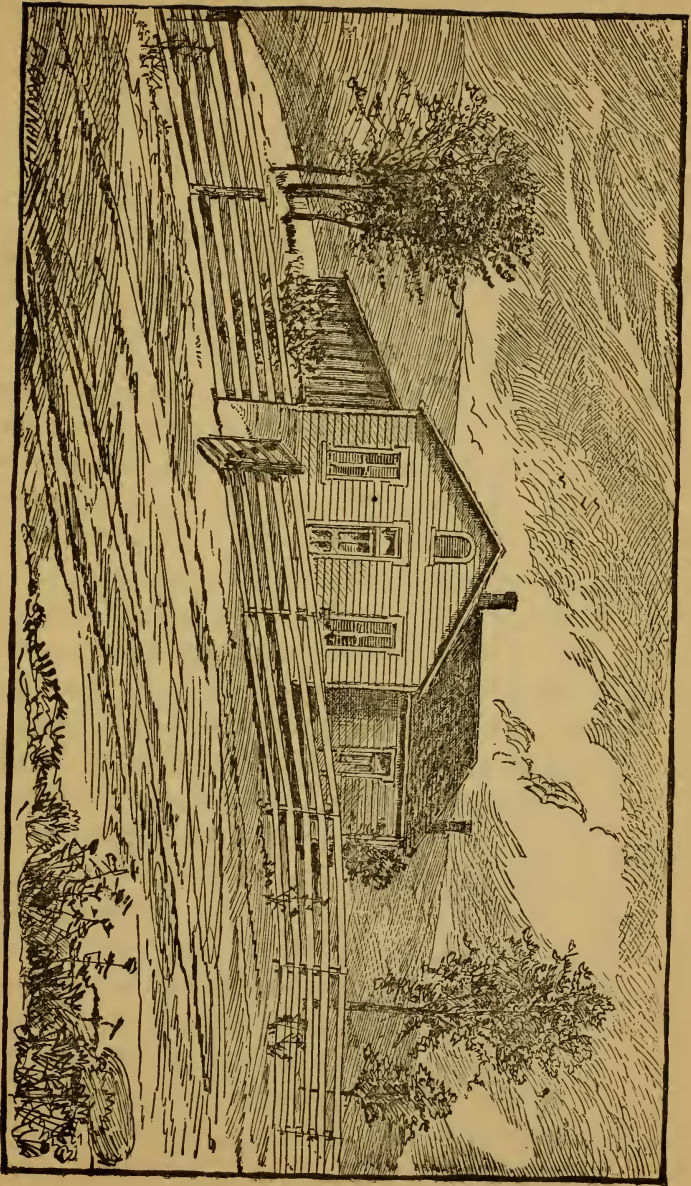
Charles and Robert Ford made their way with all speed from the desolate house to the first telegraph office, and as if exulting in a glorious triumph, they sent the following brief dispatch to Marshal Craig, Sheriff Timberlake, and Governor Crittenden:

“I have got my man.”

Meantime, the news of the tragedy had got wind. And when the Ford Brothers got to the police station they found that Marshal Craig and a posse of officers had gone to the scene of the murder. They followed him without delay, and surrendered. They were immediately placed under arrest. They were marched to police headquarters through an astonished crowd. Mrs. James also accompanied the officers to the City Hall, having left her children in the care of Mrs. Larnal, who knew the Jameses under the assumed name of Howard.

The news that Jesse James was killed spread like wild-fire through the city. Hundreds crowded the streets, the Court House was thronged, and every train brought in crowds of curious people, attracted by the news of the bandit's death,

THE HOUSE WHERE JESSE WAS SHOT.



Mrs. James telegraphed at once to her brother, Mr. Mimms, and to Mrs. Samuels, to come immediately.

It was hardly possible to believe that Jesse was indeed dead. He had borne a charmed life so long, escaped so many times, had seemed to defy fate itself, that hundreds upon hundreds could not credit the news. Men laughed to scorn the idea of Jesse being caught unawares. "Shot down by a mere boy! Ah! nonsense!" was the cry. "He'll surprise some of you yet; Jesse's only playing fox."

Early in the day Coroner Hiddens was notified, and he instructed Undertaker Sidenfader to remove the body to his establishment. A large crowd accompanied the strange procession, but only a few persons, including the newspaper reporters, were admitted to the sad sight.

As Jesse's body lay awaiting the inspection of the coroner's jury, it did not present a very revolting appearance. It did not bear in the face any signs of a hard, cruel, lawless life. But for the wound over the eye, through which the fatal bullet forced its way, the face looked as though it might have been that of a man who had lived at peace with all men. There was no sign of the outlaw on the dead man's face. It was calm, imperturbed and restful. But the weary breast that now lay at rest bore the marks of former strife. Two large bullet holes, memorials of the Northfield fray, told how fierce had been the conflict through which he had passed.

It was hard to believe that Jesse James was dead. Hunted for years, hunted by thousands, could it be that he was run to ground at last? If the news was not too good to be true, it was certainly too strange to be easily credited.

The newspaper men of the district were soon on the alert. Robert Ford had not had time to get his first meal since the murder before the omnipresent reporter was suing for an interview.

“You see,” said the reporter, “people don’t and won’t believe that Jesse is dead, unless they have some direct and distinct testimony.” And so the reporter managed to get Robert talking, and when he was fairly started he showed no disposition to be reticent. For the interest of our readers we append the entire story of Robert Ford, as given to the representatives of the press on the first day of the murder.

ROBERT FORD’S STORY.

“So they say that the dead man isn’t Jesse James, do they? Then they are mistaken. I first met Jesse James three years ago, and I have made no mistake. He used to come over to the house when I was on my oldest brother’s farm. Last November he moved here to St. Joe, and went under the name of Thomas Howard. He rented a house on the hill, back of the World’s Hotel, a quiet part of the town, and not thickly settled. My brother Charley and I had known nearly all of the gang, but had never worked with them otherwise.

“I was in collusion with the detectives, and was one of the party that went to Kentucky and arrested Clarence Hite, last February. Hite got twenty-five years in the penitentiary. Jesse never suspected that we were false to him, and, as his gang was all broken up, he wanted new material, and regarded us favorably. Two weeks ago he came to Clay

county to see his mother, Mrs. Samuels, who lives forty miles east of Kansas City. Charley and I told him that we wanted to join him and be outlaws, and he said all right. Charley came here with him a week ago Sunday, and I followed last Sunday night. We both staid at his house, a one-story building with seven rooms.

“Governor Crittenden had offered \$10,000 for Jesse, dead or alive. We knew that the only way was to kill him. He was always cool and self-possessed, but always on the watch. During the day he would stay around the house, and in the evening he would go down to the news depot and get the papers. He said there were men here who ought to know him, but they never did. He took the *Chicago Tribune*, *Cincinnati Commercial* and *Kansas City Times* regularly, and always knew what was going on all over the world. About a week ago he read a piece in one of the papers that Jesse James’ career was over, and Charley said he was awful mad about it. He said he would show them, before long, that Jesse James was not done yet.

“He had not done any job since the ‘Blue Cut’ train robbery, last September, and I don’t believe he had over \$700 or \$800 in money. He was thinking of robbing some bank near by, and then running in under close cover. It was for this he wanted our help. We knew we had to kill him, but there was no chance to get the drop on him until this morning.

“His wife and boy of seven and girl of three were in the kitchen. Jesse was in the front sitting-room, where he slept. Never knew him to be so careless. He commenced brushing

the dust off some picture-frames, but stopped and took off his weapons, and laid them on the bed. There was a Colt's revolver and a Smith & Wesson, each forty-five caliber. He also had in the room a Winchester repeating rifle, fourteen shots, and a breech-loading shot-gun.

"As he turned away from the bed, we stepped between him and his weapons, and pulled on him. I was about eight feet from him when he heard my pistol cock. He turned his head like lightning. I fired, the ball hitting over the left eye and coming out behind the right ear. Charley had his fingers on the trigger, but saw he was done for, and did not shoot. Not one of us spoke a word. He fell dead at Charley's feet. We then got our hats, went to the telegraph office, and telegraphed what we had done to Governor Crittenden, Captain Henry Craig, of Kansas City, and Sheriff Timberlake, of Clay county. The latter replied: 'I will come at once. Stay there until I come.'"

On Tuesday morning, April the 4th, the newspapers told this story through all the States and Territories of the Union. In Kansas City, St. Louis and Chicago the excitement was intense. When Pinkerton's Detective Agency of Chicago heard the news they smiled incredulously. When, however, it was confirmed, Mr. William Pinkerton said:

"All right! The brave John Wicher is avenged at last!"

The whole of Clay county was in a state of perfect agitation. For, while Jesse was dreaded while he was alive, his tragic death awoke a feeling of pity. In the heat and fervor of the excitement, Robert Ford came in for a good deal of execration.

"Poor devil," said one who had known Jesse from his youth, "bad as he was, he was full of sand, and only an infernal traitor could have done him the dirty trick."

One of the old members of the gang who left them some years ago to settle down into a quiet life at Independence, was questioned on the whole subject, and spoke thus freely in answer to the various queries presented to him:

"What do you think of the killing of Jesse James?" was the question proposed to the old Independence confederate.

"I do not know what to think. I guess there is no mistake about it, and to tell the truth, I have been expecting it for some time."

"Why?"

"Because Jesse was so infernally bold in his movements that he was bound to be caught napping some time."

"Did you expect him to go in this way?"

"Yes, of course; for I knew he would not be taken alive, and I also felt sure that his death would be accomplished by some member of the gang. I never expected, however, that Bob Ford would kill him. I always thought Jim Cummings would be the one to do the job."

