SAM SPENCE, the Broadhorn Boy.

BY EDWARD WILLET.
Sam Spence, the Broadhorn Boy.

And How He Fleated Into a Fortune.

A Story of N. W. Orleans in War Times.

By Edward Willett,
Author of "The Boy Cruisers," "Flatboat Fred," "Tip Tressell, The Floater," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

LEFT ALONE.

"Where's Jim and Jerry?"

"Dunno, Cap."

"What's become of the skiff?"

"Durned if I know."

"Well, this is the queerest streak I've struck in a long time. Mysterious disappearance of two men and a skiff. What do you make of it, Hank?"

"I don't make nothin' of it, am I don't want to make nothin' of it. Those two men was on watch here the last half of the night. You know that as well as I do. I kem up here this mornin' and they was gone, and the skiff was gone. That's all."

"It's enough, Lord knows. Well, Hank, I'll go down and see how Sam is getting on with breakfast. When it is ready, I will call you."

This conversation took place on a large flatboat, known as a "broadhorn," solidly built of heavy plank, and roofed over in a curve with light boards. Near what may be called the stern, though it was only the up-stream end of the craft, was a stout stage extending crosswise over the roof, to which reached the handle of the steering-oar, a long sapling with a flange at the water end, pivoted at the stern of the flatboat. Nearly amidships were two similar oars, but somewhat shorter and lighter, extending like wings at each side, but just then lying against the hull of the boat, as they were not in use. It is evident that the flatboat was built and intended solely for floating down-stream with the current, and that the steering and side oars were only for the purpose of controlling her course.

She had come from the Kanawha country, and was loaded to the extent of her capacity with barrels of the fine salt of that region, the sole proprietor of boat and cargo being Jackson Spence, who had wanted to know what had become of Jim and Jerry and the skiff.

"Captain Spence, as he was called in consideration of his command of a big flatboat, was a tall, broad-shouldered, keen-eyed man, a widower with one son, who had invested all his savings in this venture and had his own ideas of the profit he expected to make.

He had started with three able flatboat hands and a boy to cook and make himself generally useful, the boy being his son, Sam Spence. Two of the hands seemed to have deserted during the night, and the third was Hank Birdsell, a short, tough, low-browed, sullen-natured man, whom the owner left on the steering-stag when he went below to see about breakfast.

In the little room at the stern of the broadhorn, which may be styled the cabin, a brisk fire was burning in the stove, on which coffee was boiling and a smoking hot breakfast of bacon and potatoes and corn-bread was ready.

Sam Spence, who had prepared the breakfast, was a lad of eighteen, or nearly that, and was tall for his age, broad-shouldered and keen-eyed like his father. He was, withal, a stalwart and fine-looking young fellow in spite of his rough garb of flannel shirt and coarse trousers.

Sam put the breakfast on the table in a twinkling, and sat down with his father.

Jackson Spence was always a man of few words, but on this occasion he was more than usually quiet and thoughtful.

"Anything up, dad?" asked the boy.

"Something down. I am down in the mouth this morning."

"What's the matter?"

"Jim and Jerry have left us. They quit their watch last night while the rest of us were asleep, and took the skiff, and went off."

"Do you know why they did that?"

"I don't know; but I can guess. I suppose they were scared—afraid to go South."

"Well, sir, I suppose we can get along if Hank Birdsell will stick to us, and I hope he is all right."

"He may be, and he may not."

"Have you any reason to doubt him?"

"I am not sure. I don't care to talk about it, Sam. I must wait and see."

Father and son were silent during the remainder of the meal.

When it was finished Jackson Spencer looked at Sam, and his face wore a gloomy but resolved expression.

"We must make up our minds to the worst," he said, "and there is no telling how bad it may be. Now, Sam, if anything should happen to me, I want you to go right on to Orleans with this salt."

If anything should happen to you, father? What do you mean? What do you think might happen to you?"

"Nothing that I know of. I am feeling a little queer this morning. But I mean to run this cargo through to Orleans, if I live to do it. If I don't live, the job is yours. The river is at a good stage, and the boat is safe to swim, and you may have the luck to do it. But you must never give up, Sam, as long as you can draw a breath."

"Why, father—"

"There, that will do, my boy. I don't want to talk about it any more. You understand me well enough. I will send Hank down now. Come up when he is through with his breakfast."

Hank Birdsell came down, and ate his morning meal as silently as possible.

Sam Spence tried to draw him out, to learn something about the desertion of Jim and Jerry, and about his own intentions; but the man could not be persuaded to talk, and answered only in monosyllables when he answered at all.
When he had finished his breakfast he went on deck—if the roof of the broadhorn may be called a deck—and Sam followed him.

Mr. Spence was at the steering-car, and he looked inquiringly at his remaining hand as he came up. But Hank Birdsall, instead of meeting his glance, looked sullenly and anxiously at the shore.

The flatboat was then in the lower Ohio, and it would not be long before she would float into the swift current of the Mississippi.

"Can you tell me, Hank, why those men left us?" quietly asked the owner.

"I reckon you know as much about it as I do," was the rough reply.

"I don't know that I do. What is your opinion of the cause of their desertion?"

"What's the use o' foolin', Cap? You know as well as I do that there's goin' to be war. There's war already, and it's only the beginnin'. It was all in the paper that we got from that man in the shiff yesterday. You saw it, and I saw it, and Jim and Jerry saw it."

"Well, what of that?"

"A purdy figure we'd cut, way down South, with no chance to git back home, and among enemies. Don't you know that?"

"I know that I mean to run this salt down to Orleans if I live.

"All right fur you, if you want to do it. You are after the dollars; but there ain't dollars enough in the business to pay me to go back on my own country and people."

"Do you mean to say that I would do that?" angrily demanded Mr. Spence.

"I don't mean to say anything about you. I only say that I wouldn't do it."

"Well, Hank, I don't believe that we will have any trouble. If I can get this salt through to Orleans it will bring big money, and you shall be well paid, and I don't doubt that we will find our way back somehow. It will be worth your while to stick to me, and I expect you to do it; but I must have a square understanding with you. What do you mean to do, Hank Birdsall?"

"You can do as you please, Cap Spence. The boat is yours, and you may run it into the Gulf of Mexico if you want to. But I don't go with you. No Dixie's Land in mine."

"What do you expect to do, then?"

"Jim and Jerry wanted me to go with 'em in the skiff last night; but that was too sneak-in' to suit me. I am bound to leave this flat afore it passes Cairo. I don't know jest how I'll git ashore; but I mean to go, if I have to swim for it."

Jackson Spence's face had been growing redder with every word, showing that his anger was rising.

When the man finished speaking, it fairly blazed up.

"You sha'n't leave this boat, Hank Birdsall," he declared. "You were hired for the trip, and you got to run it."

"Not if I know myself," hotly answered Birdsall. "Do you take me for a durned nigger slave? I told you squarely what I mean to do, and I am bound to do it."

"And I tell you, Hank Birdsall, that you sha'n't leave this flatboat, unless you leave it a corpse."

"I would like to know how you mean to stop me."

"I will tie you neck and heels, and you sha'n't stir hand or foot until we have passed Cairo and are well down in the Mississippi."

Hank Birdsall laughed incredulously, but was evidently nervous and ill at ease.

He was then standing about a rod from the steering-stage, on the planks that lay along the middle of the roof and served as a walk for working the side cars.

Angered by the sneer, Jackson Spence took a step toward him, as if to execute his threat.

"Don't you dare to touch me, Jack Spence!" exclaimed the man, backing a little. "Better keep away from me, you durned white trash!"

"I am no white trash, you lying hound. I tell you, Hank Birdsall, you've got to come under."

Mr. Spence, who had let go the steering-car, advanced as he spoke; but Hank Birdsall suddenly jerked out a pistol, and fired at him.

The bullet went wide of its mark, doubtless owing to the man's nervousness.

Jackson Spence drew a pistol as quick as thought, and fired with a better aim.

His bullet struck Birdsall in the forehead between the eyes, and he fell backward on the planks, where he lay motionless, the blood oozing out of his head and staining the roof of the flatboat.

Mr. Spence stared at him, as if shocked at what he had done, and then staggered as he stepped back upon the steering-stage.

"Are you shot, father?" eagerly asked Sam, stepping forward from the end of the stage.

"No—not shot—but—"

The unwounded man pressed his hand upon his heart, and dropped down near the steering-car.

CHAPTER II.

SAMS'SOLITARY VOYAGE.

SAM SPENCE was so astonished by the terrible events he had witnessed that he was fairly dazed.

There was a blur before his eyes, the flatboat and the river and the shore all seemed to mingle and whirl together, as he stood and stared at the body of his father.

He closed his eyes, and pressed his hands to his head, until his senses gradually returned to him, and he was able to see clearly and comprehend his position.

He spoke to his father, but got no answer.

He felt of the body, but found no sign of life there.

Jackson Spence was surely dead!

Heart disease had been the cause of his death, accelerated by trouble and excitement.

It was of this that he had a presentiment when he spoke his last words to him in the cabin.

Hank Birdsall was also dead, and there could be no doubt of the cause and manner of his death.

It was a terrible thing to the boy to find himself alone on the broadhorn; yet worse to be
alone in the presence of those two staring corpses.

One of them, at least, he could get rid of, and he set at work at once to do so, though the task sickened him, and his nerves were sorely tried.

He rolled Hank Birdsell’s body off the planks where it lay onto the curved roof of the flatboat, and then hastily shoved it overboard.

It was not look at it after it struck the water, but resolutely kept his eyes turned away from that direction, or closed them if his glance happened to stray thither.

The corpse of his father he could not treat so summarily.

It would have been a consolation to him to keep the body until he could give it proper burial; but that seemed to be impossible.

He thought of preserving it by covering it with salt; but that would be too horrible a task, and he was unable to carry it below.

But he could not bring himself to the point of parting with it; so he covered it with a blanket, after driving the steering-oar from the steering-oar.

Then he tried to calmly consider his position and the chances of the future.

He had no idea of failing to execute his father’s last command and run the broadhorn to New Orleans, if possible.

But, was it possible?

Five hands had not been considered too many to take care of the craft, and now only one boy was left.

He knew that he could do little toward controlling its course, and would be obliged to trust to the chances of the stream.

But the river was at a very high stage, as his father had said. He had nothing to fear from sandbars, and the flatboat would be likely to keep in the current. The only danger seemed to be that she might run ashore or ground on an island. As for that he must trust to luck and his own labor.

The broadhorn was not the kind of craft that he could lend to a landing to procure help or to discontinue the voyage. She was at the mercy of the stream, and he could not stop her if he wished to.

She was floating slowly on the placid bosom of the Ohio while he gave himself up to these reflections. When he had arrived at his conclusions he looked down the river and perceived that the port of Cairo was in sight.

It was possible that help might be got there if he could hail the shore or show some sort of a signal of distress; but it was more likely that he would be stopped and an end would be put to his voyage.

The paper that was brought aboard had told him that the war had begun and that troops had been sent to Cairo. If that port was in the possession of the military, it would be best for him to give it as wide a berth as possible.

So he started in time to endeavor to direct the course of the broadhorn toward the Kentucky shore, and succeeded, by using the steering-oar and the starboard rowing-oar better than he had expected to.

Just before the craft came opposite to the town he went below and looked through the little window of the cabin.

The United States flag was flying there, and he could faintly perceive blue uniforms on the levee; but no attempt was made to stop or otherwise molest the broadhorn.

It was then near the dusk of the evening, and she was by no means a formidable object in either a naval or a military point of view, though she might be bearing aid and comfort to the enemy.

Sam ascended to the steering-stage again when the flatboat swung into the swift current of the Mississippi.

The long and heavy oars were very difficult for him to manage, and he could not use them efficiently, but he was able to guide the course of the unwieldy craft to some extent, and succeeded in placing her where he wanted her, in the middle of the stream, where she would get the full force of the current and would be less liable to take to the shore.

So the thousand miles voyage from the mouth of the Ohio to New Orleans was begun, and Sam naturally wondered where and how it would end.

The Mississippi was to him a sea of uncertainty, and all the long reach below was full of mystery and danger.

But there was an exhilaration and a fascination for him in that very uncertainty and in the mystery and danger.

The unknown has always been a great attraction for the oldest and best of us, and wonder and expectancy atoned to Sam Spence in a great degree for the loneliness and peril of his position.

In the stillness of the starry night, when no sign of life was visible anywhere, the presence of his father’s body weighed upon his spirits with a vast oppression.

He could not see the staring eyes and the ghastly face; but he knew it was there. He could perceive the outlines of its form under the blanket, and the same sight that he had seen as he crossed it was ever present to the eye of his mind.

He knew that he could not keep it until he should be able to give it proper burial, and to have it lying there was more than he could bear.

He was afraid that he might go mad.

Painful as it would be to commit his father’s body to the water, its presence on the flatboat would be more painful, if not absolutely unendurable.

It must be buried, and the Mississippi must be its grave, and he must be undertaker and clergyman and mourner.

Sam Spence had often read of burials at sea, and he endeavored to follow the salt-water custom as far as circumstances would permit.

He sewed up his father’s body in a sheet, in which he put all the heavy pieces of metal he could find about the boat, and placed the corpse upon a plank which he ripped up for that purpose.

Then he prayed as well as he was able to, recited such portions of the Burial Service as he could remember, and concluded the ceremony by tipping up the plank and letting the body slide into the Mississippi. It sunk out of his sight, and he fell upon the stage in an agony of grief.
Then it was that he fully realized his great loss, and really felt for the first time that he would never see his father again.

He also felt himself to be alone in the world, as well as alone on the flatboat; but the removal of the dead bodies left him less lonely than he had been, and the absence of the image of death gave him new life.