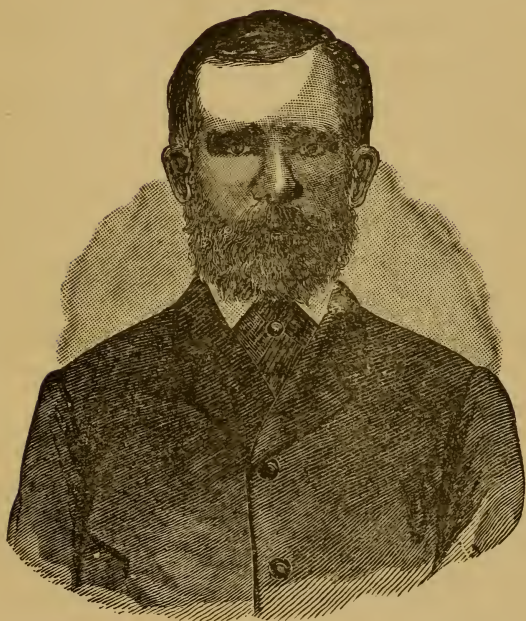
"Why did you think of Cummings?"

"Because he and Jesse were terribly jealous of each other, and were continually having some kind of a fuss."

"Do you know Bob Ford?"

"Yes, and I tell you he is clear grit, if he is nothing but a boy. He isn't afraid of the devil himself, and would just as soon tackle him as not."

"Was he connected with the **Blue Cut** robbery?"



LATEST PORTRAIT OF FRANK JAMES.

"No, but his brother Charley was. Both were in the Winston robbery, and he also helped Dick Little kill Wood Hite."

"What effect will the killing of Jesse have upon the gang?"

"It will break it up, of course. Frank was the real head of the gang, and did all the planning, but Jesse did the execution, and without him nothing can be done."

"What about Jesse having lived in Kansas City for several months last year?"

"He lived on East Eighth street at the time of the Blue Cut robbery, and was at home and read a full account of the affair in the papers next morning. He was supposed to be a stock dealer, and he came to Cracker's Neck several times when making arrangements for the robbery, on the pretense of buying cattle, and one time did drive a herd to the Kansas City stock yards."

"Did the people of Cracker's Neck know him?"

"Some of them did, but were afraid to give him away, while others had no desire to betray him. He came and went when he pleased, and was always welcome."

"What will Frank and Jim Cummings do now?"

"I think Frank will go to Texas and settle down. He is half dead from consumption, any way, and I don't think he will live long. The excitement is all that has kept him up for more than a year. Jim Cummings is a treacherous scoundrel. I shouldn't wonder if he tried some scheme to secure a pardon by betraying Frank. He will never be able to organize a gang by himself, as no one has any confidence in him."

“What do you think of the manner in which Jesse was killed?”

“It was a dirty, mean trick, but was the only way to get him. I am surprised that Jesse laid his revolvers down, for I never knew him to let them out of his reach before. Why, when he slept he always had a revolver in his hand, and the slightest noise would cause him to jump up straight in bed and cock his weapon ready for a fight. He was always afraid of being betrayed, and would never allow any one to touch his pistols, or take them out of his hands. He was afraid of Jim Cummings, and would always make him eat and sleep apart from him.”

“What effect will his death have upon you and your partners in the Blue Cut affair?”

“I don’t know that it will have any, except to scare the boys. Bugler and Chapman are already frightened half to death for fear of being lynched. We are all gone up, and I don’t see any use of making any fight about it.”

“What about Dick Little’s statement that you were not in the Blue Cut robbery?”

“Little is a liar, and I think he has been hired to tell that by Bugler’s friends.”



CHAPTER LXV.

THE INQUEST.

MRS. SAMUELS RECEIVES THE NEWS—HER INTERVIEW WITH JESSE'S WIFE AND CHILDREN—VISITING THE DEAD—THE INQUEST—SCATHING DENUNCIATION OF DICK LITTLE BY MRS. SAMUELS.

When the telegram reached Kearney bearing to Mrs. Samuels the tidings of Jesse's death, she was walking in the garden in the warm spring sunshine. The sight of the messenger as he hurried toward the house filled her with sickening apprehensions. It took but a moment to tear the dispatch open, and there was the brief awful message:

“Jesse just shot dead by Bob Ford. Come at once!”

“That was all! Ten short words! But every word went like a poignard to the sad woman's heart. But she shed no tears. She seemed to be turned to stone in a moment. All the past seemed to rush before her aged eyes. The long sad years of agony and loss and care. And now Jesse was dead, dead by a traitor's hand. She crumpled the telegram in her hand and said in low broken words:

“Shot by Bob Ford! Why did he trust him? Given away by Dick Little, the dastard, and shot by Bob Ford! Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!!”

Mrs. Samuels hurried away the next day to St. Joseph arriving there about 10 o'clock in the morning. The meet-

ing between the mother and Jesse's wife and the little grandchildren was exceedingly pathetic. Jesse's widow broke forth in uncontrollable anguish, while the poor children hardly apprehending the full sorrow of the scene, clung to their aged grandmother with passionate sobs and crying, and tried to tell in their childish way all the pitiful story. Mrs. Samuels looked round again and again as though she could not believe Jesse was dead, and might at any moment come in at the door. The sad company was driven down to the undertaker's to view the body.

The body of Jesse was laid out with all decency and order at Undertaker Sidenfader's. When Mrs. Samuels caught sight of Jesse's dead face, her pent-up agony broke forth in bitter wailing as she moaned and cried:

"My poor boy! My dear son! My darling!" and she bowed her gray head and kissed his cold face again and again. Mother, wife and children! It was a pitiful sight. A sight to make a stout heart tremble. Mrs. Samuels was now convinced that Jesse was dead indeed. When asked if this was her son Jesse, she said:

"It is! it is! Would to God it was not!"

The arrangements had all been made for the coroner's inquest. The jury was empaneled and consisted of W. H. Chowling, J. W. Moore, Warren Samuels, Thomas Morris, William Turner, and William George. The jury declared themselves ready to hear testimony. The court-house was crowded to its utmost capacity. Every inch of standing room was occupied, the anxious crowd pressed forward to gain a glimpse of the mother and widow of the dead guerilla,

Amongst others in that motley crowd was Dick Little, who had been sent to the inquest for the purpose of identifying the body of the deceased. The testimony was in the following order:

H. H. CRAIG, Police Commissioner of Kansas City, was the first witness sworn. He said: "The body corresponds with the description of Jesse James. I know the Fords. Bob Ford assisted Sheriff Timberlake and myself. Ford was not commissioned. Robert Ford acted through our instructions, and Charles was not acting under our instructions."

SHERIFF TIMBERLAKE testified that he was acquainted with Jesse James and recognized the body. They were personally acquainted. "Saw him last in 1870, and knew his face. He had a finger off. I told Ford to get his brother to assist him."

DICK LITTLE was sworn. "I have seen the body and recognize it as the body of Jesse James. I have no doubt of it. His general appearance is that of Jesse James. His finger is off as James' was. I recognize scars in the side and thigh."

JAMES FINLEY testified he was not acquainted with Jesse James. "I went to the house after the shooting and found two horses. I sent two officers after the Johnsons, as they were then called. Ford came and acknowledged the shooting. He described the wounds on the body, and claimed the man was Jesse James. Ford told me there were watches and jewelry at the house. I found watches, jewelry, pistols, cartridges and a purse. I gave the purse to Mrs. James. It had some small change in it. A scarf pin was found with the marks 'J. W. J.'"

Mrs. Samuels, mother of Jesse, was then called. As she entered the room all eyes were turned upon her. Men stood on the seats, craned their necks, and used every endeavor to gain a view of the woman, who, although the mother of the outlaw, had the respect of every one in the room. She moved with a slow step and bowed head to the witness stand. She has a kindly face and eyes, and a rather prominent nose. She was dressed in black, with a black straw hat, and a black veil that partly covered her face. When she took the stand her face had a resolute appearance, but as the examination progressed, that disappeared, and she was very much affected. She testified that she was the mother of Jesse James, and she had seen the body but a moment before. "Is that the body of your son?" asked the coroner. "It is," she answered, and then sobbed out: "Would to God it was not!" Placing her hands on the heads of the little son and daughter of Jesse James, who were standing in front of her, she continued, "And these are his orphan children." As she said this she was moved to tears. Mrs. James was asked to raise her veil, and, as she did so, Mrs. Samuels was asked if she recognized her. She answered that it was the widow of Jesse James.

Mrs. James testified that she recognized the preceding witness as Mrs. Samuels. Mrs. Samuels retired from the court-room.

The jury retired for a very short time and brought in the following verdict:

"We, the jury, find that the deceased is Jesse James, and that he came to his death by a pistol-shot in the hands of Robert Ford."

The processes of the law began their immediate course. The Ford Brothers were at once committed to jail under a warrant from Mrs. Jesse James, charged with the murder of Jesse James, late of St. Joseph, Missouri.

The fact of Jesse's death was now set at rest. Further testimony was not needed. Indeed, none of any importance could be given. His mother, his wife, his old comrades, had sworn to his identity. And yet to this very day, if Jesse should reappear it would not be regarded as a miracle, there would be thousands who would say "I told you so! Jesse has fooled you all along."

A remarkable scene transpired at the close of the inquest. It would seem as if Mrs. Samuels had not noticed Dick Little during the inquest. It may be she was absent when he gave his testimony. Returning from the court-house she leaned upon the arm of her bereaved daughter-in-law, who seemed doubly dear to her now that Jesse was gone. Mrs. Samuels had seen the bitter storms of nearly threescore years. Her hair was grey, and her brow was wrinkled and furrowed, her face was ashen pale. She bore all the signs of a crushed and heart-broken woman. Turning from the witness-stand her eye fell on Dick Little—whose confession she regarded as the beginning of Jesse's downfall; in a moment her eyes were dilated with the passion of a tigress, her bent form became suddenly erect, and her towering form assuming a terrible aspect, she lifted her one arm and launched on him a bitter, bitter curse.

"Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!" She hissed between her teeth. "God will send vengeance on you for this. You are



MRS. SAMUELS.

the cause of all this trouble. Oh, you villain! I would a thousand times rather be in my poor boy's place than in yours."

Dick fairly trembled before the storm and tempest of this woman's wrath. He drew back in abject cowardice, as though he feared she might do him some bodily harm. And it may be, if she had a Smith & Wesson handy, that in the whirlwind of her passion she might have made a full end of Dick Little's confessions.

"I did not hurt him," said Dick. "I thought you knew who killed him!"

But Mrs. Samuels took no heed, she only groaned as she groped her way out of the court house. "Oh! my God, my poor Jesse!"

St. Joseph grew more and more crowded as the day went on. Mrs. Samuels, and Mrs. James, with Mr. Mimms, spent the rest of the day in preparations for the funeral.



CHAPTER LXVI.

HERE LIES JESSE JAMES.

THE LAST OF EARTH—PREPARATIONS FOR THE FUNERAL
— THE HOMEWARD MARCH — JESSE LYING IN STATE —
THE FUNERAL OBSEQUIES.

After all his wanderings east and west, through State and Territory, amid the civilized of crowded cities, the "cow-boys" of the plains of Texas, and the desperadoes of New Mexico, Jesse James came at last to die in his native State, and within fifty miles of his early home.

Born in 1845, and dying in the spring-time of 1882, his life was spanned within the narrow limits of thirty-seven years. But what strange years they had been, crowded with deeds of wild reckless, daring. Jesse had not reached the full prime of manhood by a decade, but he went down to his grave with more mortal murders on his head than he would care to count. The story of that strange life, as presented in these pages is, of necessity, only fragmentary. No man's life can ever be written. There lies locked in the bosom of every man that which he would not care to divulge, and much more that he could not if he would. If Jesse could and would have told the secret story of his life it would no doubt have been much more thrilling than these pages are already.

After the inquest, the body of Jesse James, placed in a magnificent casket, with silver adornments which cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$200, was handed over to Mrs. James for interment.

The members of the whole family, as far as possible, had gathered at St. Joseph. There were Mrs. Samuels, Mrs. James, the two children, Jesse and Mary James, Mr. L. W. James, cousin of the late Jesse, and Mr. R. T. Mimms, the father of Jesse's widow. If Frank James was really there, as is avowed, he kept very quiet. There was some considerable official wrangling as to whether the body should be sent to Kansas City; but Sheriff Timberlake prevailed, and as we have said, the body was handed over to Mrs. James by Coroner Heddins, on an order of the Grand Jury of Buchanan county, and a dispatch from Governor Crittenden.

It was resolved that Jesse should be interred in a quiet corner of the homestead at Kearney. All arrangements were speedily made, and about 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening, April 5th, the mournful cortege set out. The depot at St. Joseph was crowded, the special desire being to get a glance at Jesse's aged mother. The casket which bore all that was mortal of Jesse was well guarded, and by none more faithfully than Mrs. Samuels. Not until the casket had been safely placed in the baggage-car, could she be induced to board the train.

Just before the train started, it is said that some demented fellow aimed a pistol at Mrs. Samuels, but he was quickly driven from the depot, and was glad to escape without more trouble.

The funeral train reached Cameron about 9 o'clock at night. Crowds thronged the depot, and begged for a sight of Jesse's face. But all these requests were refused, Mr. Mimms and Mr. G. L. James keeping strict vigil by the dead. It was after midnight when the body of Jesse was borne into the Kearney Hotel, where it was arranged that the dead outlaw should lie in state from 6 o'clock to 10 o'clock A. M.

The scene in Kearney that day will not soon be forgotten. All business was suspended, the public schools were closed, and during the period while Jesse's body was on view, from 1,800 to 3,000 came to take a last look at his face.

At 2 o'clock the funeral services were held in the Baptist church, which was densely crowded. In this church, shortly after the war, Jesse professed religion and was baptized. The casket was placed upon the communion table. The services were conducted by the Rev. R. H. Jones, of Lathrop, and the Rev. J. M. P. Martin, the pastor. Mr. Martin delivered a very impressive and suitable address.

Mr. Martin begged that, on account of the fact that John Samuels—a half-brother of Jesse's—was lying at the point of death in the house, none but the near relatives of the deceased would follow the funeral to its final destination. But when the funeral procession reached the homestead there were three or four hundred waiting to witness the last sad rites of burial.

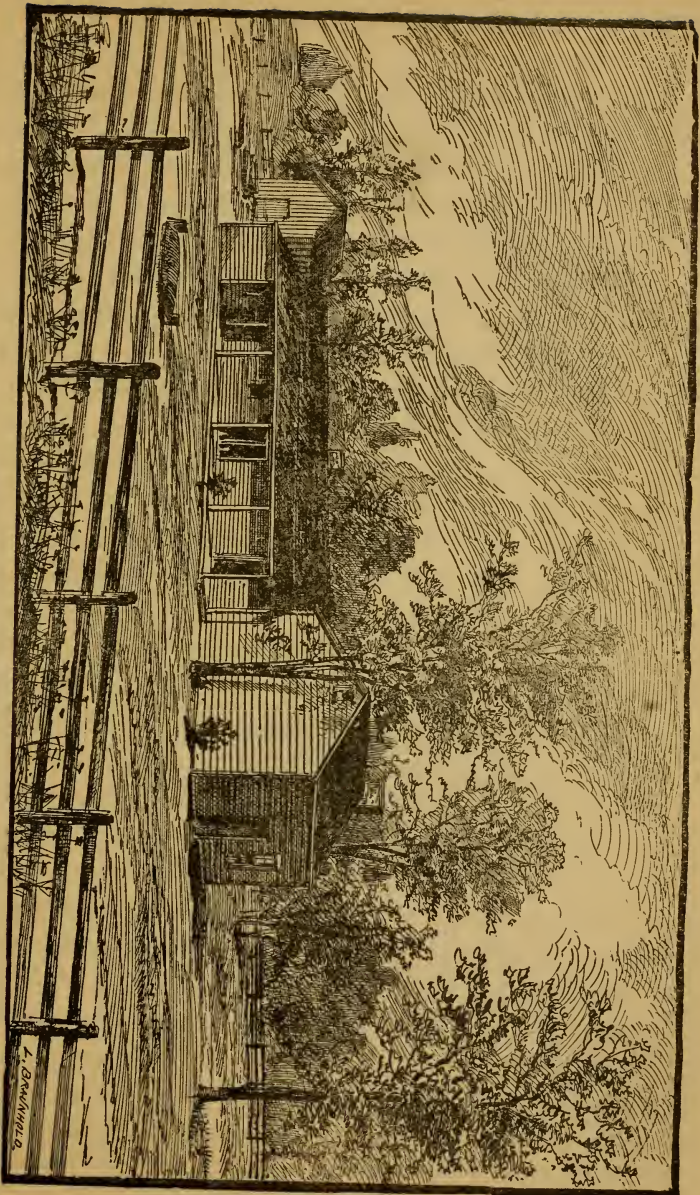
The utmost decorum was observed. The casket was taken into the house for the dying brother to see, and if, as some say, Frank was there too, who need complain! If the

authorities knew of this, they made no effort whatever to arrest him.

Jesse's grave was dug in the southwest corner of the one-acre lot of the Samuels homestead. The words spoken at that sad grave-side were few and wisely chosen. Mr. Jones said that God alone was judge of men, and to his merciful judgment we must leave our dead—a sentiment that may be permitted to pass unchallenged if properly understood. The hidden forces, motives, weaknesses, and predisposing causes which lead to the commission of crime are often so involved in obscurity, and so difficult, if not incapable, of analysis by men, that they must necessarily be left to infinite intelligence to determine. Society, however, is perfectly competent to take cognizance of, and pass judgment upon, overt acts; and is under an imperative necessity so to do under penalty of anarchy and dissolution, and return to the barbarism and isolation of savagery.

No antecedent pressure is so great as to relieve the individual from the legitimate penalty of his acts; or, if it is, society is at least justified in assuming the responsibility of regarding his life as forfeit to the laws—a sacrifice, if nothing else, to the well-being of his fellow-men. Nor can any pitying sensibility for human infirmity or passion be permitted to contravene the decisions of society's courts of competent jurisdiction. Indeed, society is every day sacrificing even innocent lives, through an unavoidable necessity, to its own progress. Commerce and invention are daily making their martyrs; and under these circumstances it is the mere drivel of unthinking sensibility to waste sympathy upon fierce and

THE SAMUELS' RESIDENCE.



L. BRANWELL

brutal bandits and cut-throats, whose lives have been voluntarily risked upon a cast of fate, and lost. Or, is it perhaps that this false feeling for the dare-devils of society is an inheritance from the rude times when brute force and physical courage were the chief or only passports to admiration?

The sun was beginning to set as the last clods fell upon the coffin. In a little while all was silent save the night winds which sighed and moaned through the pines, as though they too, would chant a requiem over Jesse James' grave.



CHAPTER LXVII.

RELIGION OF THE JAMES FAMILY.

The religious business enacted at the funeral of Jesse by the mother and wife, is not new with them. Mrs. Samuels started in matrimonial life as the wife of the Rev. Mr. James. During her residence under that divine's roof she was a constant attendant at church, and, although never very meek or lowly, her religion was of the effervescent order, and her commanding presence was often seen to rise in church meetings. She could pray with fervor, and point the way to salvation, accompanied by descriptions of the locality now in the revised edition called Hades, that would make the listener quake and tremble. Mrs. Samuels' name has never been stricken from the roll of membership of the New Hope Baptist church, located a couple of miles from her farm, and which she joined several years ago. Following in the old lady's footsteps was the immortal bandit Jesse. When he came home after the war from his bushwhacking tour through the Southwest under Quantrell, he for about two years, Dr. Price tells us, lived on the farm, working, and to all appearances conducting himself as became a respectable young man. During the winter of 1866 he attended the revival meetings held in the Baptist church in Kearney, and was converted and baptized.