After seeing that the broadhorn was straight and heading down the middle of the stream, he went below and turned in. He was so weary that he fell asleep at once, and slept soundly until dawn.

When he went on the roof he found everything going on well, except that the great, ungainly float had nearly turned around, and he had hard work to get it straightened up again.

Then he cooked and ate his breakfast, and was ready to face the duties of the day.

They were not very arduous, although he made them considerably severer at first than after he became more accustomed to the river and his position.

He had noticed that the broadhorn had gone along smoothly and well while he was asleep and nobody was attending to it, and he realized the fact that he would be obliged to trust to luck and the chances of the stream as there was really but little that he could do.

At occasional towns and landings he perceived a new and strange flag, which was not the flag of the United States, and he knew that he was fairly within the realm of Secession, if not among enemies.

He began to feel like an alien, a person who has lost his own country and has not gained a new one.

There was one consolation in this—he would not be afraid to ask for help if he should find a chance to do so, as he need no longer fear capture or stoppage. His cargo of salt was going where it needed to go, and was bound for a port where it would be gladly received.

But he had no chance. He did not dare to bring the boat to the shore, supposing him to have been able to do so, and the signals which he tried to make were never attended to.

If he had still possessed the skill he might have made his wants known; but he had no way of leaving the flat, and was practically isolated in sight of populous places.

So day after day went on, and night after night, the voyage continually becoming more monotonous and tiresome.

It is true that the element of danger was lacking, or, at least, the difficulties and dangers were not near as great as Sam Spence had expected them to be. But it may be doubted if this fact afforded him unmixed pleasure, as there was not enough excitement about his life to make it interesting.

He had plenty of hard work, however, as he did not spare himself in his efforts to make the voyage successful.

He was obliged to exert himself to keep his unwieldy craft straight in the river, and every now and then he found it drifting dangerously near to an island or the shore, and was forced to struggle hard to work her back to the channel.

Besides this, though the flatboat was well built and reasonably tight, he was compelled to work pretty hard at the pump to keep it clear of water, and when he laid down for a few hours' rest he was always thoroughly tired out.

Fortunately he did not face any of the bad places during his sleep—or, if he did, he was happily unaware of the fact—and in course of time he drifted into a part of the river where there was comparatively no danger, where the stream flowed swiftly but placidly, and it was not a difficult matter to keep the big broadhorn straight with the current.

Before this he had met steamboats, plenty of them, as considerable business was doing on the lower river, and transports were carrying soldiers in gray uniforms to and fro, and he had occasionally had a chance to hail them for the purpose of asking assistance; but they generally kept well out of the way of his clumsy craft, and seemed to regard his hail merely as a friendly greeting.

So, when he reached deep water and a clear river, he made no further effort to attract attention to his case, and was content to let the current do its work with as little assistance as possible.

Fortune had favored him in the rough places, and why should it not continue to favor him in the smooth places.

Besides, if he should bring the broadhorn into port alone, the greater would be his glory and his gain.

CHAPTER III.

A RISE IN SALT.

As the big broadhorn floated down the river, into the semi-tropical region known as "the coast," past gay plantations and banks loaded with luxuriant foliage, where the air was warm and odorous, Sam Spence knew, although he had never made the trip before, that he was approaching his destination, and his great fear was that he would reach New Orleans in the night.

There ought to be men enough on the flatboat to manage her and guide her in to the shore at the proper place; but the crew consisted of only one boy, who was quite unequal to that task, and who had not the faintest idea of the location of the proper place.

He knew that there were plenty of steamboats and tugs at that port, and had reason to believe that they would be only too glad to meet him and tow him in.

If he could reach the city and dispose of his cargo, he believed that he could somehow find his way home, in spite of the war.

That had been his father's expectation, and why should it not be his?

But he was afraid that if he should reach New Orleans at night, his flatboat might float past the city unnoticed and drift out to sea.

This was not at all likely; but the fear of it made the boy very uneasy, and he got but little sleep while he was watching for the city to appear.

The good luck that had followed him so far kept close to his heels, and it was a bright
morning when he caught sight of New Orleans.

First the smoke told him of its presence, and then the tall masts of ships, and then the steeples and roofs of the city, and he danced for joy on the steering-stage as he felt that he had nearly reached the end of his long and lonely voyage.

He fastened below to get a flag which he had prepared for the occasion, the same being a red square which he had cut from a flannel shirt.

This he attached to a pole and waved it vigorously as he stood on the steering-stage.

He had serious doubts as to whether his signal was the correct thing; but he was doing the best he could do, and might at least hope to attract attention.

In this he succeeded.

A tug came puffing up-stream, and speedily ranged alongside of the broadhorn.

"Where you from?" inquired the commander of this small Hercules of the river.

"Kannahwa country," briefly replied Sam.

"Great guns! What's your loadin'?"

"Salt, sir!"

"By the jumpin' Jehoshaphat! Who'd have thought it? Where's the rest of the crew?"

"Done."

"What's become of 'em?"

"Never mind that now," answered Sam, who was determined to use his tongue discreetly until he knew where and how he stood. "It is too long a story to tell. Can you tow me in?"

"To the salt warehouses?"

"Yes. You will have to put a man aboard to make the lines fast."

"All right, youngster. Forrard there, jump aboard with the bow bawser! Lively now!"

The commander of the tug fastened to hitch on, and whistled for another tug, which came steaming up, and the pair of little monsters rounded the big broadhorn to and tossed her in against the current until she was securely made fast to the levee in front of the brick salt warehouses at the upper end of the city.

Sam Spence made no bargain with the tugs. He was so glad to get safe to land, and at the proper place, that he did not trouble himself about details.

His father had left a considerable amount of gold in a buckskin belt, which the lad had secured upon his own person, and with a pistol in his hip pocket, he seemed to be equipped for any ordinary emergency.

There had been a "boom" in salt since the broadhorn started from the Kanawha country.

The news of the breaking out of war had sent the price of that necessary commodity "kissing," and the actual fact of war had raised it like a balloon, and it was still going up.

As soon as the broadhorn was made fast to the levee the news of the nature of her cargo was made known as if by magic, and eager speculators began to flock down and board her.

The commander of the tug had a quiet word to say to Sam Spence before they reached the landing.

"You are a young feller," said he, "and all alone. I don't know how you happened to be alone, but reckon it's all right. I want to say that you will find a true friend in Ben Frossman, and that's me. Take my advice now, and don't be in a hurry to sell."

"All right," responded Sam, who had already come to the same conclusion.

He inquired for a warehouse proprietor, and a man who seemed to have an honest face presented himself and was introduced by Ben Frossman as Mr. Prole.

"Are you in charge of that load of salt?" asked the warehouseman.

"Yes, sir," answered Sam.

"Nobody but you?"

"Nobody but me."

"That's queer. Is the salt for sale?"

"Yes, sir."

"Come up to my office, and I will talk to you about it."

Sam Spence locked his cabin door, and accompanied the warehouse man to his office across the levee, followed by Ben Frossman and by the longing eyes of the speculators at the landing. The captain of the tug not only followed Sam to the office, but entered it uninvited.

As Mr. Prole did not object to his presence there, Sam could not well do so. Besides, there seemed to be no special cause for objecting. As the man had not yet been paid for his services, it might be supposed that he was looking out for his money.

He was a short and stout man, of perhaps forty years, with a chubby brown face, black hair, and very bright little black eyes.

The warehouseman was puzzled.

It was a puzzling fact that a broadhorn loaded with salt should arrive from up the river at that time, and yet more puzzling that its crew should consist of but one boy.

He naturally wanted these curious facts explained before he could settle upon anything in the way of business, and Sam was quite willing to explain everything that needed explanation.

In response to Mr. Prole's inquiries he told the story of the trip, including the desertion of two of the crew and the death of the third man and his father, and related everything exactly as it occurred.

Ben Frossman, who took a lively interest in all that was said, listened with eyes and mouth wide open.

"That is a strange story," said the warehouseman. "If I did not know that you had come here alone on that flatboat I could not believe it. But I judge you to be a truthful young fellow, and am ready to take stock in all you say. How did you get by the blockade?"

"Blockade?" answered Sam. "What's that? I don't know anything about a blockade."

"Nothing can pass Cairo now; but perhaps the blockade had not fully closed in when you came through. You are in wonderful luck, my young friend. That you should bring that flatboat down here alone is such an immense piece of luck that I can hardly take hold of it, and that you should get a cargo of salt into New Orleans just now, when salt promises to be
scarce, and the price is way up yonder, is most astonishingly lucky for you. Do you want to sell the salt?"

"I expect to sell it, of course."

"How much is there of it?"

Sam named the number of barrels.

"I will give you ten thousand dollars for the lot as it lies."

The lad opened his eyes; but he did not need Ben Frossman's nudge to cause him to decline the offer. Ten thousand dollars was a vast sum compared with what his father had paid for the salt. Adding the expenses of the flatboat and the trip, there would still be left a great profit.

It was clear that salt was salt; but it would doubtless continue to be salt. There was no danger that it would lose its savor, and, as for the price, there was every reason to believe that it would keep on rising. It might be as well for Sam Spence to have the profit which the warehouseman would expect to reap.

"I am in no hurry to sell," said he.

"Just as you please," replied Mr. Prole. "I may be able to do better by you to-morrow, or you may get better offer for yourself. What shall be done with the salt in the mean time?"

"I thought I would let it stay where it is, in the flatboat, and in your charge, until I sell it."

"I think it had better be put in the warehouse. It will be covered by my insurance, and I would not care to be responsible for it should the sharks come."

It was finally settled that the salt should be taken ashore, and that Mr. Prole should attend to its storage and pay what was proper for the service of the two tugs.

"There is just one word more to say about this business," remarked Mr. Prole. "Are you of age, my young friend?"

"No, sir."

"So I thought, and consequently you are not responsible for your contracts, or can't be held responsible in law. Don't that make things a little inconvenient?"

"I can't see that it does, sir. You will have the benefit that will be good for all the lawful charges against it, whether I am or not."

"Just so. I see that you have a head for business, and that was what I wanted to know. I would hate to have dealings with a fool. I will set a big force at work to roll in the salt, and you can come here in the morning for your papers."

This was quite satisfactory, and Sam asked to be directed to a quiet and decent boarding-house, not far from the levee.

Mr. Prole wrote an address on a card, and offered to send a boy to guide his young customer.

"That won't be necessary," said the tug captain. "I am going that way, and will be glad to show him."

Sam Spence and Ben Frossman went down to the landing, the former to put his clothes in a hand-bag, and the latter to give directions to the crew of his tug.

Then they crossed the levee and went into town together, Sam feeling much like a capitalist since he had begun to comprehend the rise in salt.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ADVENTURE AND NEW FRIENDS.

Sam Spence was not at all inclined to be talkative as he walked into the city.

There was so much to look at that he wanted to use his eyes, rather than his tongue.

Wheeling was the largest city he had yet seen, and in New Orleans, even in the old-fashioned business blocks, and in the quiet residence portion of the American quarter, there was much that was strange and wonderful to him.

But the captain of the tug was more than talkative—he was inquisitive, and unpleasantly so.

He poked the lad with questions concerning his father, his family, his voyage, his feelings and opinions, and all sorts of relevant and irrelevant matters, until Sam felt as if a badgered witness might feel under the cross examination of a sharp attorney, and at last his patience was exhausted.

"The fact is, Mr. Frossman," said he, "that I have told all I have to tell about my voyage and everything else, and you have heard it. I don't want to be impolite, but must ask you to let up on your questions. I am for getting information just now, instead of giving it."

"Your head is solid," remarked Frossman with a laugh. "I like to hear you talk that way, because it shows that you're the right stuff, and you'll have to be the right stuff to get along here these times."

"I reckon I will worry through," replied Sam.

"Looks like it. Now, Mr. Spence, if you will take my advice, you won't go to that boarding-house which Prole recommended."

"Why so? Isn't it a good one?"

"Good enough, I suppose, as boarding-houses go. But you can't be a bit private in a boarding-house. The people are always so inquisitive. The best thing for you would be a nice little hotel, like the one I am stopping at. It is called the Rainbow, and is only a few doors out of Canal street. It is right lively down there, and in the hotel people come and go, and nobody asks any questions."

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Frossman; but I don't care to be in a lively place. I will try the boarding-house, and if I don't like it, or if the people bother me, I will look you up."

"All right, my lad. I was only advising you as a friend. Here is the Rainbow's card, and if you want a true friend, just ask there for Ben Frossman. Here is the place you are looking for, and it seems to be a decent sort of a house."

"I reckon it is all right."

"One other p'int, friend Spence. If the people there are inquisitive, as they are apt to be, you had better not let them know that you are a Yankee. Just tell them you're from Natchez, or Vicksburg, or Memphis, or anywhere along the lower river."

Still the tug captain's advice did not suit Sam.

"I think I know how to keep my tongue in my truth," said he, "but when I say anything, I am likely to speak the truth. I don't think that lying pays, and I believe I would
Sam Spence, the Broadhorn Boy.

rather stand the trouble that comes, than lie out of it."