He was then noted for his boyish modesty and retiring nature—real or assumed. After he had been a member for a few months, he would come to the prayer meetings apparent-

ly very much depressed, and would pray aloud, with a fervor of despair, accusing himself of being a vile sinner, but never specifying his crimes. "I have heard him," said the doctor, "make an eloquent prayer." During the years 1865, 1866 and 1867, Frank James was also seen in Kearney, but not so frequently as Jesse. In 1870 they disappeared altogether, and since have been lost sight of, except by those on the inside. Mrs. Susie Palmer (then Susie James), sister of the James Boys, was also a member of the Baptist denomination, and both herself and mother have on more than one occasion asked the prayers of New Hope church for the erring Jesse and Frank. It is not known where Mrs. Jesse James caught the religious fever. Possibly the mother and sisters may have infected her with it, or possibly Jesse during the interims between his marauding expeditions and killings may have settled down to fasting and praying. Certain it is that all the female relatives can pray fervently, and denounce their "enemies" in the name of God vehemently. It is thought by some that the deep religious feeling which they have manifested during the past week is hypocrisy. The better opinion is that it is a sort of mania with them. A deeper philosophy would find it no enigma even in the outlaws themselves, much less in their families. "It is the first step which costs," says the French proverb; and each successive step is a product of its antecedent. It is known that there is scarcely a recorded case in the history of peccant humanity, in which the first step in crime proved the last. It is not in the nature of things that it should be so. The irritating consciousness of wrong-doing, like the excitement of liquor, impels its victim to further excess, and the robber and the drunkard alike become the prey of moral and physical intoxication.



CHARLEY FORD.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FORD BROTHERS.

Robert Ford, who did the shooting, is rather slender, not very robust, but sinewy and active, and appears capable of great endurance, as well as adventurous and brave. His eyes, hazel in color, are large, piercing and restless. This latter peculiarity may, however, be largely due to the peculiarly exciting circumstances under which he was brought into public notice. His forehead is bold and high, and his general appearance indicates self-possession and shrewdness, if not cunning. His hair is a light brown, and not very abundant. He is about five feet eight inches high, resembling his victim in this respect, if no other. He would never have been singled out of a crowd as the most available opponent of the daring outlaw; yet it is easy to see after the event that he possesses many of the qualities most essential to carry to a success the schemes necessary to insure his death or capture.

His brother, and assistant in the prosecution of their common design, is larger, taller and broader, as well as a few years older. His hair is darker and his face broader, but the eyes are of the same hue. The lower jaw is somewhat obtrusive, and in consequence he appears to be more brutal, if not more brave than his brother. The younger gives the impression of greater shrewdness; the older, of greater boldness; and both of coolness, firmness, alertness and self-possession.



ROBERT FORD.

CHAPTER LXIX.

UN-AMERICAN METHODS.

It is not our present purpose formally to discuss the relation of this act of the Ford Brothers to the laws of Missouri, nor the attitude of the State authorities toward them. But it must be confessed that the whole country was profoundly affected on learning of such a peculiar un-American method of enforcing the laws and bringing law-breakers to condign punishment. It savors too much of semi-barbaric or Asiatic methods; and though a faint but very real tincture of the same principle may be recognized in the habitual procedures of prosecuting attorneys and police authorities, by inducing one of a gang of criminals to turn witness for the State against his fellows, and the like; and notwithstanding that the same idea is crystalized in the popular proverb, "It takes a thief to catch a thief;" it still remains a fact that a profound sensation was created by this unique method of executing the law. Court martials, and suspension of trial by jury, and other more or less arbitrary processes have been familiar to the most progressive and free races of men in times of internal or external danger; but that, in the midst of peace and at the very acme of the reign of law and order in the most advanced country in the world, a premium should be put by public authority on such a flagrant breach of faith between man and man, between guest and host, between relative and relative,

is, to say the least, very startling. Public events have a singularly powerful influence in educating the people; and the sanction of government should be carefully withheld from everything that savors of treachery and deceit.

Governor Crittenden, fairly representing in this matter the great State of which he is the chief executive, felt very deeply in common with his people, the unmerited stigma which was being fastened on the commonwealth by the continued lawlessness of the band of outlaws of which Jesse and Frank James were popularly recognized as the irrepressible leaders, and by which a State, second to none in natural resources, was being deprived of its rightful share of national development and increased prosperity. He may well be excused if, in the earnestness of his zeal, he may have overstepped the lines which more thoughtful minds, removed from the blinding force of urgency and pre-occupation, would lay down for his guidance. The man of affairs, with an intricate problem demanding immediate solution, may err in appearance more than in reality, if, in the failure of all ordinary resources, he is tempted to take refuge in new but effective measures. Overwhelmed with the necessity of securing the end in view, he may fail to catch the full significance of some slight obliquity in the means employed. Flagrant perversity may obtrude, and be quickly set aside; but perplexity generated by the pressure of apparently conflicting duties has a tendency to blunt the keen edge of moral susceptibility.

It would seem that Governor Crittenden and Sheriff Timberlake were fully cognizant of the whereabouts of Jesse James, or could have obtained that knowledge from the Ford

Brothers, who are stated to have been in their power, and the actual murderer in their employ. Under these circumstances it is hard to justify the method pursued. Far better would it have been to have summoned a posse, or, if necessary, the militia of the State, and arrested the criminal at his house on the hill. It is true, such a course might have endangered the lives of the assailants, but officers of the law are accustomed to take such risks; the law would have been vindicated, and the State of Missouri saved the added discredit of having got rid of its bandits in such an un-American fashion.





YOUNGER BROTHERS





CHAPTER LXX.

THE YOUNGER FAMILY.

Henry Washington Younger, the father of the "Younger Brothers," was born in Kentucky about the year 1805. At an early age he concluded to seek wealth, home and influence in another county, and consequently emigrated to the (then) western wilds of Jackson county, Missouri. He was a man of marked ability and the highest integrity of character. Struggling against poverty for several years, he finally began to see the fruit of his labors in a comfortable homestead and some well-cultivated land. He worked hard, and saved what he earned. Always pleasant in his manners, and honorable in his dealings, no man in Jackson county was more respected. Concluding, about the year 1830, that two could live as cheaply as one, and having a weakness for the opposite sex which is quite common to humanity, Mr. Younger asked Miss Beersheeba Fristoe, a most estimable young lady, for her hand. The offer was accepted, the nuptials were performed, and a happier couple could be found nowhere this side of the California gold mines. Everything went on as merrily as a marriage bell. Mr. and Mrs. Younger enjoyed the blissful experiences of their own congenial society, and the respect of all who knew them. Acre after acre was added to the homestead, until a very fine farm indeed was presided over by the young Missourian. His popularity among his

neighbors grew, until its borders were the boundary lines of Jackson county. The people said he would make a good representative at Jefferson City. Accordingly he was sent to the Legislature three successive terms, and declined serving a fourth. His estate in Jackson county now consisted of 600 acres of choice land, with many fine improvements. But prosperity continued to smile upon him. He soon purchased another farm near Harrisonville, Cass county, upon which he moved his family in 1858. Previous to his departure from Jackson county, however, he served eight years—1850 to 1858—as judge of the county. The people delighted to honor him, and had he remained at the old homestead, perhaps the terrible afflictions of himself and family would have been avoided. But repairing to his farm in Cass county, he lived pleasantly and peaceably, enjoying the luxuries of life and an untroubled conscience. Soon after arriving at his new home he began to speculate a little. Two stores were bought by him. Shortly, seeing a good bargain in a livery stable at Harrisonville, he purchased, and made a great deal of money out of this venture. No more prosperous man could be found in all the country. It is said that, at the beginning of the civil war, or at the time of his death, Washington Younger was worth one hundred thousand dollars, a considerable portion of which was destroyed or taken by the Union troops.

Fourteen children—six boys and eight girls—were the fruits of his happy wedlock. Richard Younger, the oldest of the children, died in 1860, just as he was budding into manhood. He was a fine-looking, popular young man, with



COLE YOUNGER.

good traits and a good heart. Fortunate it was for him, no doubt, that death cold and grim, plucked the flower ere it should be withered by the wintry blasts of adversity and misfortune awaiting the remainder of the family. His life had been one of pleasure,—his demise at the most auspicious moment of it all. The clouds of rebellion were then lowering, and the mutterings of the distant thunder already heard in parts of Missouri and Kansas. Had he survived, his fate would have been that of his brothers, and the fair name of Richard Younger been tarnished by the black spots of vengeance and bloodshed. But he died; and may the willows over his grave ever point to the place above where every member of that now notorious household would be entitled to go, had not outrages more terrible than imagination can picture, been heaped upon them.

Thomas Coleman Younger, the next oldest, was born Jan. 15, 1844, in Jackson county, Missouri. By nature he was brave but gentle. His education, as did that of all the children, reached quite a high degree. His father spared no pains nor expense in fitting Coleman for an active, intelligent, and useful life. Although his nature was deep and his passions strong, there was no particular manifestation of it until after the death of his father. Since then he has stood a peer of the Jameses in bravery and daring, while revenge of the bitterest type speaks in every act. Although mild and gentle in youth, and decidedly peaceable when treated properly, yet is he fiercer than a lion when aroused. We have heard so much concerning the atrocities committed by this Coleman Younger, that it is difficult to believe him ever a good-



JIM YOUNGER.



BOB YOUNGER.

natured youth desiring nothing but peace and happiness. And yet before the terrible scenes inaugurated at the outbreak of the late civil war, no kinder hearted young man could have been found in Harrisonville than himself.