"I wouldn't call that a lie, young fellow. But I can only give you the advice of a true friend. Good-day, and good luck to you!"
The house did seem to be a decent and respectable one, as well as quiet and pleasant, and Sam Spence went in after the tug captain left him.
He found the interior to correspond well with the exterior, and that Mrs. Fassett, the landlady, was also quiet and pleasant.
His appearance did not recommend him, as he was brown, and rough, and countrified, and his hand-bag was anything but stylish.
But he was well received when he mentioned Mr. Prole's name, and was given a nice room, and was requested to make himself at home.
He got from Mrs. Fassett the direction of some clothing stores, and sailled out, taking his bearings by the sun, as well as by the names of the streets.
His buckskin belt was well filled with money, as his expenses had been very light as yet, and it seemed right that he should dress nicely, and look like other people.
When he returned to the boarding-house he was a different young man to look at, as he was fully stylishly arrayed from top to toe, and the finishing touches to his appearance had been added by the deft hands of a barber.
Mrs. Fassett was both surprised and pleased, and evidently regarded her new boarder as a bright and handsome young fellow.
At tea he was introduced to a miscellaneous assortment of boarders, among whom were the usual young physician, a lieutenant of the new Confederate army, who was very proud of his uniform, and a very pretty, black-eyed girl of about his own age, who seemed to be willing to transfer her smiles from the lieutenant to the new arrivals, who was named to him as Miss Nettie Dibble.
They looked at Sam Spence curiously, and he blushed as he dropped into his seat, not being accustomed to that sort of thing.
A few efforts were made to draw him out; but they failed.
It might be that his liberty, if not his life, depended upon a discreet use of his tongue, and he was determined to guard that "unruly member."
As he had merely informed Mrs. Fassett that he was from "up the river," and as she had so announced him to the company, his reticence was taken for the bashfulness of a countryman.
It did not lessen his value in the sight of Miss Nettie Dibble, who "made eyes" at him during the meal so evidently that she might be supposed to intend to "cultivate" him thereafter.
If that was her intention, she had no chance to carry it out just then.
Sam slipped off to his room, and in the early evening sauntered out to look at the city.
He did not care to "see the sights" until he was more sure of his footing; but he wanted to become gradually acquainted with New Orleans, and to get accustomed to going about.
It was a quiet street; he saw a young lady walking just ahead of him, and behind her a man in a gray uniform, who was evidently trying to overtake her.

He succeeded in doing so, and spoke to her; but she repulsed him, and hurried on.
The man hurried after her, and Sam Spence also quickened his steps, until he was near enough to hear what was said.
"Leave me alone!" exclaimed the girl. "I don't know you—I don't want to know you. You have no right to speak to me!"
"Can't do it, sweetness," replied the man.
"Positively can't do it. You are too pretty to be going about here alone."
He put his hand on her shoulder to detain her, and she uttered a cry.
A few rapid steps brought Sam up to them.
"Leave that lady alone!" he ordered, as he seized her tormentor by the collar and jerked him away.
The supposed soldier tore himself loose, and sprung at his young antagonist.
But Sam's muscles had been toughened by his life in western Virginia, and by his hard work on the broadhorn; and a straight-out blow of his fist sent the man to the pavement.
He picked himself up, and drew a bayonet from a sheath at his side.
Sam faced him with a loaded revolver, and he quailed.
"Get away from here now," ordered the lad, "or I will blow the top of your head off quicker than you can wink."
He looked as if he would perform his threat, and the baffled rowdy sneaked away.
The young lady had stood her ground when she perceived that she had such a resolute protector, and she smilingly held out her hand to Sam as her tormentor passed out of sight.
The lad saw that she was young and pretty, and he blushed when she thanked him.
"I don't need any thanks," he answered. "I am glad that I was of some use to you."
"But I feel like thanking you. You have done me a great service. I must confess that I was terribly afraid of that man."
"He won't be likely to bother you any more, miss; but it don't seem to be safe for you to be going about here alone, and I will see you home if you are willing!"
"Thank you, sir. My home is only a little distance from here, but I will be pleased to have your company."
It was doubtless fully as pleasant to Sam Spence as it was to his companion.
She was so amiable as well as pretty, that her kindly ways soon put him at his ease and made him feel quite like an old friend.
She did not question him concerning himself, and had only learned that he was a stranger in the city, when they reached her home, a small but very neat house.
"I must say good evening, then," he remarked.
"Indeed, you must not!" she eagerly replied.
"You must come in, if it is only for a few minutes. My aunt and cousin will want to thank you for the service you have done me."
"I don't deserve any thanks."
"You must let them look at you, anyhow. Indeed, you must come in—please, do."
The lad could not resist the persuasion of her tones and the pleading of her eyes, and he went in.
He was ushered into a cozy and homelike sitting-room, where he found a fine-looking and motherly old lady, with a young man who bore a striking resemblance to her. They stared when Sam entered; but his companion set matters right at once by telling of her adventure and the assistance she had received, and the lad was highly praised and most cordially welcomed.

Introductions followed.

The old lady was Mrs. Challis, a widow; the young man was her son, George Challis, and the young lady was their niece and cousin, Lucy Trimble, a Kentucky girl, who had been visiting them, and whose return to her parents had been interrupted by the breaking out of the war.

Sam Spence was soon made to feel at home, and he was sure that he had never met such nice and friendly people.

"So you are from the Kanawha country," said George Challis. "How long have you been here?"

"Not a day yet," answered Sam. "I got in this morning, with a big broadhorn and a load of salt."

"Indeed! You surprise me. I supposed that everything was shut off. How did you come through?"

The lad was glad to find somebody in whom he could confide, and glad of a chance to talk freely. So he told his story, and received plenty of praise and sympathy from his new friends.

After spending two very pleasant hours with them he went away with the promise to come back to dinner the next day, and George Challis accompanied him part of the way to his boarding-house.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRUE FRIEND.

The Rainbow, to which Sam Spence had been invited by the tug-boat captain, was not much of a hotel. It was a little one, as Frossman had said, but a decent one to look at, and was situated on a street that ran back to Canal street, toward the upper end of that thoroughfare. Its main attraction was found in the fact that it was but a few doors from Canal street.

Though it had a dozen or more rooms, its proprietor depended for patronage upon his bar, rather than upon his hotel accommodations.

At the rear of the bar was a small room shut off from the rest of the floor. It was furnished with a round table and several chairs, and was intended for the convenience of card-players.

In this room, the night when Sam Spence was enjoying himself with the Challises and Lucy Trimble, three men were seated, one of whom was Ben Frossman. One of the others was Max Marks, a middle-aged man with a decidedly Jewish cast of countenance.

The third was Captain Caffery, whose face was just as decidedly Irish, and who was gorgeous in a new Confederate uniform.

They were not playing cards, though there was a pack on the table, but were engaged in earnest conversation, which was sidetracked by glasses of liquor that were occasionally replenished by the order of one or the other.

"I tell you, fellers," the tug-boat captain was saying, "there's a pile to be made out of that young chap, if we can only git at him right.

"That's the point, my lad," remarked the Jew. "The thing is to go to work the right way. What sort of a chap is he, now?"

"Right smart and bright, with a will and a way of his own, and well able to take care of himself if he wasn't green."

"He don't seem to be so sumping green, either, as he has sense enough to hold on to his salt. If we could get him down here we might do something with him. Do you think we could ring him into a game?"

"No, unless we could get him off his head. He's a country boy, and up country at that. I tried to get him to come here, but he held off. I may work it yet, and if I can, that would give us a better chance."

"You say the b'ye is a Yank," remarked Captain Caffery. "Sure an' that's a good p'int. Can't we come the Confederate over him?"

"What do you mean?" asked Frossman.

"Arrist him an' lock him up, all to ourselves. Sure it's nobody w'd be mane enough to take the part of a Yank."

"I don't know about that, Dennis. The Confederate dodge might get us mixed up with some sort of authorities, and we must steer clear of them if we can. We may have to try it, but it won't do just yet."

"If ye could git him to take a cruise in the tug, now, we might stow him away in Algiers, or somewhere up the coast, and handle him as we pleased."

"That's not a bad notion, captain, if we could git him to go, and it is worth remembering."

"How about women?" queried Max Marks.

"He is a boy, you say, but quite a sizable lad, as I judge. At his age a smart girl can do almost anything with a young chap like that, if she goes to work the right way."

"I reckon he is a little too sharp and smart to run after women," answered Frossman.

"They might run after him, then. Where is he stopping?"

"At Mrs. Fassett's boarding-house, and here's the address."

As the Jew read the address a crafty smile lighted up his coarse features.

"This is the devil's own luck," he said. "Old Prole has played right into our hands by sending him there. It is a nice, genteel place; but one of the boarders is a girl I know, named Nettie Dibble. She is a sort of a queer duck, but has sense enough to keep shadily, and I have a pretty tight hold on her. I will have a talk with her in the morning and will put her on the track of the young chap, so that she can help us when we make up our minds what we mean to do. If any woman can work him into our hands, she is the one who can play the game."

"That's a good scheme, Max," said the tug-boat captain. "But you must make her go
easy at the start, so as not to frighten him. We
will have to be rough enough after we get hold
of him, and must be sorrier tender at the start.”

“Nettie will be as tender as a sucking angel.
By the way, Frossman, when is the young chap
to get his money?”

“Aint now you’re talkin’ sense. That’s what
the matter is. He won’t git his money until he
sells his salt, and he won’t be in a hurry to sell
it, and that’s why we must rough in. But he
will get the storage receipt in the morning, and
we must go for it. We must make him assign it
to one of us, so that we can sell the salt and get
the money. Then we will clear out and he will
be free to go where he pleases.”

That was the best thing to do, Marks declared,
and Nettie Dibble was the very girl to lead the
victim into the hands of the conspirators, and
he would square the business with her in the
morning.

“Well, gentlemen,” said Captain Caffery, “as
all’s settled that can be settled at prinsent, let’s fill
the glasses and have a little game among our-
selves.”

The next morning, when Sam Spence had
gone to the salt warehouse, Nettie Dibble re-
ceived a visit from Max Marks.

She met him graciously; but her manner
showed that she felt a certain restraint in his
presence.

“You have a new boarder here, Nettie,” he
said.

“Yes, a young fellow from up the river.”

“What do you think of him?”

“I have seen him only twice and at meals.
He seems to be a nice sort of boy, rather bash-
ful and countrified.”

Perhaps he is not as bashful as he looks.
He may be shy and careful, because he has
something on his mind, you know.”

“What do you know about him, Max?”

“I know that there is money in him, and I
and some friends of mine want to get at it. I
shall want you to help us play the game.”

“What am I to do?”

“You are to get on the soft side of him, as
you can do easy enough if you want to, and
manage him so that we can get hold of him.”

“And what then?”

“We will squeeze a little cash out of him—
that’s all.”

A troubled look came into the girl’s face, and
she pressed her lips together.

“I won’t do anything to hurt that young
fellow, Max Marks,” she said. “I won’t do
it.”

“I hope, Nettie, that you haven’t been fall-
ing in love, and with a mere boy.”

“I think I ought to be beyond that sort of
thing,” she answered, with a blush.

“You ought to be, sure enough, but perhaps
you ain’t. Nobody said anything about hurting
the young chap, Nettie, and we don’t want to
hurt him. We only want to get hold of some
of that money, the easiest way possible, and
you’ve got to help us in that. You know that
I know about your doings when you were in
Heller & Caseman’s store, and how you laid
aside a neat little pile for hard times. You
don’t want to have a row with me, I hope.”

“No. Will you promise me, Max, that you
won’t harm him, except about money?”

“Do you think we mean to cut his throat, or
pitch him into the river? I am no such a fool
as that. I tell you that we won’t hurt him, and
and that ought to be enough.”

“I will do what I can, then, though I don’t
like to.”

“All you will have to do will be to get on the
soft side of him, so that you can lead him
about a little, and then I will tell you which
way to pull.”

CHAPTER VI.
A CONFIDENTIAL FRIEND.

It has been said that Sam Spence had gone to
the salt warehouse when Max Marks called on
Nettie Dibble.

He found his salt all safely stored, and Mr.
Prole handed him his warehouse receipt.

“I will sell the broadhorn for you if you wish,” said that gentleman. “It will bring a
fair price as old lumber; but that is all it is
good for.”

Sam assented to this, and went to the flatboat
to pack his father’s effects and the remainder of
his own, which he directed to be sent to his
boarding-house.

“As for the salt,” said the warehouseman,
“you need not be in a hurry to sell it. I offered
you as much as I was able to pay for it in cash;
but I don’t mind admitting that it is worth a
good deal more. I suppose you have found
that out by this time. If not, you will soon get
your eyes open. Hold on to it, my lad, and
when you want advice I can promise you an
honest opinion.”

Sam thanked him.

“You must be careful of that receipt,” he
continued. “It represents quite a pile of
money, and it would be a bad piece of business
if you should lose it.”

Sam promised to take care of it, and hastened
to reach Mrs. Challis’s house in time for dinner.
He was expected there, and was warmly wel-
comed.

At dinner the conversation naturally drifted
into politics, and that all-absorbing subject, the
war.

“As you have come from so far up the river,”
said George Challis, “it is possible that you are
what the people here call a Yankee—that is, in
favor of the Union.”

The lad thought it necessary only to say that
he was too young to be a politician.

“But this matter has passed out of politics,”
replied George. “The war has become a very
serious fact and everybody must have an
opinion. I am quite willing, as we hold you to be
a special friend, that you should know that I
am a Union man. We are all for the Union in
this house, though we make no noise about it.
My cousin Lucy’s father is a strong Union man,
and we are afraid that his opinions are making
trouble for him in Kentucky.”

“I suppose I am on the Union side of course,”
answered Sam. “I can’t get this war into my
head yet. I don’t see why they should fight,
but I know it would never do to break up the
Government.”
That is fair enough, my friend, and it is safe ground to stand on."

The ice being thus broken Sam Spence told his friends of Ben Frossman's advice that he should lie about his home, and claim to have come from one of the lower river towns.

"I think you did well not to follow that advice," said young Challis. "Lies are apt to bring people into trouble. If you tell on you may have to tell a dozen more to back it up; besides, it isn't worth while. I believe a Union man to be about as safe here as he would be at the North, if he has sense enough to keep from making a fuss about his sympathies. If I were one of the other kind and should happen to find myself stranded in the North, I would shape my course for New York or Boston. If they should begin drafting people into the army here, I might have to look out for myself; but I hope the war will be over before it comes to that."

After dinner the lad showed his warehouse receipt, and spoke of the care he must take of it, lest he should lose it.

He was not willing to leave it at his boarding-house or to carry it around in his pocket, and wanted to know whether it would be best to deposit it in a bank or some such institution for safe keeping.

"Of course you must take care of it," replied George Challis. "You might leave it here, but then you would not have it with you if you saw a chance to make a good sale of the salt. It would be best to carry it on your person, if you could do so safely."

"Let me manage that," said the old lady. "If our young friend will give me his vêt, I will sew in the paper so as to hide it and keep it securely. Then he need have no fear that it will be stolen, unless the thieves should strip him of his clothes."

Mrs. Challis took the vest and soon finished the job, and her work was quite satisfactory."

Before Sam Spence left his kind friends Lucy Trimble had an opinion to express, which was quite to the point.

"It is quite true," she said, "that people in boarding-houses are very inquisitive, and that they will find out all about a person's affairs if they can. I would not recommend a boarding-house, under the circumstances; but I think it would be well for Mr. Spence to make a change. Auntie, why should you not invite him to stay with us?"

"A capital idea, Lucy," chimed in George.

"It would give me the greatest pleasure to do so," said Mrs. Challis, "if I thought the invitation would not be intrusive."

Sam Spence was overjoyed. He declared that the invitation had been given and there was no backing out of it. He would accept it most thankfully, and would come and make his home with his new friends as soon as his week was up at Mrs. Fassett's, if not sooner.

He took tea at the boarding-house, where his absence from the dinner-table was commented on, and a pretty general spirit of inquisitiveness was manifested.

From this he escaped as soon as possible, and went up to his room, but found it lonesome there, and after a while he went down to the parlor.

The parlor happened to be empty, and the lad did not find much pleasure in communing with his own thoughts.

He had enjoyed himself so much with his friends, the Challises, that absence from them quite upset him, and he would have packed up and settled himself upon them at once, if it had appeared to be the proper thing to do.

It seemed to him just then that he was alone in the world, and one gloomy meditation led to another, until he fell into a severe fit of the blues.

From this he was rescued by the entry of Nettie Dibble.

She had not been among the inquisitive ones at the tea-table, but had given him an occasional sympathetic glance, and had now and then spoken a word that had turned the course of the talk.

Therefore she was welcome when she came into the parlor, and it was not long before she succeeded in establishing rather confident relations with the lad.

It must be said for Nettie that she had a gentle voice and a very winning way, and for her age she was well supplied with tact.

Her story as she told it to Sam Spence was well calculated to excite his sympathy and gain his confidence.

She was an orphan, as he was, and quite alone in the world; but she had inherited a little property that was enough to support her in a modest way.

But she sorely felt the need of friends in that great city, and knew absolutely not one person whom she really cared for or in whom she could trust.

It is no wonder that such a story, told with her soft voice and in her gentle manner, moved the sympathetic boy almost to tears.

He did not know that in all large cities there are many so-called "miscellaneous women," who make it the business of their lives to set traps for the unwary.

He would have resented it as an insult to both, if any person had told him that this girl was setting a trap for him.

It was not long before he opened his heart to her, as she seemed to have opened hers to him.

He told her of his home, of his voyage, of the death of his father, of all his trouble on the trip, of his safe arrival in New Orleans, and of his pile of salt in the warehouse that was equal to a pile of gold.

He told her of his adventure with Lucy Trimble, of the Challises, and their home, and of his intention to take up his residence with them.

He did not tell her of the warehouse receipt that was sewed in his vest.

Simply because he did not think of that.

His confidences with Nettie Dibble continued until a pretty late hour, and when he went upstairs to bed he was by no means sure that he wanted to leave the boarding-house and go to live with the Challises.
CHAPTER VII.

CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

DURING last two days that followed her first attempt Nettie Dibble cultivated the acquaintance of Sam Spence so assiduously and effectively that she was able to report to Max Marks that she “had him where she wanted him,” meaning thereby that she felt able to lead him into any trap that might be set for him.

His other friends, the Challises, in the mean while saw but little of him, and wondered what was the matter with him.

He called upon them once, on the second day after Nettie Dibble had taken him in, and promised to spend the evening with them, but failed to keep his appointment.

The reason was that the siren of the boarding-house had engaged him to go out with her that evening, for the purpose of a long walk that might be called an expedition.

“I must go to visit a sick friend,” she said.

“It is my old nurse, whom I love so dearly, and she has sent me word that she is very ill and wants me to come to her as soon as possible. Of course I shall be glad to do all I can for the poor old soul. But she lives near the edge of the city, in such a lonesome and out-of-the-way place that I would be afraid to go there alone, especially at night.”

“Suppose I go with you,” suggested Sam.

“It would be right into my hand. That is—I mean to say—it would be so kind of you. But I am afraid it would trouble you too much, or would take you away from some of your other friends.”

He declared that he would be very glad to accompany her, and she showed that she was quite as glad to accept his offer.

He wrote a note of apology to Mrs. Challis, which Nettie promised to send for him by a messenger.

She did not send it, however.

On the contrary she hastened to Max Marks, and informed him of the projected expedition, so that he and his friends could make their arrangements accordingly.

The Jew had already called at Mr. Prole’s salt warehouse, as part of the plot of the conspirators would have to be worked up in that quarter.

He inquired for Sam Spence, and professed to be greatly disappointed at not finding him at the warehouse.

“I expected to meet the young fellow here,” he said. “I have been bargaining with him for his salt, and have as good as bought it. The contract will be completed as soon as I find him, and you may expect me here to-morrow morning with an order for the lot.”

“His indorsement on the warehouse receipt is what you will need to bring,” replied Mr. Prole.

“All right; that is what I will bring.”

Sam Spence and Nettie Dibble were to set out from the boarding-house directly after tea; but the girl was detained, as she said, by certain duties of wardrobe and other preparations, so that it was after dark when they got under way.

Then they had a long distance to travel, and considerable time was occupied by the journey.

The place to which they were going was an out-of-the-way place, as the girl had said, and it appeared to Sam to be quite the proper thing that she should take an escort.

It was near the edge of the city, where there were but a few small dwellings, mingled with shanties and dilapidated rockeries.

The night was very dark, and lights were few and far between.

As they were passing a small and lonesome building, three men darted out from the shadow, and seized the lad.

The attack was so unexpected and so violent that he could neither resist nor make an outcry.

He was gagged and hurried into the house before he had time to think.

But he noticed that Nettie Dibble ran away without showing any special sign of fright, and that no person started to run after her.

This led him to suspect that he had been trapped, and his suspicions very soon became a certainty.

The room into which he was taken could suggest nothing but the interior of a trap.

It was on the ground-floor—in fact, it was about all there was of the house—and was small and dingy and dirty, with the appearance of not having been inhabited in a long time.

There were two windows, one at the side and one at the front; but they were solidly boarded up. The only furniture was a mattress spread on the floor, a small table, and two cheap chairs. On the table was a small coal oil lamp, which gave a dim but not a religious light.

The three men who had brought him in there were not roughs in appearance, but were all securely masked.

This was enough. Sam was convinced that he had been trapped, and he could make a fair guess at the object of his capture.

Doubtless it was connected with his cargo of salt and the money that its sale might produce.

His captors meant to get possession of his property; but how they expected to plunder him he could not guess. He was quite sure that the task would give them some trouble.

What worried him the most was the belief that he had been led into the trap by Nettie Dibble.

That lonely orphan girl had so entirely won his confidence; and he had sympathized with her so deeply, that it hurt him to feel that she was only an artful minx who had cultivated him for the purpose of betraying him. Yet everything pointed that way. Her easy escape, and the evident preparations that had been made for his reception, proved that the whole affair had been planned, and of course she was one of the conspirators.

The three men did not leave him in any doubt as to their intentions.

By the light of the oil lamp they searched him thoroughly, turning all his pockets inside out, and carefully examining his pocket-book.
They found nothing but a little money and the usual outfit of a boy of his age.
He had taken the precaution to leave his belt, with the gold it contained, in the possession of Mr. Prole, whom he believed to be an honest and responsible man.
Even if it had been on his person it may be doubted whether his captors would have taken it. They were after bigger game.
They restored his bits of property to his pockets, and settled down solidly to business.
Thus far they had not spoken, except to whisper among themselves.
One of them seated himself, and addressed the lad in a voice which Sam could not remember having heard before, though he believed that he would know it if he should ever hear it elsewhere. The tone was not exactly German, but had a foreign twang; in fact it was a Jewish tone.
"Now, young chap," said he, "we want that warehouse receipt of yours."
"What warehouse receipt?" innocently answered Sam.
"Mr. Prole's receipt for your salt in his warehouse."
"You see that I haven't got anything of the kind about me."
"So it seems; but it is somewhere. We want it, and we mean to get it. That is what we have brought you here for, and you must tell us where it is, and give us an order for it, so that we can get it."
"I can't see what good it would do you," replied the lad. "That receipt is of no use to anybody but me."
"We will make it of use to us. All we will need is your indorsement, and that you will give us."
"Suppose I won't do anything of the sort?"
"Oh, but you will. You will have to. I tell you, young chap, we mean business. There ain't a bit of foolishness about this thing. We mean that you shall indorse that receipt, and that we shall get the salt. When that business is settled, you can go where you please, without having been harmed at all. If you hold back, and try to give us trouble, you will have a good deal harder time, I should say, than you have ever thought of having in this world. But you can bet your sweet life that we mean to settle that salt business to suit ourselves. Now, young chap, tell me where that receipt is."
Sam Spence hesitated, as well he might.
The situation was indeed a serious one. There could be no doubt the men intended to do precisely what their spokesman said that they would do, and they appeared to be able to execute their threats. Surely Sam Spence could do nothing to hinder them.
Yet he did not for a moment contemplate the possibility of parting with his property, and had not the faintest idea of giving the scoundrels any hold upon it. They might do their worst, but he could stick to his salt.
There was nothing the lad could oppose to their evil designs but dogged obstinacy. He had plenty of that, though, and was not afraid to use it. They could not touch the salt without his permission, and he did not propose to become their accomplice in the crime of robbing himself.
He did not fear that they would proceed to extremities at once, and something might be done in the way of gaining time.
He must say something about the warehouse receipt; but what should he say?
Not the truth, of course—anything but that.
He might send them to Mrs. Challas's house, with such an order as would cause George Challas to suspect something wrong, and thus bring him to the rescue.
But George might not be there, or might misunderstand the matter, and he did not wish to needlessly alarm his friends or get them into trouble.
His interlocutor noticed his hesitation, and addressed him sharply.
"Speak up, young chap. Where is the receipt?"
"I left it at my boarding-house," answered Sam.
"Very careless of you. Whereabouts at your boarding-house?"
"In my room, of course. I will go there with you and get it if you want me to."
"Oh, no. What do you take us for? We ain't quite so soft as that. You don't get out of here until the salt business is settled. In what part of your room did you leave the paper, sonny?"
"In my hand-bag, on the floor in a corner. Do you want me to give you an order?"
"We won't trouble you for that. If it is in your boarding-house I can find it. Keep him safe, boys, until I come back. If he has lied to us, we will make him sorry for it."
The man with the Jewish cast of conversation hastily left the room, and left the proprietor of the salt in charge of his two comrades.

CHAPTER VIII.
A VERY UNPLEASANT PROSPECT.
Sam Spence did not feel a bit comfortable when he was shut up in the lonely house with the two conspirators.
The threat which the third man had discharged as he went away was not calculated to make a pleasant impression upon him.
If he had lied to them, he was to be made to suffer for it. He had lied, and consequently he would be made to suffer. The lie would soon be discovered, and the suffering must soon begin. There was nothing cheering in such a prospect as that.
Of course he could at any time put them in a better humor by ripping open his vest and producing the precious paper; but he had not the remotest idea of giving up in that style.
The suffering had to be felt to be appreciated, and he was not yet afraid of it.
In the fact that no order was required for getting the paper from his boarding-house he saw a further proof of Nettie Dibble's connection with the conspiracy. She would of course be employed to search his room, and might be expected to search thoroughly.
The two men who had been left with him were very silent and uncommunicative.
They spoke to each other occasionally in
whispers, but showed no inclination to enter into a conversation with Sam. He tried to draw them out, but with poor success. Indeed, if that would have nothing at all to say to him, and the other, who was evidently an Irishman, answered him very shortly.

It might be supposed that time would pass slowly with the lad under these circumstances; but, as a matter of fact, it moved very swiftly. Even now, before length of distance to Mrs. Fassett's boarding-house, and that considerable time must be occupied in making the journey; but the man who had gone to seek the warehouse receipt would return, and then the suffering would begin. The more he thought of that, the faster time flew.

Flying time brought the searcher back all too quickly, and as soon as he entered the door the wrath in his face told Sam all he wanted to know.

The suffering was surely about to begin.

"Have you got it, Max?" asked one of the others—not the Irishman.

"No," angrily replied Max Marks. "The young scamp told us a flat-footed lie. There was not a sign of any paper in that old trap of his. He has given me a long tramp for nothing; but I will make him pay for it with his hide."

It must be confessed that Sam was a little flustered, if not actually frightened. It seemed that the suffering was about to begin.

But it was possible to save off the evil hour a little longer. A stout lie, well stuck to, might answer the purpose, and Sam Spence was equal to the emergency.