The next one of the boys is John Younger, who was born in Jackson county in the year 1846. His nature was somewhat different from that of Coleman and Richard, but by no means repulsive. Always radical and daring he frequently had occasion to test his ability in "fist fights" among the other boys of the neighborhood long before the fatal days of the rebellion. He was perhaps the most passionate of any of the brothers, and had he not been plucked from the wild scenes of outlawry by the bullet of Captain Allan, in 1874; he would have startled the world, perhaps, with more daring deeds than those of his brothers.

Bruce, James and Robert are the next ones born into the happy household of Washington Younger. They were born respectively in the years 1848, 1850, and 1853.

The first of these three brothers died at an early age. The experiences of future years which were to blight their fair name and utterly destroy all happiness under their roof, was spared this child of fate. Like Richard, he sleeps beneath the sod, one of the flowers of the Younger family whose sweetly perfumed petals send off no odor distasteful to the sensitive organs of many who hate the name of Younger. James was a daring, eckless character, full of life and vigor, and having a nature almost cruel from the beginning. None were braver, none courted danger more than he. His boyhood days were enlivened by hunting, riding and rough sports

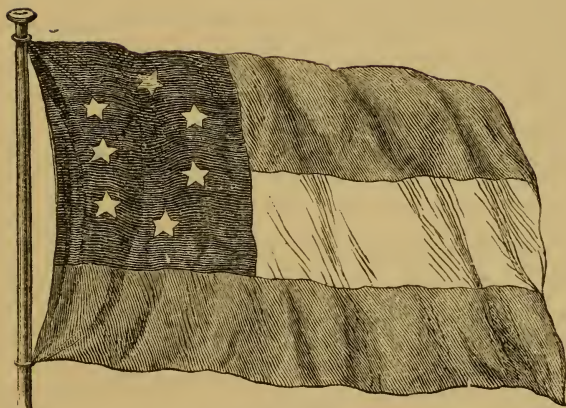
in which he seemed to take greater delight than any of his brothers. Early in life he learned to handle a gun, and before reaching manhood, had acquired considerable skill with a revolver. Robert Younger, born in 1853, was considerably younger than Cole, yet always enjoyed his companionship more than that of the other brothers. He was a fine appearing boy, even when he started out under the black flag of Quantrell. Many a maiden of his neighborhood was smitten with his laughing eye, jovial countenance and winning manners. But before he had spent very many years as an outlaw his career was suddenly stopped by the strong hand of the law, and he languishes with his brothers, Cole and Jim, behind the bars at Stillwater, Minnesota.

All the home influences surrounding these notorious characters of history were the best. Their father was kind and indulgent; perhaps too much so. Love reigned supreme throughout the household. The brothers loved the sweet faces of their sisters, while the girls reciprocated with the tenderest affection. In fact had their passionate regard for mother and father been less ardent, it is doubtful whether so soon at least, they would have taken up the gauntlet in their defense. A man of wealth and influence, Henry Washington Younger gave his family a high standing in the community. No young men or young ladies had better advantages intellectually and socially. They were all given a liberal education. The girls pursued whatever branches they chose, and fitted themselves for useful and intelligent womanhood. Their hands were sought by scores of suitors, and the best families of Western Missouri were glad to receive them into their relationship.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE BALEFUL CURSE OF CIVIL WAR.

While the writer would not for anything exonerate those whose condemnation is deserved, yet it does seem that more than the young men who are generally counted responsible for the black deeds of their hands will, in the final reckoning, be placed alongside them as instigators to all their wickedness. When we glance impartially at that cheerful fireside before the civil war, and read the happy faces before us; faces expressing intellects as elevated and souls as expanded as can be found in less notorious households; when we listen to the innocent prattle of those children, and the sound injunctions from father and mother, there appears no great foundation for attributing their after crimes to a bloodthirsty and inhuman nature. Different from the James Boys, in having a father to instruct, and a highly respected mother to guide, yet the dark obloquy that attaches itself to the name of Younger will perhaps never be lifted; nor will any charitable hearts forget the deeds of later years long enough to glance back into the probable cause. Certain it is that the lawlessness of after years was never imbibed during their home life. Almost unpardonable wrongs and cruelties were inflicted on them by the unprincipled "Jayhawkers" and "Red Legs" of that Western country. Cruelties too barbarous for heathenism, and yet committed under protection of the fair American flag. But we are anticipating.



THE CONFEDERATE FLAG.

Henry Washington Younger was a Union man. At the beginning of the civil discord, which turned neighbor against neighbor, brother against brother, and child against parent, this representative of the people and man of wealth represented the unpopular side of the question in Missouri. He loved the American flag. He loved the grand young nation under whose banner he lived. He condemned the spirit of anarchy and secession which was animating so many of his friends and countrymen. Although frequently incurring the displeasure and ill-will of his friends and neighbors, he unhesitatingly declared his loyalty to the supreme authority at Washington, and his admiration for the noble Lincoln.

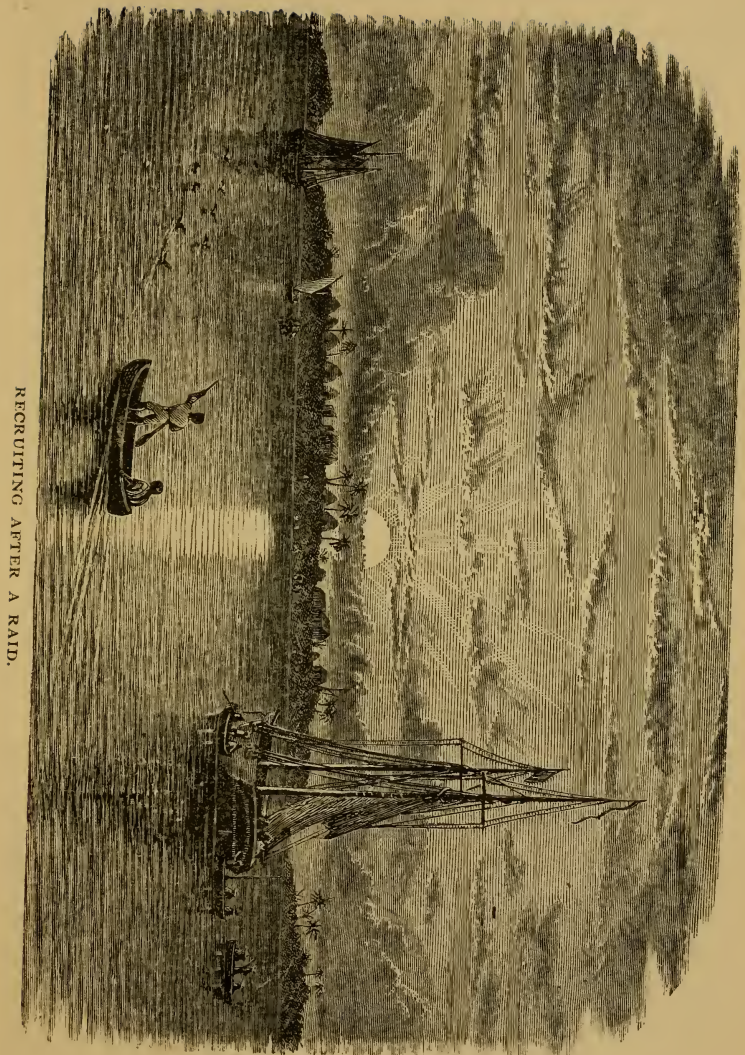
Notwithstanding his position in this strife, at the very first raid of that scoundrel Jennison into Missouri, Mr. Younger was damaged to the amount of \$20,000. They carried off forty head of valuable blooded horses, which he was keeping in his stable at Harrisonville. They laid their hands upon a number of vehicles belonging to him, and such other things as were to be found. No questions were asked by the marauders, no reasons given. Their main object was to plunder, and they selected Mr. Younger as the victim. Of course they were known as Union soldiers. They were working to suppress the Rebellion—and fill their pockets with the spoils of conquest. Pretending to be laboring in the interests of the government, within whose jurisdiction their plans were executed, they cared nothing for the political sentiments of their victims, but robbed wherever there was material worth taking. Fortunes were swept away like snow under a melting sun. Innocent homes were ransacked, outrages com

mitted, inmates hanged or shot, and all in the name of freedom and justice. No wonder those who happened to fall into the hands of such wretches were turned into demons of revenge. No wonder respect for the flag, respect for the government, respect for the law that would permit, and, as was frequently supposed, sanction such barbarities, should be lost.

This first atrocious deed for a time bowed down Mr. Younger with grief; but he soon recovered, and loved his country and her great cause as fervently as ever. The culmination of his wrongs was yet to come. Foraging parties again visited his fine farm, and wasted his resources. Demand upon demand was made upon him. He saw his property slipping from his grasp. He was called upon to yield up his money or his life. There was no resistance to be offered — no succor from any source. Finally, in 1862, he received the last cruel thrust from the murderous hands which had left so many deep imprints upon his fortunes. He had gone to Independence, Missouri, in a buggy to receive a large sum of money—the proceeds of a sale of cattle. The Jayhawkers heard of his intentions. They resolved to have the wealth. An ambush was sought near the road, about five miles from Independence. The unsuspecting man started home in his buggy. The sale had been a profitable one. He carried the entire proceeds on his person, most of it being in a belt concealed beneath his clothing. As he rode along briskly, enjoying the scenery, and thinking of his happy fireside at home, he was suddenly stopped by a harsh voice crying out: “Fire!” In an instant twelve muskets answered the com-

mand; twelve deadly bullets pierced his body, and twelve men stepped into the road by his side. The body was completely riddled. All that remained for the freebooters to do was to secure the reward and depart. This they did only in part. Four hundred dollars was all that was found, and the remainder in the concealed belt unnoticed. His lifeless and mangled body was left lying in the road, a prey for buzzards and devouring beasts. His sons, suspecting something had happened, finally went in search of him, and found his form where it had fallen, while his spirit had taken its flight to its God. Is it a wonder that the boys of so loving a father could witness such a scene, and never cry out for vengeance upon the perpetrators? That sight—the memory of that awful day—the widowed mother, almost frantic with grief, the sisters falling upon the lifeless form, and looking to them for assistance, for comfort, for protection—was enough ever after to stir their volcanic natures to the innermost depths, and drive them forth with ungovernable fury.