"That comes of not taking me along," said he. "I could have got it for you easy enough."

"I don't believe a word you say," answered Marks. "You said it was in your satchel."

"So it was. That's where I left it."

"No such thing. I searched that satchel carefully, and there wasn't a bit of paper in it."

"Did you look in the lining?"

"No. Why should I look in the lining?"

"I cut a slit in the lining, and stuffed the paper in there to hide it."

"Why didn't you tell me that before?"

"I was so flurried that I scarcely knew what I was saying. You folks had nearly scared the life out of me."

"You didn't seem to be badly scared. It may be that you are speaking the truth now, and I will give you another chance. I will go back and get that bag."

"I will go with you, Max," said one of the other men. "There is a little matter that I want to look after out in town."

"Hello, mister!" exclaimed Sam, who thought he recognized the voice. "I reckon I know you. You are Ben Frossman, the tug-boat captain."

"It might be just as well for you," replied Frossman, "if you hadn't found that out, or had kept the find to yourself. You ain't quite as sharp as you think you are. What have you got in that bundle, Max?"

"Something that will keep that young chap safe, in the event of accidents."

Marks began to untie the bundle, and Sam watched the operation with curiosity and apprehension.

"What was in the bundle—handcuffs—ropes—or what?"

It proved to be a partial suit of Confederate gray, the uniform of a rebel soldier.

"How was that going to keep him safe, in the event of accidents?"

The mystery was speedily explained to him.

"Strip off, young chap, and put on these duds!" ordered the Jew.

"What for?" inquired Sam.

"Because I tell you to. Be quick about it, or we will strip you in a way you won't like."

This was evidently an order that had to be obeyed, and the lad proceeded with great reluctance to divest himself of his clothes and put on the rather dirty uniform.

It was not without a suspicion of disagreeable vermin that he did so; but he was chiefly oppressed by the thought that his vest, in which was his warehouse receipt, was about to pass out of his possession.

His plunderers would have the paper, they coveted, and yet they would not have it.

It was something like the story of the farmer whose pall was at the bottom of the well where he could not get at it; but it was not lost, as he knew where it was.

The rascals would have the paper but would be quite unaware of that valuable fact.

But it would be lost to him, and he was mournful indeed as they took his clothes from him.

"What are you going to do with them, Max?" asked the tugboat captain, as the Jew rolled up the nice garments.

"I mean to take them with me. I have a friend who will be glad to jump into this suit, now, young chap, you are fixed. If you should happen to get out of this house by any sort of an accident, you would at once be picked up as a deserter, and would be shot or put at hard labor with a ball and chain."

"He won't get away, Max. Don't you think you can take care of this young cuss, Cap?"

"Aye course I can," replied Captain Caffery. "Divil a fut will he stir out of this house. But yez must hurry back, b'yes, and bring some whisky."

Marks and Frossman left the house with the bundle, and Sam Spence dropped upon a chair, feeling that his case was a desperate one.

He had only one guard left; but that one was as good, or as bad, as a dozen.

There was clearly no chance for escape, and when the searchers returned without the warehouse receipt what would he do then?

He could no longer expect to pacify them by the production of the paper, and could only fall back upon the declaration that his hand-bag had been plundered. But they would no longer believe any of his inventions.

It was painfully apparent that the period of suffering could not be much longer delayed.

As for getting any information from the Irishman, that was out of the question.
Unlike most of his race, he was not a bit talkative. When he did speak, his threats and his promises of suffering made the lad wish that he had not been stirred up.

Captain Caffery, however, was not unwilling to afford himself as much consolation as the circumstances would allow, and he found it in a pocket-flask.

He had told the “byes” to hurry back and bring some whisky; but he was not poorly provided with that means of comfort, and in his lonely and tiresome watch he drew upon it freely.

After the departure of Froesman and the Jew he frequently resorted to his flask as a relief from the increasing tedium of his vigil, and took such liberal draughts that the supply soon began to run short.

This caused him to sigh for the return of the “byes” with more whisky.

It also caused him to become so drowsy that he had great difficulty in keeping his eyes open.

There was no reason why he should not snatch a few winks of sleep.

He was doing so when he took all proper precautions for the security of the captive.

He drew the mattress across the doorway and took out the key of the door and put it in his pocket.

Then he informed Sam Spence of his intention.

“’I’m goin’ to try to git a bit of sleep, you young scalawag,” said he. “But I always sleep wid wan eye open, and yez needn’t think yez can git out o’ this, beca’s I’ve got the key av the dure in me pocket, and the house is as safe as a jail, begorra. Take it alsy, then, sonny, till the byes come back.”

He stretched himself out on the mattress and was soon sound asleep.

It was no one-eye-open slumber either, as both of his eyes were tightly closed and his heavy snore told how completely he had passed under the rule of Morpheus.

But his temporary retirement did not seem to brighten the situation at all for Sam Spence.

There was no getting at the door without stepping over his body, and the key was in his pocket.

But Sam was one of the never-say-die sort of young fellows, and he was not going to let the occasion pass without making an effort for freedom.

He slipped off his shoes and examined the premises.

There was a door at the other end of the room; but it was locked, and the key was gone.

He tried the windows, and perceived that they had been boarded up solidly. If there had been any tools to work with, he could not have broken his way out without arousing the Irishman.

If he could get the upper hand of Captain Caffery his way to escape would be clear; but he knew that he was nothing like a match for the stout soldier.

His pistol had been taken from him, or he believed that he could have had the nerve to shoot the sleeping guard.

He looked around for a weapon, but could see none except the coal-oil lamp.

It was possible that he might brain the Irishman with that, or stun him until he could get the key and open the door.

He had about made up his mind to try this desperate experiment, when he heard a slight but unusual noise.

It sounded like the careful turning of a key in a lock.

He looked toward the rear end of the room, and saw the door open slightly and so softly that his ear would not have told him that it was opened.

It opened a little wider, and a woman’s head was thrust in.

As she peered into the room, he recognized the face, to his intense surprise, as that of Nettie Dibble.

She opened the door wider, and made a sign for silence as she took a step in.

Then she beckoned to him.

The astonished lad stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once.

He picked up his shoes, and silently glided to the open door, where the girl stood aside to let him pass.

Then she closed the door behind them both, locked it carefully, and put the key in her pocket.

He found himself outside of the house, under the starlit sky, and free!

CHAPTER IX.

NETTIE DIBBLE’S REPENTANCE.

Nettie Dibble took the hand of the rescued captive, and hurried him away.

He was overjoyed at having so unexpectedly obtained his freedom, but was yet more surprised at the manner in which it had come to him.

There could scarcely be a doubt that it was this girl who had led him into the trap, and how was it that she had come forward to release him from it?

It was surely enough to know just then that he was free and no longer in danger of the suffering that had been promised him; yet he was nearly wild to ask questions, and learn how it came about.

But the girl gave him no chance to do so. She led him across, through a collection of shanties, to another nearly-vacant street, and then hurried him down toward the more thickly-settled part of the city.

It was not until she was compelled to halt and get her breath, that he was able to speak to her.

Then he tried to make up for lost time.

“I don’t understand this at all, Nettie. I am ever so much obliged to you; but I wish you would tell me how and why you got me out of that place.”

“Not just now. Please don’t ask questions yet. Let us get further away from that place. That man might wake up and follow us.”

“I think he is not sober enough to do much in that line,” replied Sam.

“But we need not run any more risks; come on.”

She walked forward rapidly, and soon turned
to the right, and then meandered among the
the main and side streets, until it was quite cer-
tain that any attempt to follow them must pro-
cceed upon mere guesswork.
Then she moderated her steps, and took a
long breath as a preparation for talk.
"Now, I will tell you all about it," said
she, "and I must make a confession which I
ought to make, and not much ashamed to
make. Did you have any idea that I had helped
to get you into trouble there?"
"Well—I may have thought—"
"Of course you did, and you were right. I
wish I could say that you were not. It was I
who led you to that place where those men
could easily get hold of you. I would never
have thought that I could be so mean and
wicked; but Max Marks made me do it. He
had a dead hold on me, you see. I needn't
tell you now what it was; but I was afraid of him.
He made me do it; but he promised me that you
should not be harmed, and but for that I would
never have consented. But when I saw them
pick you up and tie you, and take you in there,
I broke down, and felt that I had done an aw-
ful, awful thing."
The girl burst into tears, and Sam tried to
soothe her.
"Don't worry about that now," said he. "It
is all over, and you got me out of the scrape,
and I want to know how you did it."
"I was home at Mrs. Fassett's when Max
Marks came there and told me what he
wanted was in the satchel in your room, and that
I must take him up there and find it.
"Of course it was easy enough for me to get
in, and I took him up, and there was the satchel
on the floor.
"Marks rummaged it, and when he failed
to find what he wanted, he went into a fearful
fit of rage. Oh, he was terribly angry.
"He said that you had lied to him, and that
he would make you suffer for it. He swore,
Sam, that he would skin you alive.
"I reckon he would have come pretty nigh
doing it if I hadn't got away from there," re-
minded Sam.
"I told him that that wasn't according to
contract, as he had promised me that you
should not be harmed; but he laughed at me,
and said that he had got you safe, and meant
to play the game to suit himself, and didn't
care what I thought about it.
"I gave him a blessing, and he gave me a
setting down, and then he went away.
"As soon as he had gone I put on my things
and followed him; but I had to stop at another
place on the way, and did not reach that house
until just before he and another man came out.
"I kept out of their sight, and hung around
the house and listened.
"After awhile I heard the man who was left
in here with you speak of going to sleep, and I
waited patiently until he began to snore.
"Then I went around to the rear of the
house and listened there. I heard you try the
door, and after a little I opened it and let you
out. And oh, Sam, I am so very, very sorry
that I had anything to do with getting you
into such a scrape. I am afraid you can never
forgive me."
"I have forgiven you already," answered the
lad. "But I want to know how you happened
to have a key that would fit that door."
"That is where the fun comes in—as if there
could be any fun about such a shameful piece
of business. It was not all a lie that I told you
about my old nurse. I had an old nurse, though
she was not sick, and had not sent for me. It
happened that she used to live in the house
that you were taken to. I knew the house
as soon as I saw it. It happened, too,
that she had carried away the key of the
back door, and I remembered that. So, when I
followed Max Marks from Mrs. Fassett's, I
went first to Aunt Dinah's, and got the key,
and that is how I was able to let you out. And
here is where Aunt Dinah lives now, and we
will step in and rest a bit, if you are willing."
Sam could not help feeling a slight suspicion,
which he was ashamed to confess. Might this
not be another sort of a trap?
But that was not likely. The girl had released
him from a positive danger, and he ought to
trust her. Yet it was queer that she had a key
to fit that door, and it almost looked as if his
escape had been arranged as his capture had
been.

The two entered the neat little white-washed
house, and Nettie was warmly received by an
old colored woman, who asked her no questions
concerning her escort, or the reason of her
nocturnal wandering.

Doubtless she knew all about that, as she was
up and waiting for them at that very unusual
hour of the night.

She busied herself to make them comfortable,
and set before them some cake and a sweetish
wine which she called cordial.

Nettie parted freely of both; but her com-
panion could not be persuaded to touch either.

He was cultivating the virtue of suspicion.

But there was no trap that he could discover
at Aunt Dinah's house, where they rested
until daybreak, which had not been far away
when they stopped there.

Then they thought it would be proper to go
on, as the people at Mrs. Fassett's would be up
by the time they reached the boarding-house,
and Nettie bade her old nurse an affectionate
good-by.

"I must tell you, though, Nettie, that I am
not going to Mrs. Fassett's yet a while," said
Sam, as they picked their way over the broken
pavement.

"Why not?"

"Do you see this rag I am wearing? They
took away my clothes, and made me put on
this dirty uniform. That Jew told me that if I
should be caught out in these togs, I would be
picked up as a deserter."

"I don't believe that," she remarked.

"No more do I."

"He wanted to scare you. But your things
don't look a bit pretty, and perhaps you and
meeter make a change before you come to the
boarding-house. It is easy to get other clothes,
though."

"Not so very easy. I wouldn't like to go
into a clothing-store with these things on. Besides, I have no money."

"I think I can let you have what you need, Sam."

"Thankful, but I believe I had better go right on to Mrs. Challis's. Her son George is about my size, and he will lend me something to wear until I can get a new rig. Are you going back to the boarding-house, though?"

"Yes. Why shouldn't I, since you are all right?"

"Are you not afraid that the Jew will hunt you up, and come down on you like a thousand of brick?"

"Let him do his worst. I am not going to be afraid of him any more. But why should he come down on me? He can have no reason to suspect me of having had anything to do with turning you loose. The man we left there will wake up, or his friends will come and rouse him, and not one of them will be able to give the slightest guess how you got away. They will be as mad as hornets, and the mystery of the thing will make them ten times madder. Won't that be jolly?"

"Ever so much jollier than if he should wake and find me there."

At the boarding-house Sam took leave of his companion.

"Do you think you can ever forgive me?" she plaintively asked.

"I said that I had already forgiven you. Don't let that worry you. All's well that ends well."

CHAPTER X.

A FEW OF TROUBLES.

The Challises were early risers, and both George and his mother were up and about when Sam Spence reached the house.

They were surprised to see him there at that early hour, and vastly astonished at the appearance he presented.

"Where on earth did you come from, my dear boy, and where did you get those horrid clothes?" demanded Mrs. Challis.

"I will tell you all about it after a little," answered Sam. "It is a long story and a hard one. But I can't do anything until I get rid of what you rightly call these horrid clothes. Won't you lend me something to wear, George, until I can get a new rig?"

"Of course I will, and I think I can fit you pretty fairly, too. Come up-stairs."

The lad came down-stairs as soon as he had changed his clothes and washed and brushed himself, and his appearance was much better than it had been when he arrived.

He felt much better, too.

Breakfast was ready then, and Lucy Trimble was present, and all were eager to know what had happened to him.

"Yes, I was glad to get rid of that old uniform," he said when he was congratulated on his improved appearance. "She offered to lend me money for a new suit; but I preferred to come here."

"Oh, exclaimed George. "So there was a woman in the case, and that accounts for the scrape."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Challis. "Who would have thought it? At your age!"

Lucy was shocked, but was also curious.

"Yes, there was a girl in the case," answered Sam with a blush. "A girl got me into the scrape, and the same girl got me out of it."

He told of his acquaintance with Nettie Dibble, and related the adventures of the night, to which his friends listened with the liveliest interest.

It was the opinion of the Challises, and especially of the female portion of the family, that Nettie was a bad lot, and that Sam ought to cut her acquaintance. It was well enough to forgive her, but he had better keep clear of her thereafter.

"I don't believe she would do me any more harm," he replied; "but I can't help feeling shy of her. To be bit once is enough for me. I am glad that I never told her about the receipt that was sewed in my vest."

"That is lucky," said George. "It would be too good a point for the Jew to get hold of."

"I thought I was doing a very good thing when I sewed it up for you," said Mrs. Challis; "but it seems to have been a very bad thing, after all."

"But who would have guessed," replied Sam, "a gang of thieves would take away my clothes?"

The loss of the warehouse receipt was a serious matter, and it was seriously discussed.

It was agreed that it would not be advisable to attempt to cause the arrest of the conspirators just then, but that they should first find out from Mr. Prole how Sam stood with regard to the receipt and the salt.

"I am not enough of a lawyer to decide that matter," said George Challis; "but I am afraid you will have trouble. If that proves to be the case, and if the receipt is absolutely necessary to give you a right to your property, I suppose we must try to recover it with the help of the police, though I doubt if either you or I ought to have anything more to do with the authorities here than we can help."

It was also agreed that the lad should remove from Mrs. Passett's to the house of his friends that day, and he sent an order to Mrs. Passett for the little property he had left in his room.

George Challis accompanied his young friend to the salt warehouse, where they had a private interview with Mr. Prole.

Sam told the story of his capture and robbery, and the warehouseman listened with undisguised amazement.

"It is the queerest story I ever heard," said he. "Mind, now, I don't disbelieve you; but it is hard to take hold of such a story as that. I never heard of anything like it, and I wouldn't believe, if you hadn't told it to me, that such a thing could happen here in New Orleans. But I can't think that you would try to play a game on me."

"Of course I would not," replied Sam, who began to wonder whether Mr. Prole himself was not trying to play a game.

Since he had learned to suspect people, he was getting to be very suspicious, and it was at least possible that the warehouseman might
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have been interested in the plot of the men who captured him.

He had as good a right to suspect Mr. Prole as Mr. Prole had to disbelieve his story.

"We know that it is a strange story," said George Challis; "but it is a true story whether you believe it or not. The question is how my young friend here is affected in his rights by the loss of his warehouse receipt."

"That is a very bad piece of business," replied Mr. Prole, in a tone that strengthened Sam's suspicions. "I warned him that he must be very careful of that bit of paper."

"He was careful of it, Mr. Prole, very careful; but the best of us are liable to be robbed. Now he wants to know what he is to do about it. Will you give him a new receipt, or can he sell his salt without a receipt?"

"He can't sell the salt without something to show for it, of course; nor can I give him another receipt dry, as I may say."

"I am sure that he would not swindle you, sir."

"I don't want to question his honesty, Mr. Challis, and I do not question it; but I must look upon this matter in a business light. How do I know that he has not already sold the property and assigned the receipt, and that somebody may come upon me for the salt at any time?"

"That would be a criminal act," suggested George.

"Perhaps it would; but I would never get even by putting him in jail. Why, it was only yesterday that a man was here inquiring for him about the salt. That man said that he had as good as bought the property, that he was sure to complete the bargain as soon as he could see your young friend, and that he would be here with the receipt this morning."

"Who was that?" eagerly asked Sam.

"He did not give his name."

"What did he look like?"

Mr. Prole described his visitor as well as he could, and added that he looked like a Jew.

"The very man!" exclaimed Sam. "That was one of the scamps who robbed me."

"It may be so," answered Mr. Prole. "If it was, he was playing a queer game—sort of advertising himself, as I may say. I don't deny your story, my young friend, though it is a strange one; but there is only one thing for me to do to protect myself, and that is to stick to the letter of the law."

"And what is the letter of the law?" inquired George.

"Your young friend will have to make affidavit before a notary to the loss of the receipt, and will have to give me a bond with good sureties in double the estimated value of the salt, to protect me against any come-back in the shape of an assigned receipt."

"That is pretty hard on me," remarked Sam. "I am a stranger here, and could no more give such a bond than I could buy up the city of New Orleans."

"Of course it is hard, but it seems to be the only thing I can do. It is a bad business all around. I will think the matter over, and if I can strike any way of making it easier for you, I will let you know. But I would advise you to find that receipt. Seems to me that you ought to have applied to the police before this."

Sam Spence was quite crestfallen. It seemed to him that his salt might as well be melting in the Mississippi, for all the good it would do him.

"Very well, Mr. Prole," said he. "I will do the best I can. I will need some money, though, and I suppose you will be willing to give me my belt and my gold, as I took no receipt for that."

"Of course I will," answered Mr. Prole, and he took the belt from his safe and handed it over to its owner.

"You mustn't think that I want to be hard on you, or to cheat you out of your salt," said he. "I am a business man, and must look at things in a business way. But I will do the best I can for you."

Mr. Prole surely appeared to be an honest man, and Sam began to repent of his suspicion. He mentioned it to George Challis as they walked up the street, and that young gentleman could see no ground for it.

The next thing in order was a clothing store, where Sam purchased a new outfit, and left George's suit to be sent to his new home.

Then the two friends debated.

"It is hard luck for me," said Sam. "I could never think of giving such a bond as Mr. Prole calls for, and there don't seem to be the faintest chance of getting that receipt back."

"We must try to recover it, though," replied George. "I suppose we will have to apply to the police, and I don't like to do that. Yet I have no reason to believe that they would refuse us justice on account of our views about the war."

"It looks as if something might be done, George. As I know the names of two of the men, and can give a pretty good description of the third, the police ought to get hold of one of them, anyhow. But I am tired of worrying about it."

"Suppose we quit worrying about it, then, for a while. You seem to be quite fagged out, Sam, and I believe a little run around is needed to brighten you up and fit you for business."

"Suppose we go out to the West End and see the Spanish Fort. It is a very nice and gay place, and there is to be a big review there-to-day."

"Agreed."

CHAPTER XI.

A FORTUNATE ENCOUNTER.

The two friends got a buggy, and drove out over the shell road to the West End.

On the way Sam Spence marveled at everything he saw—the hard and smooth road, the dark canal, the forest of tall trees with their hanging bannors of gray moss, and the general strangeness of the landscape.

The neighborhood of the Spanish Fort was crowded with pleasure-seekers, and no one could have supposed that a great civil war was in progress, or even in contemplation, if it had
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not been for the many gay uniforms that were mingled with the throngs.

A listener, however, would soon discover that the all-absorbing subject was not forgotten in the midst of gayety, and that all sorts of talk were pretty sure to lead up to it or touch upon it.

George and Sam had nothing to do with any of the talk, and were careful to keep their tongues in their heads.

They enjoyed an excellent dinner, and then strolled out among the crowds to enjoy the sights.

While they were thus occupied Sam seized the arm of his companion with a sudden grip that startled him.

"There's my clothes!" he eagerly exclaimed.

"Where?"

Sam pointed at a young man who was walking near them. He was neatly-dressed, and his air and strut showed that he supposed himself to be making quite a stylish appearance.

He had a hook nose, a cast of countenance and features that marked him for an Israelite.

George looked at the young Hebrew, and was decidedly of his friend's opinion.

"It is the same suit that you wore yesterday, or exactly like it," said he. "But you can't be sure that it is the same suit. Of course there are many like it."

"Those are my clothes, George. I could swear to them. You see that they don't fit that fellow, and you know that a Jew would never throw away his money on a mi-fit."

"That's a fact. They are pretty sure to get the worth of their ducats."

"Another point, George. When that man took my clothes away last night, he said that he had a young friend who would be glad to jump into the suit. Of course the young friend would be a Jew. He has jumped into it, and has taken the first chance to splurge in it."

"What are you going to do about it, Sam?"

"I am going to tackle him right now."

"All right. I will back you up."

Sam stepped up to the person who was wearing his clothes, and touched him on the shoulder.

The young Jew looked around angrily.

"What's the matter with you, young feller?" he demanded, with an effort to be supercilious.

"Where did you get those clothes you are wearing?" quietly asked Sam.

This question was confusing; but the descendant of Abraham quickly recovered from his embarrassment.

"Where did I get my clothes? None of your business."

"It is my business. Where did you get them?"

"From my tailor, of course."

"No tailor ever sold you that suit. It belongs to me. It was stolen from me last night, and you will have to give it up."

"I will, will I? Not if I know mine self. Who are you, anyhow?"

"The owner of the clothes you are wearing. Come with me now, if you don't want to get into worse trouble."

The altercation had quickly attracted a crowd, who began to inquire into the merits of the case.

Sam Spence kept his hand on the shoulder of his subject, and his determined look showed that he knew his rights and meant to maintain them.

"This man is wearing stolen clothes," said he. "The suit he has on was stolen from me last night."

"That's a fact, and my friend can prove it," remarked George Challis.

The Jew appealed to the crowd, asking if that was not a pretty go, and declaring that he had bought the suit and paid for it.

But he found no friends there. His appearance, as contrasted with Sam and George, was not in his favor.

"Stag the sheeney!" said one. "Ain't he cuttin' a gay figger in other folks' property?"

Better go with him, Moses, and settle the thing," said another. "It's easy to see that the young feller means business."

The crowd attracted a policeman, who pushed his way in, and wanted to know what was the matter.

There was no fight; but the dispute demanded his attention.

Sam repeated his charge very plainly, and the other stubbornly declared that the clothes were his own property.

"Come along with me," said the policeman.

"This is a disturbance, and I arrest both of you. There is only one square way to settle such a question as this."

He took them to the nearest police magistrate and George Challis accompanied his friend, and a few of the crowd followed them.

The magistrate proved to be Judge Sarpigny, an old Creole, who happened to be at leisure to attend to the matter.

When the policeman had given him his account of the arrest and its cause, he turned to Sam, and asked his name, which was given him.

"What is your name?" he asked the Jew.

"Isaac Marks."

"That settles it," said Sam. "Now I know how he got the clothes."

"Don't go too fast, young man," remarked Judge Sarpigny. "You may tell me your side of the story now."

Sam related as briefly as he could his adventure of the previous night, and his encounter with Isaac Marks that day.

He told the tale clearly and distinctly, and his manner evidently produced a favorable impression upon the magistrate.

"That is a strange story," said the official. "It is a very strange story; but stranger things have happened. I don't know but the strangest part of the business is your accidental meeting with this man, who was wearing the clothes which you claim to be yours. Now, Mr. Marks, you may tell me your side if you want to."

The Jew simply declared that the clothes were his, and that he had come by them honestly.

"If I have rightly understood your story, Spence," said the magistrate, "you do not
Sam Spence, the Broadhorn Boy.

charge that this man stole the clothes, but that he is in possession of stolen goods."

"That is what I believe to be the truth, sir."

"Very well. The clerk will write an affidavit to that effect, and you will swear to it, and I will take a warrant against the prisoner here in court."

While the clerk and Sam were busy with the affidavit, Isaac Marks was evidently worried. He sat with his head down, quite crestfallen, and there could be no doubt that he considered the affair a serious one.

The affidavit was completed, and the warrant was signed and duly served upon Marks.

"The case is fairly before me now," said Judge Sarpigny, "and I am ready to hear evidence. The ownership of the suit is a question of proof."

"If you please, sir," said Sam, "there is one point which I can easily prove to your satisfaction, or you can prove it to suit yourself. It is a very important matter to me, too, much more important than the suit."

"What do you mean, young man?"

"I will find a paper sewed up in the vest. It is a valuable paper to me, and it was sewed in at the house of my friend here, by his mother, Mrs. Challis. I will point out the place to the policeman, who can rip the stitches and see if it is there."

"That would be very good evidence. Do you know anything about such a paper, Marks?"

The Jew hesitated; but his imagination was clearly not equal to the lie that the occasion required.

He could only say that if there was any such paper, it was there when he bought the clothes, and that he had come by them honestly.

Sam pointed out to the policeman the place in the vest where the paper was concealed.

"Before he digs for it," said he, "I will describe the paper, sir, so that you may have no doubt that it belongs to me. It is a warehouse receipt for a cargo of salt, that is now in the warehouse of Stephen Prole. It is signed by Mr. Prole, and is in favor of me, Samuel Spence."

The magistrate nodded, and the policeman ripped the lining of the vest at the place that was pointed out to him.

He brought forth a folded paper, which he handed to Judge Sarpigny, who read it carefully.

"This is your paper, Spence," said the magistrate. "It is just what you described it to be."

"I hope you will take care of it, sir," answered Sam. "I don't want to claim it until you are satisfied that it belongs to me; but it ought to be kept safely, out of the reach of any thief or any man who wears stolen clothes."

"I will keep it for the present. Now, Marks, what have you to say?"

What Marks had to say was to the effect that he had no evidence ready, and that he wanted time to get word to his friends and procure a lawyer.