RECRUITING AFTER A RAID.

CHAPTER LXXII.

GUERRILLA RECRUITING.

PEACE ESSENTIAL TO PROGRESS—SCRATCH OUR CIVILIZATION AND YOU FIND BARBARISM—HOW RECRUITS WERE MADE FOR QUANTRELL.

Mr. Younger was dead, but his sons were not. Cole had been driven into Quantrell's camp some time before this occurrence, for self-defence, and this fact was used as a pretext by the Jayhawkers for committing the horrible deed just recorded. But the angel of peace had taken its flight from the threshold of the Younger residence to return never again. Not content with taking the life of the inoffensive father, the hyenas in the guise of Union soldiers ceased not to heap new sorrows upon her to whom the fatherless children now looked for protection. At the dead of night she would be awakened by loud hammering at the door, and demands for admittance. If slow in obeying the command, the doors would be broken in, and the house searched, without regard to feminine delicacy. Time and again she and her daughters have arisen in the middle of night to prepare a meal for twenty or thirty hungry Red Legs. Profanity, obscenity, and indecency were always indulged in by these wretches, and not one word permitted in remonstrance.

The boys, unable to defend their home against such bands of marauders alone, one after another joined Coleman, and the

terrible Quantrell. Here they proved formidable adversaries to their persecutors, and eventually became as bad as those whom they hated. The names of the Younger Brothers began to be feared by Union renegades, and others less worthy of injury. The Jayhawkers sought every opportunity to capture the boys, and even inflicted many severe penalties upon their defenceless sisters and mother as revenge. A band came to the house one day and demanded information regarding the boys. The inmates of the house pleaded ignorance. The freebooters insisted that the women knew of the guerillas' whereabouts. Again all knowledge concerning the parties sought was denied. Without other cause, and in the most cruel manner three of the beautiful maidens were dragged out of the house, carried to the Kansas City jail, and locked up. Being kept there awhile, and still refusing to disclose the hiding place of their brothers, the infuriated mob tore down the building in which they were incarcerated over their heads, killing every one of the girls and some other relatives who had been locked within those walls. Can civilization boast of any superiority over barbarism, if that deed was the outgrowth of civilization? Can history point to a deed more dastardly than the cold-blooded murder of these innocent maidens in Kansas City; Were such experiences not the kind to either drive the subjects of this chapter mad, or into the most fiendish engagements?

Mrs. Younger saw her daughters brought home stiff in death. Nor did she know whether the murder of them was all that they had suffered. It was quite probable that a fate more terrible than that of death had been theirs while in the

hands of those desperate and heartless animals calling themselves men. Another funeral was the result—another series of green graves—another flood of tears, and Mrs. Younger, bowed down with affliction and grief, was rapidly nearing the time when she, too, would have the laurels wreathed over her breast, and the willows waving above her lonely corpse. But she was destined to drink still deeper the dregs from sorrow's cup.

Having her family broken up—the boys, all but one, having been obliged to leave the home fireside,—Mrs. Younger concluded to remove to her property in Cass county. She sought peace and loneliness. She longed for a place where she might be permitted to indulge her grief over the loss of loved ones who had been ruthlessly snatched from her embrace without warning or without cause. She sought to bring back once more a faint ray of that light and joy which had shed its beams over their past life. She would forgive the crimes committed against her in the name of law and justice: still love the old flag that had been trailed in the dust, and which she had loved in former days, if only she were permitted to dwell in quiet and peace.

No sooner had she left the abode of so much misery, and repaired to her Cass county farm than the hell-hounds were again upon her track. They swore that the mother of the Younger Boys should disclose their hiding places, or suffer the consequences. Consequently a visit was made to her new home by twenty-two Jayhawkers. It was dead of night when they reached the place. The inmates were at once aroused by loud cursing, hallooing, and hammering by the drunken mob,

Mrs. Younger knew too well what it was. She had heard such sounds before. She descended as soon as possible, but the door was burst in, and a search begun for her wayward sons. These not being found, one of the desperadoes threatened to knock her brains out with the butt end of his gun unless she told where they were. Failing to extort anything from her, the leader of the gang said:

“Well, you d—d old hag, we’ll make you come to it! You can’t hide butternut guerillas in this house and escape punishment. Boys! Get some shavings and kindling. We’ll burn the old shanty to ashes.”

This was received with a round of cheers, as the brave and courageous (?) knights of a glorious republic prepared the fuel for reducing the last of the Younger estate by flames. When everything was ready, the chief thundered:

“Now, old woman, get a match quick! No whimpering here! And if you have any brats left in the house I’d advise you to get them out. You’ve got to do the work yourself. Strike the match now and let her flicker.”

Too frightened to disobey, and knowing there was no other alternative but to do as she was bid, the sorrow-stricken woman applied the torch to her own domicile, and watched it disappear as the angry flames swept it to the very foundations. Her tormentors stood around and taunted her over its destruction; not one sympathizing heart—not one human voice—only the demoniacal jeers of a half-drunken band of wolves in soldiers’ uniforms. As she tottered away from the ruins of her beautiful homestead, almost blind with fright and grief, the cruel flames of persecution seemed to be gnawing at the strings

of her heart until they were almost ready to snap. For three miles she trod that weary, dark and drearisome road. For three miles she staggered on, scarcely knowing whither she went. For three miles no gleam of light greeted her vision as she peered into the midnight darkness. For three miles Mrs. Younger, with heaving breast and aching head, labored on until completely worn out and ready to drop, she reached the friendly abode of a neighbor, where she found rest. But the terrible experience of that night wrought their work upon her, and for days she lingered between life and death. Her nature was strong and heroic, but such manifold adversities would crush a Joan of Arc. Consumption with its malignant hand fastened its grip upon her frame and finally succeeded in dragging its victim to the grave. Not immediately did she succumb, it is true, but never after that terrible experience was she able to travel much, nor engage in the duties of life.

Having a son-in-law by the name of Jones in Clay county she was sent thither by her friends, where she remained for the most part until her death in May, 1870.

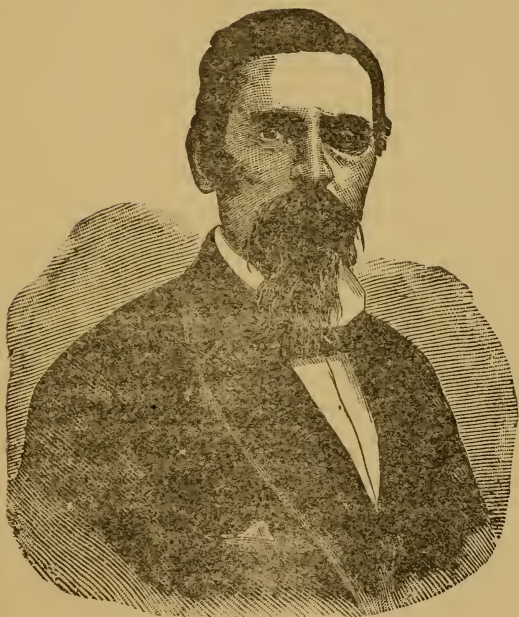


CHAPTER

THE YOUNGER BOYS WITH QUANTRELL.

We come now to the lives of men who have anything but an enviable reputation, yet who are not without reason for their conduct. Coleman Younger in particular, is considered, and properly so, one of the most desperate and lawless characters which it has been the painful duty of history to record. But, as has been shown, his life has not been altogether bad. Until he reached the years of manhood he moved in a good society, and enjoyed as respectable a name as any young man in Western Missouri. The circumstance which compelled him to depart from the paths of peace and loyalty to his government occurred in October, 1861—about six months previous to his father's death. He and his sister were attending a party given by Colonel McKee of Harrisonville. A large company had been invited, including several military officers who were stationed in the village. Conspicuous among these was Captain Irvin Walley, a young man of good appearance, but a bad heart. This federal captain asked Miss Younger to dance with him, which invitation was for some reason declined. The valiant officer was considerably nettled over the refusal, and expressed himself quite freely in regard to it. To add fuel to the flames, Cole Younger purposely paid special attention to another young lady present, to whom Walley was also inclined. The young lady rather showed preference to the good-looking youth of eighteen summers.

The blood of the gallant Captain began to boil with indignation as he saw Younger captivating the belle of the evening, while he had been jilted on every side. He concluded to avenge the offense by chastising his adversary. Consequently, having made known his intentions so that Younger heard of them, he bided his time. Cole considered that there would be more virtue in quietly retiring than in provoking any attack, so he took his sister and returned home before the hour was up for departing. Walley called him a coward when he heard of his leaving, and resolved not to let his victim escape so easily. He noised it abroad that the country "would be better off with less Youngers in it anyhow," and boasted that he proposed to exterminate "the whole gang of 'em." Cole advised with his father, who concluded to send him down into Jackson county to avoid trouble. In a day or two after the young man had taken his departure, Walley and a band of militia appeared in front of the Younger residence, and demanded his surrender. Upon being informed that he whom they sought was not at home, but in Jackson county, the freebooters swore they would capture him if they had to go to Texas after him. After a little preparation the captain started to Jackson county with a company of well armed men to seize one harmless, beardless youth. But when their destination was reached, the bird had flown. Word had been sent him by his father, of Walley's intentions, and Coleman had taken refuge with relatives. Mr. Younger immediately sought a council with the Jayhawkers, and tried very hard to work a reconciliation. Their leader was invincible. The offending youth must die.



GEORGE SHEPHERD.