"Very well. The examination is adjourned until ten o'clock to morrow morning. Spence, you can go now; but you must be sure to be on hand in the morning, and you may as well bring some witnesses, though the case is clear enough so far."

The Jew also arose to go.

"Hold on there, Marks!" ordered the magistrate. "This is a serious charge, and I will have you keep in custody until you can procure bail. You may send for your friends as soon as you choose, and at the same time you had better send for a suit of clothes, to keep you from using property that don't belong to you."

CHAPTER XII.

CONFEDERATE JUSTICE.

George Challis and Sam Spence got their buggy and drove back to town, congratulating themselves upon the fortunate result of their expedition to the West End.

From the livery-stable they hastened home, where Mrs. Challis and Lucy were wondering what had become of them.

Their wonder was increased when they learned what really had become of the wanderers, and listened to the story they had to tell.

"You are one of the Lord's lucky ones, Sammy Spence," said Mrs. Challis. "I don't believe you need be afraid of anything in this world. Even if you should be blown up in a powder-mill you would light on your feet without a bruise."

"He was certainly very fortunate in finding his clothes and his receipt," said Lucy; "but I hope he will keep clear of danger hereafter."

"I think that Miss Trimble is right," responded Sam. "It is all very well not to be afraid of danger; but it is better to have a sharp eye for keeping out of it."

They had a nice supper that evening, and when Sam went to bed he felt himself very much at home. It was a strange thought of his lost father at the bottom of the Mississippi, and of his own lonely condition, but was thankful that he had found such kind friends, who were not disposed to make their friendship an excuse for robbing him.

Early in the morning he procured a carriage and went with George Challis to the office of Mr. Prole, to whom the adventure of the previous day was briefly related.

The warehouseman was vastly astonished, and at the same time there could be no doubt that he was greatly pleased.

"The story you told me yesterday was a hard one," said he, "and I own that I was not ready to take it in in a hurry; but this beats it. That you should have chanced on the fellow who had your clothes, in such a crowd as that at the West End, is almost too much for me. It seems to be a solid fact, though, and after I swallow this I can gulp down the other without half trying."

"If you will ride out to the court with us and identify the receipt, perhaps you will be convinced," remarked George.

"That's so. Seeing is believing. I will be glad to go."
On the way they picked up the man who had sold Sam the suit of clothes, and drove out to Judge Sarpy's court, reaching there a little after ten.

Isaac Marks had already been brought out, and Sam gladly perceived that he was no longer wearing the suit of clothes which was in dispute.

He was seated there, consulting with a man of a Jewish cast of countenance, who proved to be a lawyer of the hysterical persuasion.

Sam looked among the bystanders for Max Marks and Ben Grossman, but neither of them was present.

He had hoped to see them there, that he might enjoy their extreme chagrin when they learned that the precious paper for which they had committed a crime had been in their possession, and that they had unwittingly let it slip through their fingers.

But they had probably been already made acquainted with that fact, and their discretion was sufficient to keep them out of reach of a court in which their deeds were sure to be exposed.

The case was called, and the evidence was hard.

Sam Spence repeated his story substantially as he had told it to the magistrate.

The man from the clothing store identified the suit that he had sold to the lad. George Challis also identified it, and told how his mother had sewed the paper into the vest. Mr. Prole identified the warehouse receipt, and was convinced that Sam's story was true from end to end.

Marks's lawyer cross-examined the witnesses, asking a great many unnecessary questions, and putting everybody out of patience, but producing no other effect.

"The court takes notice of the fact," said the magistrate, "that the paper was found in the vest, as described. That is the case for the prosecution. Now, Mr. Abrahams, what have you to say for your client?"

The lawyer rose to his feet, with a solemn visage and an air of importance.

"I have no witness ready," he answered; "but I have a very important point to present. I wish to point your Honor to the fact that the prosecutor in this case has no standing in this court, or in any other court of the State of Louisiana. He is not a citizen of the Confederate States of America, but has lately arrived here from the country of the enemy. Consequently he has no right to be heard here, and your Honor is surely aware that the plea of alien enemy is a legitimate plea, and a final one, if proved, in any court of record in this State."

Mr. Abrahams sat down, and his manner showed that he believed himself to have made a profound impression on the court.

So he had.

But it was an impression of profound anger. Judge Sarpy was so wrathful that he could scarcely contain himself.

"That is the meanest nonsense I ever heard," said he, "It is nothing less than an insult to try to impose such stuff upon me. In the first place, this is not a court of record; but it is a court of justice, and justice is going to be done here, if the city should sink. In the second place, this case is not a suit at law for the clothes, but a criminal proceeding, and the witness Spence is not the prosecutor. The State of Louisiana is the prosecutor, and he is only a witness to help her assert her rights and secure justice."

"But you will take notice of the fact that he is an alien enemy," answered Abrahams. "He is liable to arrest as a spy. His friend, here, George Challis, who has testified for him, is also a Union man, and I respectfully submit that their evidence ought not to weigh against a loyal citizen of the Confederate States."

"That be blowed!" exclaimed the old Creole, whose patience and dignity flew away together.

"What do you take me for? The truth is the truth, whether the witness comes from Labrador or Patagonia, and what the State of Louisiana wants is the truth. The form of government may be changed, or the men who run the government; but justice goes on just the same, and a thief is still a thief. What have I to do with the young men's politics, if they have any? It is not a question before this court. For that matter, I am willing to say that some good friends of mine are Union men, and they have a right to their opinions. The question is, Mr. Abrahams, whether your client is guilty of being a receiver of stolen goods. Have you any witnesses?"

The lawyer was obliged to admit that he had no witnesses ready, and he asked for time to produce them.

"There has been time enough for that, as far as this proceeding is concerned," replied the magistrate. "I must bind the prisoner over, and you can produce your evidence at the trial. I shall require bail in the sum of one thousand dollars."

This settled the question, and the lawyer went to procure bail.

"The witnesses must leave their addresses," said Judge Sarpy, "so that they may be found when they are wanted. I can't give you the clothes, Spence, as they are part of the evidence in the case, and must be kept until it is concluded; but the paper clearly belongs to you, and here it is."

Sam thanked him as he received the paper, and went his way, well pleased with Confederate justice as administered by Judge Sarpy.

Mr. Prole was so highly rejoiced at the confirmation of his young customer's strange stories, and at the same time so anxious to stone for his former unbelief, that he invited the party to accompany him to the West End, where he ordered a sumptuous dinner, and they had a remarkably pleasant and jolly time.

In the course of the repast the subject of the recovered sculpt naturally arose, and the warehouseman had something to say about it.

"Now that you have got your receipt, my young friend," said he, "you had better get rid of it as soon as possible."

"Why so?" asked Sam.

"Not that I think you are likely to lose it again; but, as a matter of business, and in your interest, I advise you to lose no time in selling your salt. Between you and me—and the rest of us, of course—salt has gone as high as it is likely
to go, and one of two things may happen, if not both of them. If you wait much longer, you will either have to take your pay in paper money, or—I am merely saying that it is possible, mind you—this city of New Orleans may be gobbled up by the—ah—end of you.

"Do you think that is likely?" eagerly asked George Challis.

"Likely? I did not say so. I hope not, of course. I go with my State, and when the State swings, I must swing with it. But let us keep our heads clear of politics, if we can. I am a warehouseman, and as a warehouseman I advise our young friend here to sell his salt. I know a man who will be glad to give him thirty thousand dollars for it."

"Thirty thousand dollars!" exclaimed Sam.

"Yes, and a few thousand on top of that, as I will make the best bargain I can for you, and you shall have gold for your salt."

"Sell it!" said Sam, and that question was settled.

The party rode home in the best of spirits, and the next morning the sale of the salt was consummated.

Sam Spence received the price in gold of the United States, packed in canvas bags, which he and George took home in a close-carrige, and stored it safely, as they thought, in the cellar of Mr. Challis's house.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOW FOR THE MONEY!

In the little back room at the "Rainbow" Hotel were seated the same three conspirators who had planned the capture and robbery of Sam Spence.

Again they had glasses of liquor on the table before them, and the pack of cards was untouched, but their faces were gloomy, and well they might be, as they were discussing their sad failure.

"Yes, we did make a bad botch of the business," observed Max Marks. "There's no denying that."

"Yes, it was a bad botch yez made av it, Mister Marks," responded Captain Caffery.

"That I made of it? What do you mean? What did I do that was not well done?"

"Didn't yez engineer the whole business?"

"Of course I did, and am proud of my work. If I made any mistake, it was in leaving you in charge of the young chap. Everything worked well up to that time. The girl brought him to us, and we took him in and had him safe. Ben and I went away, and left him in your care, and when we came back he was gone."

Captain Caffery flared up instantly.

"Do yez mean to charge that I made away wid him, Mister Marks?"

"I charge nothing. I only say that if there was a botch made, that is when and where it came in. What became of him?"

"Divil only knows. I lay across the duce, wid th' key in my pocket. He couldn't ha' got out that way without my knowin' it. When yez knocked at the door I got up and opened it, and he was gone. How he could ha' got out unless I let him out, is more'n I can begin to say."

"That's the point of the business," said Marks. "If there was any botch, there is where it came in. But nobody accuses you of turning him loose, Cap; so you ought to be careful how you talk about botching things."

"Take it easy, boys," remarked the tug-boat captain. "We all did our best, and I don't see that anybody is to blame. I think, though, that we would have been better off if Max had not given that suit of clothes to his brother and got him juggled. That is what has hurt us."

"I don't see it," replied Marks. "There are no warrants cut against us, and I will attend to my brother Ike. He is out on bail, now, and when his trial comes I will see to it that he goes clear, and no expense to any of you. The only thing that troubles me is that I hate to give the thing up."

"An phuy should y?" demanded the Irishman.

"What else is there to do?" inquired the tug-boat captain.

"The best thing yit. Go fur the money."

"What do you mean? What money?"

"The money he got for the salt, av course, an' a foine big pile it is. Oh, it's so smart yez are; at Denis Caffery's he bye's that it's got ahead av the pair av yez. I don't know how the lad shlip'ed off when we had him tight and fast. That's the quarest thing Iover shtruck. But I do know that he's sold the salt an' got the money."

"Now, Cap, I hope you know what you're talkin' about."

"Bet your sweet life I do. I saw him an' another chap loadin' the gold in sacks into a carriage, an' saw 'em drive away wid it."

Captain Caffery laid his elbows on the table, and watched the effect of his announcement on his auditors.

It must have been sufficient to satisfy his vanity.

Marks was visibly annoyed because this important discovery had been made by another than himself, and Ben Frossman was quick to applaud the Irishman's sharpness and sagacity. But the Israeliite thought that he saw a chance to "get even."

"It is a pity," said he, "that we don't know what became of the carriage and the gold and the rest of the outfit. That would make the captain's information more valuable."

"An' did yez take me fur a fool?" responded Caffery. "I folleyed the outfit, me b'ye, an', here's the strate an' number the carriage went to, an' here's the names of the folks as lives there. Mebbs yez know some av thim, Mister Marks?"

"It's the name of the chap who was with him at the court," replied Marks. "If w. knew just where to find that gold, we might make a strike now."

"I'm keen to bet they put it down cellar," remarked the tug-boat captain.

"I didn't folley it in," said the Irishman, "but I mane to."

This observation caused considerable surprise and comment on the part of the others, who wanted to know what the redoubtable officer of infantry meant by it.