Seeing no safety for Coleman in that section any longer, Mr. Younger arranged to send his son away to college. The idea was entirely satisfactory to the boy, and preparations began for his removal. Just a day or two before he was ready to start, relatives in Kansas City sent word to him that it would be unsafe for him to leave his concealment—that guards were stationed all around him, and an attempt to get out of the country would result in sure death. Consequently, their plans were again demoralized. It was not known what to do; one relative advised this, another that. Finally Cole decided the matter for once and all, by coolly remarking :

“So be it then. I will fight them since I must.”

These words constitute the key to the fearful tragedy that followed. Driven to rebellion because there was no alternative, he afterward learned to love it better than law and order.

Quantrell and his daring band had made quite a stir in many parts of the country, where in January, 1861, they were reinforced by Coleman Younger. Although young in years, he at once took rank as one of the bravest and most cautious of that reckless band. The new life had many charms for his courageous nature. His associates, for the most part, were young men with like interests, and all having suffered some wrong at the hands of the Jayhawkers or Red Legs. The spirit of their intrepid chief was inspiration for any deed. Kind and jovial with each other and friends, their doctrine was to hate and fight to the bitterest end all who opposed them. Although considered to be a law unto themselves, without warrant from either the federal or confederate, they were in reality fighting and pillaging in the regular ser-

vice of the Southern leaders. Coleman Younger sometime since published a letter in which he emphatically declares that he was personally recognized during the entire war by confederate commanders, as an officer of the army, and received pay as such. But they were bound by no particular limits, nor restricted by any rules. The work of damaging Union forces and counteracting the work of the unlawful bands of marauders on the other side, was given entirely into the hands of Quantrell, who made the best use of his liberty.

The first fight in which the subject of this sketch engaged after joining the band occurred at the house of John Flannerty, in Jackson county. The guerillas had been on a raid into Kansas and were just returning. They had stopped at the above mentioned residence for the night and were wrapped in the arms of Morpheus, when loud hammerings and cursings at the door awoke them. Quantrell descended and inquired the cause of such a racket. The answer was:

“Quantrell and his guerillas are in here and we demand an unconditional surrender.”

“Surrender!” That word had been stricken from Quantrell’s vocabulary. Might as well have sent such a message to Grant at Vicksburg, or Lee when he first entered Richmond. He asked for a few minutes to decide upon. During the interval allotted them the guerillas were arranging for a desperate fight. Some were placed up stairs, and others down. At the appointed time Quantrell ordered his men to fire, when such a deadly volley was poured into the militia upon the outside that a panic ensued.

The besiegers kept clear of the house after that, but

poured in their leaden messengers from concealment. For two hours the fight raged unabated. "Crack! crack," sounded the muskets, with ever and anon, some one's dying shriek or groan. Finally one or two of the militia managed to set fire to the house. The flames hissed and snapped as though delighted with the prospect of routing the inhabitants of the building. It soon became evident that there was no alternative but flight. Pillows were secured dressed with coats and hats, and when the proper time came, thrust out the windows. Of course those on the outside thought these were the guerillas tumbling out, and poured a dozen shots into each one. As soon as the fire was thus drawn, the band made a grand rush out of the house at another point, poured a volley into the enemy, and breaking through their ranks, escaped in the darkness of the night. It was a narrow escape, but an escape none the less. None of the guerillas were killed, while a large number of the militia never saw the light of another day. Cole Younger came very near ending his days after getting out of the house, and had he been a man of less prowess and skill, would have done so. By some means he became separated from the remainder of his band, and was pursued by a dozen horsemen. More than once they overtook him in the timber, but as often were frightened into a stampede by Younger pointing his empty gun and stick at them, at the same time raising a cry as though his fellows were with him. He came through all safe, however, and received the congratulations of his companions over his strategy.

The experiences at Flannerty's were soon to be repeated.

Not more than six weeks after that episode, Quantrell with his men were lodgers at the residence of Major Tate in Jackson county. It was midnight. The sky overhead was bespangled with glittering stars, while the stillness of the night was marked by scarcely a sound. Suddenly a band of mounted militia rode up to the house, and roused the inmates. A rough voice demanded that Quantrell and his men come out immediately, or fire would be opened. The answer was a shot from the chief himself, which sent the commanding lieutenant to his long resting place. Firing at once began on both sides, which continued for three hours. Time was given in the meantime for Major Tate and his family to remove to the barn. One after another the besiegers fell under the unerring fire from within, until a successful attempt was made to burn the building. As soon as the heat and smoke became unbearable, the command was given the guerillas to charge the ranks of the enemy. So sudden and terrible was the assault upon them that the Jayhawkers were thrown into confusion, and permitted their birds to escape. The guerillas had one man killed, while the militia lost twenty men and had forty more wounded. Such marvelous triumphs created a kind of superstitious notion among the people generally that the confederate irregulars were destined by fate to survive all attacks—they fought with charmed lives.

Col. Buel, with two hundred followers, were passing through Jackson county about February 26, 1862, when he heard that Quantrell was somewhere in the neighborhood. After considerable scouting the band of guerillas was discovered in camp on Indian Creek. Investigation disclosed the fact that

they were very strongly fortified, and every precaution would be necessary for their capture. Accordingly he concluded to surround the camp that night and demand a surrender in the morning. Two ten-pound cannon were among his accoutrements. Silently the militia planted themselves on all sides of the camp, and waited for daylight. At the first dawn a shell was sent into the slumbering camp which caused every man to jump upright, gun in hand. In a moment the guerillas took in the situation. A council was held. Cole Younger proved the right man for the emergency. He proposed that they defend the fort all day, and at night slip over to a barn-yard full of cattle near by, and cause a stampede. The militia would think it was the guerillas escaping and in the confusion, Quantrell and his men could get out at another point. Rather a novel plan to be sure, but we will see how well it succeeded.

The fight waged hot and fierce all day. Several times the militia charged but were as often severely repulsed. Finally, as the shades of night began to gather around, the firing ceased, and silence reigned supreme. About midnight Cole Younger, with two or three assistants, withdrew from the camp, and sought the barn-yard. It was reached safely, and without being noticed. Immediately the drove of cattle were put to flight. They went dashing pell-mell through the woods, making sufficient noise to wake the entire Federal camp. The cry: "The guerillas are upon us!" was raised and the direst confusion followed. Some panic-stricken, fled they knew not whither. Others, stood motionless, half asleep and bewildered. Col. Buel, as soon as passible, arranged his

troops for defence, but before such arrangements were completed the fifty guerillas were safely concealed in the rear of Buel's camp. They had slipped out of the fort in another direction, and were now planning an attack. As soon as daylight disclosed the whereabouts of the enemy's artillery, Cole Younger was dispatched with a small body of men to capture it. This he did with no trouble—the artillerymen being completely surprised and unable to offer resistance. Then began another fierce conflict. The Jayhawkers were largely in the majority, but having lost their cannon were at a great disadvantage. It is uncertain what would have been the result had not Jennison, with quite a large body of jayhawkers, at this moment appeared in sight. But before Quantrell had time to take the alarm, Col. Buel, mistaking the oncoming soldiers for Confederates, ordered a hasty retreat. Great confusion followed, the jayhawkers leaving behind all their ammunition, the two cannon, and one hundred killed.

Quantrell had lost but eight men and a few wounded.

One of the most brutal acts of this unlawful tragedy being enacted on the borders of civilization, occurred a few days after the fight at Flannerty's. A company of Jayhawkers learned that Cole Younger was concealed at the house of a relative by the name of Blythe. The entire company at once set out for his scalp. Mr. Blythe's house was reached—a demand made for Younger, and upon being informed that he was not there, a vigorous search ensued. But Younger had before their arrival regained his comrades. Maddened at being foiled, and pretending that Blythe was lying to them, they took the little curly headed boy of the household and

brutally murdered him. The father and mother were compelled to witness this barbarous deed—fit only for brutes without the semblance of a soul.

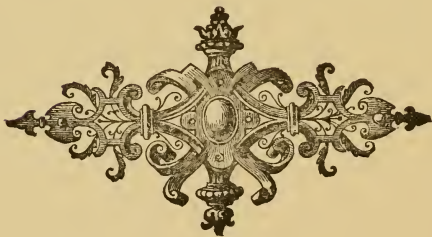
But this courageous band was soon to pay bitterly for this atrocious act. Quantrell and Cole Younger were not far away at the time, and hearing of the brutal murder, resolved to wreak revenge of the most merciless character. The Jayhawkers were expected to pass through a narrow valley called Blue Cut. Here the entire band of guerillas concealed themselves and bided their coming. Presently the unsuspecting federals came riding along. When they had all gotten well into the Cut, so that not a man could escape, a merciless fire from the front, rear and both sides was hurled at them. They dropped from their horses, one after another, never offering any resistance because they knew not where to fire. Scarcely a man escaped. If every one had been guilty of slaying the little, innocent, bright-eyed boy, so each must pay the penalty with his life's blood. Cole Younger fought more desperately than any one else. He boasted afterward of having killed ten Jayhawkers. As one or two tried to escape, he seized the bridles of their steeds and sent a bullet crashing through the brain of the frightened victim.

For a year the guerillas and Younger Brothers kept at their work of pillaging, slaying, and destroying property. It would take too long for the present work to enter into the details of their lives during this bloody period. Barbarities almost beyond the reach of imagination were performed by both sides. The fearful experiences through which the subjects of this sketch had passed—the murdered father, the weeping,

sorrow stricken mother, the outraged sisters—made them demons in their thirst for revenge. Deeds were enacted by them of which they are ashamed even to-day, when the heat of battle and the fires of vengeance have partially died out. One circumstance may be related before closing the chapter which will tend to show the magnanimity sometimes manifested by these desperadoes, and their attachment to friends.

Quantrell sent Cole Younger with a band of twenty-five men to intercept the march of fifty Jayhawkers. Younger learned that the commander of the Federals was Captain Long, an old and true friend whom he had known many years. His first injunction was to save the life of Long at all hazards, but shoot down all the rest. Long was accurately described so that the guerillas could not fail to recognize him. Younger concluded to seek the same ambuscade he had been in before, that of the Blue Cut pass. The militia were traveling from Harrisonville to Independence, and would pass along this road. As was anticipated, the fifty cavalymen rode into the trap and it was closed upon them. Twenty-seven of them fell, either killed or wounded, and ten were taken prisoners. Among this squad of prisoners was the gallant captain himself. Cole pursued some who were trying to escape, shot down a man by the name of Shoat, whom he believed to be a scout, and returned to see his friend. The two met. A cordial hand-shaking ensued, and Captain Long discovered that he was in the hands of a man whose heart was still to be touched by the tender chords of affection. After a pleasant talk over their experiences, in which Cole informed the Federal commander that he had shot his horse from un-

der him in order to capture its rider without bloodshed, Long and his fellow prisoners were granted their liberty, and went their way rejoicing.



CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE YOUNGERS IN OTHER RELATIONS — DRIVEN TO OUTLAWRY.

As has been related elsewhere, Cole Younger and his brothers were in the regular service of the Confederate army. In 1863 Missouri became too warm for them, and they sought other climes. James accompanied Quantrell into Kentucky, and was with that desperate character when he fell. Younger himself was taken prisoner at the same time, and sent to the prison at Alton, Ill. Here he was confined until the summer of 1866. Finally, being released, he returned to his home in Jackson county, Missouri. John and Robert were already at the old homestead, when James arrived, endeavoring to repair some of the ravages of the war.

Cole Younger, after leaving Missouri, repaired to the camp of Kirby Smith. Under General Smith he did some effective work. His courage and daring made him extensively useful when some dangerous exploit was on foot, and he soon won an enviable reputation among his comrades. He was placed in command of a small company of men whose business it was to intersect the enemy's supplies, tear up bridges, cut off foraging parties, and generally harass the enemy. In 1865 Cole was sent out to California with authority to raise a company for similar work to that he had been engaged in at the South. After considerable difficulty in reaching his destination, having experienced several conflicts with whites and Indi-

ans, he reached the Golden State. Hardly had he begun his work of raising the company, when Lee's surrender reached his ears and the project was abandoned. He remained a while in the mountains and then returned to his home in Missouri. Here he found all his brothers. Every one had passed through the furnace and returned scorched, but alive.

The brothers set themselves about repairing the old homestead, and gathering up some of the lost wealth, with great vigor. They were back again in their childhood haunts, and although marks of the terrible ordeal were to be too plainly seen on all sides, yet the war was over, and the Younger family courted peace. The mother evidently did not have many years longer to spend in this world, and she desired her boys about her while she lived. But the mother's desires were not to be realized. Although peace had theoretically come to the nation, practically it was still war in Jackson county, Missouri. Men would declare their sentiments. The wounds were too fresh to be thus gouged, and fights were thus constantly occurring. But it was by far worse for the ex-guerillas than any one else. Of course the North having triumphed, her soldiers reaped the greatest benefits. Nugent's State militia were given offices wherever desired, and many of the Jayhawkers were put into places of trust. These had an implacable hatred for the ex-Confederates, who in turn reciprocated the affection. Hot words would be used, a struggle ensue, the guerillas be overpowered, and killed or imprisoned. Nearly all the sheriffs were militiamen. These of course had it within their power to shoot, imprison or drive out all whom they chose, under the protection of the law.

The Youngers had escaped ill-treatment for the most part since returning. All who knew them understood their characters too well to attempt any indignities upon them without plenty of backing. But at length one of the ex-Jayhawkers whom Cole Younger had injured in some way, upon learning that the boys were home, decided to "wipe 'em out," as he expressed it. Accordingly he organized a posse of desperadoes like himself, and started for the Younger residence. As the band came through Lee Summit, a small town not very far from Harrisonville, they saw an ex-guerilla by the name of George Wigginton, whom some of them had a spite against. The cry was raised to seize him, which was done in the most violent manner. He was subjected to the meanest treatment, being prodded with guns, pricked with knives, spit upon and such other barbarities as the half-drunken freebooters saw fit to use. Finally they made him mount a horse and go along with them. Upon reaching the Younger place, they demanded the surrender of Coleman. But the ex-guerilla had "smelled a mice" and left for parts unknown. The old mother was threatened, the sisters were insulted, and the younger brother John, dragged to the barn and hung until he would disclose the whereabouts of Cole. A noose was placed around the boy's neck, and he was strung up to a rafter, but no disclosures could they wrest from the courageous lad. Several times the process was repeated until the rope cut a great gash in his neck. Finding this plan to extort information unavailing, they commanded the boy to move on ahead of them, swearing they would take him where he would be glad to tell. The boy, almost dead, was thus driven before the

heartless wretches until nightfall, when he watched his opportunity and escaped.

Other attempts were made to capture or kill the brothers until, driven to desperation, they swore eternal vengeance upon their persecutors and left their childhood home for Texas.



CHAPTER LXXV.

THE YOUNGERS AS OUTLAWS—THEIR LATEST ACTS.

If ever men were justified in defying law, the boys of the Younger household certainly were. For, although passionate and headstrong, they nevertheless had a deep regard for the laws of civil and social life until, in 1866, staggering under the fearful load of insults and crimes which the commonwealth of Missouri permitted to be heaped upon them, they threw off allegiance to the government, and stepped into a life where they might be able to assert their rights.

From the time that they were driven from home into Texas, no correct record of their doings can be obtained. Falling in with the Jameses and other lawless characters, soon after leaving Jackson county, they adopted the mode of life obtaining among their new-found associates, and soon became proscribed characters the country over. Just how many of the scrapes attributed to them they have actually been in, would be difficult to state. Their connection with the Gad's Hill, Chicago & Pacific Railway, Russellville and other robberies, heretofore mentioned in these pages, is undisputed. But, no doubt, many depredations have been committed in their name, when the Younger Boys knew nothing of them. The last fearful battle which three of the brothers were to fight, and where the strong hand of the law took hold upon them with an unrelenting grasp, was at Northfield,

Minnesota. Successful attempts had been made elsewhere to rob banks of their treasures, and it was thought that a raid upon Northfield would be none the less successful. Our readers have all seen the account of this sad tragedy. Sad, because the brave and heroic Westfall, cashier of the bank, fell a victim to the remorseless messengers of death. The story of that terrible attack in the streets of Northfield, in which the robbers were cut, shot, and everything but killed, and many of the citizens sustaining more serious wounds, is still fresh in our minds. How the Younger Brothers, with Clell Miller, Frank and Jesse James, finally succeeded in getting out of the hands of the angry mob that surrounded them. How the James Boys escaped to Mexico, and the remainder of the gang to the woods of Minnesota. It was here, about two weeks after the tragedy at Northfield that a company of one hundred and fifty men surrounded them; where Clell Miller was shot through the heart, while Robert, Jim and Cole Younger, although bleeding from a score of wounds, and pierced by as many bullets, fought like a she panther defending her young. But exhausted, almost senseless, unable to stand or to use their arms, they were at length compelled to give up, and surrender to the authorities.

A very touching incident is said to have transpired when the judge, before whom the boys were tried, pronounced the sentence of imprisonment for life upon them. Miss Retta Younger, a beautiful and accomplished sister of the boys, had come from her home to attend the trial. As the judge uttered the last word of the awful sentence this affectionate sister fell upon the neck of her brother Cole, and wept so bitterly as to move every one to tears.

The boys were taken to Stillwater, Minnesota, where the prisoner's garb was put upon them, and where they are to-day.

It is said that at the time of their capture, Cole had twenty-one bullet wounds upon his person, some of which were very serious, Jim had six wounds in all, and Bob three. Perhaps any other men would have died from the effects of the latest ordeal. But these men had iron constitutions and almost superhuman will-power. Die they would not, and die they did not.

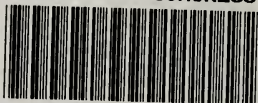
Since being incarcerated, a great change has come over the young men. Time for reflection has led them to see the great error of their lives, and an entirely different course would now be pursued were their liberty again theirs. The scars of battle are almost entirely obliterated. Jim was shot through the mouth which produced an ugly wound, but no semblance of such a gash can now be seen. Coleman has a bullet within his skull, which causes him considerable pain, but is otherwise healthy. But the handsomest of the three is a robust, fine appearing young man, intelligent and mannerly. The visitor who converses with the noted outlaws in their prison home discovers no trace of that bloodthirsty nature popularly attributed to them. The same sympathy and affection which prompted Cole to carry his brother Jim out of the Northfield affray upon his back, and indignantly resent the proposition of Jesse James to put an end to Jim's sufferings with a bullet, still expresses itself in his features and conversation. And no one gazing into the youthful, pleasant, but decided countenance of Robert would suspect that he ever

shot with his left hand only too effectively after his right arm and both legs had been broken, and gave up only because as he said, "The boys here, are all shot to pieces." Their time at Stillwater is spent mostly in reading. Cole has fully repented and is quite probably suffering considerable remorse for his misdeeds and ill-spent days. He is devoting most of his spare moments to studying theology. Bob is putting in his extra hours on the subject of medicine, and Jim reads all law books available. They are permitted to converse with each other but once a month. It is said to be very affecting to witness the eagerness with which the boys embrace each other at these periods. To a gentleman who was talking with them about a year ago, Cole expressed his deep regret that his passions had never been restrained when a boy, but in that being humored in everything, he had at length become entirely unwilling to yield under any circumstances, and when struck, never failed to resent it. Should any clemency ever be granted them, and they be permitted to step out into the free air of citizenship again, there is no doubt but peace and prosperity would attend their walks, and the noted desperadoes of frontier life would be counted valuable additions to any community.





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