"I mane that we must do now," he answered,
“what I tould yez we ought to do at the start. 
We must come the Confederate over him. Av 
course he’s a Yankee spy, and he must be 
captured as a spy, arraigned as a spy, and con-
cfiscated as a spy, be jabers!”
“I suppose you mean that his gold must be 
cfiscated,” said Frossman. “But, won’t you 
need some sort of a search-warrant for such a 
proceeding, my noble warrior?”
“My uniform is my search-warrant.”
“But are you sure that your superior officers 
will look at it in that light?”
“It’s no trouble they will make about phwat 
I do wid a lot of Yankee spies. There’s no la’ 
for the inny.”
“That wasn’t the way the judge talked that 
had Ike up before him,” observed Marks.
“An’ that judge, sir, if the truth was known, 
w’ud turn out to be nothin’ but a Union man in 
disguise. Such sintiments don’t prevail in the 
army.”
It was settled that Captain Caffery, who had 
made such a brilliant discovery, and who be-
lieved himself to occupy such a fine position 
to undertake the enterprise of “coming the Confederate” over 
Sam Spence, and thus getting possession of the 
gold into which the salt had been turned.
It is quite likely that Frossman and Marks 
regarded him as a cat that had missed its 
paws for the purpose of pulling their chestnuts 
out of the fire; but there can be no doubt that 
he regarded himself as the only man of brains 
on the “job.”
The intended victims of this fresh conspiracy 
were not uninformed concerning it, although 
the intimations of its nature which they re-
ceived were so vague as to be of scarcely any 
benefit to them.
The morning after the conference at the 
“Rainbow” hotel, as Sam Spence was walking 
with George Challis towards the business part of 
the city, they met Nettie Dibble.
She bowed to Sam and showed a desire to 
speak to him.
He was quite willing to gratify her, as he 
had no hard feelings toward her, but Challis 
took him by the arm and led him away.
There was a grieving look on the girl’s pretty 
face, but she said nothing to either of them.
“It won’t do, my boy,” said George. “To be 
bit once is enough, I should say. I am afraid 
that young woman has some new game to play, 
and the only safe thing is to have nothing to do 
with her.”
So Nettie pressed on, and what she might 
have wished to say had to go unsaid.
But she did not allow that rebuff to know 
her good intentions in the head.
There could be no questioning the fact that 
she had taken a great liking to Sam Spence, 
and doubtless she felt that she owed him some 
reparation for the wrong she had done him.
In the evening there came a messenger-boy 
to Mrs. Challis’s house with a note for Sam.
It was opened and read at once, and these were the contents:
“I wanted to speak to you this morning; to put you 
on your guard; but you would not speak, and I 
must write. I am afraid that they are setting 
another trap for you. You know who I mean. I 
don’t know what they expect to do. I wish I did, 
and I would tell you if I knew, and you better to 
know that I would do nothing against you an’ more.
But I do know that they mean to do you harm in 
some way. I saw one of them last night when he 
was out of town, and he hinted that much to me. I don’t 
know what it is, or when it is to be, and can only tell 
you to be on your guard. I will watch them, and 
will help you if I can.”
“NETTIE.”
CHAPTER XIV.
“COMING THE CONFEDERATE.”
Nettie Dibble’s letter created no little ex-
citement in the Challis household, and opinions 
concerning it were divided.
Sam Spence was sure that she had repented 
of her former misdeeds and that her intentions 
and actions were both good. He was sorry that 
he had treated her so coldly in the morning.
Lucy Trimble, for a wonder, was inclined to 
agree with Sam on these points.
George and his mother were decidedly of the 
opposite opinion. “Thorn trees could not pro-
duce grapes,” they said, “and Nettie Dibble 
was a thorn-tree of the worst description.”
But those two, although they discredited 
Nettie Dibble, agreed with the others that mis-
chief was being plotted, and that the warning 
ought to be heeded.
The only question was, what sort of mischief 
was meant, and what should be done to guard 
against the threatened danger.
If the first part of the question could be an-
swered, the second part would present less dif-
culty; but there was no answer outside of the 
blindest guess-work.
They could think of nothing but another at-
tempt at kidnaping that might be intended, 
and that might surely be guarded against.
It was settled that Sam Spence should not 
go outside of the house after dark, except in the 
company of George Challis. In the daytime 
it was not supposed that there was anything to 
be feared in such a city as New Orleans.
Lucy Trimble thought that it would be proper 
for their young friend to put himself under the 
protection of the police, but both George and 
Sam were unwilling to draw the attention of the 
authorities to themselves, as it was possible 
that their political opinions might be too closely 
inquired into.
“But it may be burglars or thieves that you 
have to fear,” suggested Lucy.
“I don’t know why,” replied George. “No-
body but ourselves can know that Sam’s gold is 
here.”
“You may have been watched and fol-
lowed,”
“That is not likely. But, Lucy, if we were 
afraid of burglars it would never do to keep a 
policeman in the house. Besides, we couldn’t 
get one. Sam and I will be here, and we ought 
to be able to guard the premises.”
This discussion was continued until bedtime, 
and nothing was settled but that Sam Spence 
and his friends must be generally on their 
guard.
In all their talk none of them guessed at the 
real nature of the threatened blow, and they 
were quite unprepared for it when it was 
struck.
This occurred just as they were about to shut up the house and go to bed.

Then the hall bell rung and the door was opened by the servant girl, who fell back before a man in the uniform of a Confederate officer.

This individual inquired for Mr. George Chal- lis and pushed his way into the hall, followed by several others, a few of whom were also in uniform.

He pressed right on into the sitting-room, where all the family were wondering what visitor could have called at that late hour.

George Chal- lis rose to meet him, and asked his business.

"It is my duty," he answered, "as an officer of the army of the Confederate States of America. I am lookin' for a Yankee spy, sor, and have orders to arrest him."

Sam Spence had not seen Captain Caffery's face in the house where he had been a prisoner, but had a good idea of his form, and recognized his voice at once.

The significance of the visit burst upon him immediately, especially as he caught sight of the mixed party that followed the officer.

"That is one of them, George!" he exclaimed.

"That is the man who guarded me in the house after I was kidnapped."

Determined to defend himself, he was about to draw his pistol, but Captain Caffery had already given a signal to his aids, and the lad was quickly seized and disarmed.

"That's the spy," said Caffery.

Sam's arms were tied behind his back, and he was pushed into a chair.

"You have no right to arrest me," he said.

"This means robbery and nothing short of that."

"Gag him!" ordered the Irishman, and the order was at once carried into effect.

George Chal- lis protested loudly against this outrage and was endeavoring to assist his friend, when he was also seized and treated in the same manner.

The women had screamed when Sam was captured, but were not permitted to make any further demonstrations, as they were guarded and threatened by Captain Caffery's ruffians.

"I can't allow any tr'ason," said the Irishman, when he had made George Chal- lis safe. "I am here to arrest a spy, and can't submit to interference from sympathizers wid the inimy. My duty requires me to s'arch this house fur evi- dence av guilt."

"To search the house!" exclaimed Mrs. Chal- lis. "Yes, it is robbery, and nothing but robbery."

"I yield to no man in respekt to the ladies," resumed Caffery; "but duty compels me to put the faymajes of this house under a mild restraint until my task is finished."

The three women were imprisoned in a back room, where two men were stationed to guard them and prevent them from communicating with the outside.

Then Caffery and his followers began their search for Sam Spence's gold.

It was conducted upon a thorough plan, beginning at the bottom, and was soon successful.

The gold was found in the cellar, where it had been merely deposited, without any special ef- fort at hiding.

Under Caffery's directions the bags were brought up-stairs and carried out at the front door, where they were loaded into a light buggy that had been driven up for the purpose of receiv- ing them.

The Irishman entered the buggy, and drove away rapidly.

The two men who had been guarding the wo- men came out, locking the door behind them, and they and the others left the house quietly, so as not to attract attention, and went in dif- ferent directions.

Sam Spence and George Chal- lis were of course left bound and gagged, and the three women were left locked up in the back room, and the front door, though closed, was not locked.

CHAPTER XV.

MEETING THE WRONG MAN.

CAPTAIN CAFFERY'S usually ruddy face was flushed purple with triumph as he drove away with the stolen treasure.

He could have no doubt in the world that he had a right to feel triumphant and to be proud of his work.

He had succeeded where his fellow-conspi- rators had failed, and his success was more valu- able than theirs would have been, because its result was ready cash.

As he had planned the enterprise and carried it into execution, of course the lion's share of the plunder would be his, and not much of it would be required to settle the claims of his assistants.

Surely he had good cause to congratulate him- self upon the success of his scheme.

It was only necessary to get the money safely out of the way, and that was what the horse and buggy were doing very rapidly.

But there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip, and every day is the truth of the old pro- verb proved.

Captain Caffery was by no means a skillful driver, and he was in a great hurry, and he was highly excited—three facts which worked to- gether to cause his destruction.

As he was turning a corner near Canal street his light buggy came in collision with a heavy two-horse carriage, one of the old-fashioned hacks.

In the carriage was the very man of all others whom he would have wished to avoid on that occasion.

That man was Colonel Chappell, who was then acting as Provost Marshal, and whose authority in the city was second only to that of the commanding general.

The collision did no special damage to the heavy hack, but was disastrous to the light buggy.

Two wheels were torn off, and the vehicle came to the ground with a crash.

It was a wreck.

The bags of gold of course fell out, and one of them burst open, shedding a portion of its tempting contents on the pavement.

At the moment of the collision Captain Caffery pulled up the horse with all his brute force, and
ne kept hold of the reins as he slid from the seat to the ground.

Colonel Chappell’s orderly who was following him on horseback, dismounted and held the frightened buggy horse.

The carriage had stopped, and the Provost Marshal stepped out.

A look of amazement overspread his face as he saw the wreck of the buggy, the driver, and the gold coin in the street.

“What’s this?” he sharply demanded.

“What does it mean? Who are you, sir?”

Captain Caffery had picked himself up.

The sudden pallor which the shock of the accident had produced was succeeded by a deep flush as he realized his position.

“Captain Dennis Caffery, of the Nineteenth Louisiana,” he meekly replied.

“What the devil are you doing here, sir, at this time of night? Why are you not at your quarters?”

The Irishman muttered something about a verbal leave of absence.

“Verbal, hey? Your colonel ought to know better. I must look into this. Whose gold is that, and what are you doing with it?”

“A bit av property av mine, sor, that I av under takin’ to a place av safety.”

“That’s queer. It seems to be a good bit of property for a man of your style to own. Well, captain, as your buggy is a wreck, we had better put this gold in the carriage, and take it to my office, where I will guarantee its safety.”

The proposition was naturally highly distasteful to Caffery, who would have preferred to take his chances of getting on with the treasure, and would rather it would go anywhere than to the office of the Provost Marshal.

But there was no help for it, and he began to pick up the bags and place them in the carriage.

“Where did you get all this gold, anyhow?” again demanded Colonel Chappell, as he mentally estimated the value of the coin.

“He stole it, sir!”

The officer turned, and saw a young and pretty girl, nicely dressed, who was panting and almost breathless.

“Hello!” he exclaimed. “This is getting serious. Who are you, my girl?”

“My name is Nettie Dibble, sir, and I am going to tell the truth about that man, and some others if necessary, no matter what comes of it.”

“That is right. The truth is a good thing to get hold of. Are you sure it is the truth you are telling me?”

She scribbled hastily and nervously on a card.

“There, sir, is the number of the house from which the gold was taken, with the name of the person it belongs to. You can easily satisfy yourself.”

Captain Caffery was trying to sneak off; but the quick eye of his superior officer detected the attempt.

“Halt there!” he ordered, as he drew a pistol.

“Do you think you can get away from us, sir? Who have you to say to this charge?”

“It is true, sir. That I arrested a Yankee spy up-town, and thought it proper to bring away the money which he might use in working against the cause of the Confederacy.”

“So that is the money which you said was your own property. Your stories don’t hang together. What right have you, sir, to arrest Yankee spies, or any other spies; and who gave you permission to run off with their property?”

The Irishman muttered something about “patriotism.”

“Pockethole is what it looks like. Orderly, arrest this man, and see that he is kept safely until I can inquire into his case. By the way, sir, what have you done with the spy you claim to have arrested?”

I just arrested him, sir—that’s all,” replied Caffery, who was quite overcome by the serious nature of the scrape into which he had brought himself.

“Do you know anything about him, young woman?”

“No, sir. I am afraid he may have been killed, or badly injured, and I think somebody ought to go to the house and see about it.”

“Quite right. That shall be attended to. Hi, policeman!”

A policeman who came in sight hastened to the spot, and cheerfully put himself under the orders of the military officer, who directed him to gather up the remainder of the gold and put it in the carriage.

Captain Caffery’s horse was hitched to the wreck of the buggy, and the orderly walked away with his prisoner, leading his own horse.

“Now, young lady,” said Colonel Chappell, “we will go to the address you gave me, and investigate the affair, and I must ask you to accompany me. Jump into the carriage, please. Don’t be afraid. I won’t hurt you. You are as safe with me as you might be with your father. Policeman, you may ride with the driver, as there may be occasion for your services.”

The direction of Mrs. Challis’s house was given to the driver, and the carriage rattled away at a lively rate.

CHAPTER XVI.

NETTIE BRINGS GOOD NEWS.

MRS. CHALLIS and Lucy Trimble no sooner found themselves relieved of the presence of their guards than they began to endeavor to get assistance from the outside.

Although the hour was late, the cries and calls of the women soon startled the inhabitants of the house in the rear, who appeared at their own windows and asked what was the matter.

“Robbers,” shouted Lucy. “There have been burglars in the house, and it has been broken into. We are locked in here. Come around to the front door, and see if you can get in.”

As soon as possible two of the neighbors reached the front door of the Challis residence; found it open, and walked in.

In the sitting room they found George Challis and Sam Spence bound and gagged, but first answered the call of the women, who came out as
soon as their door was unlocked, and hastened to release the young men.

The neighbors proved to be somewhat of a
nuisance. They naturally wanted to hear the
story of the burglary, and in consideration of
the service they had rendered it had to be told
to them.

But both George and Sam were unwilling to
make common stock of their private affairs,
and the main points of the present case were
such as they wished to reserve for private con-
sideration.

So they gave but a general account of the
affair, without mentioning any cause for the
deed or implicating any person, and without
making any statement concerning the plunder
that was supposed to have been carried away.

They got rid of their visitors as soon as possi-
ble on the plea of exhaustion, and hastened
down cellar, where they discovered the absence
of the gold.

Then they sat down to consult.

"That is what I call a bold and barefaced
piece of business," remarked George.

"A little too bold and barefaced to my
notion," replied Sam. "I don't believe it will
stick."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I believe that I will have a chance to get
even with that scoundrel, if not to get my
money back."

"We will have to apply to the police then
after all," suggested George.

"We can do better than that, I think. That
man is a soldier. To judge by his uniform, he
must be some sort of an officer."


"Well, I am going straight to the head-
quar ters of the soldiers here to find out whether
that sort of thing is allowed. I don't believe it
is. If it is not, they will haul that man over
the coals and make him give up the money. If
it is, I want to know it. I don't think I am
likely to be any worse off than I am now."

"Perhaps I had better begin at the begin-
nning," answered Sam. "You will under-
stand it better if I tell you the whole story, and I will
make it as short as I can."

"Tell me the whole story. I want the exact
facts and the entire facts."

Sam Spence proceeded to tell the story of his
adventurous voyage with the cargo of salt, and
the dangers and difficulties that had beset him
since his arrival at New Orleans, concluding
with an exact account of Captain Caffery's
burglaries exploit.

"Are you sure," inquired Colonel Chappell,
"that the man who was here to-night was one
of the party who kidnapped you?"

"Quite sure, sir, and Nettie Dibble knows
that he is the same man."

"It was a most abominable and outrage-
ous piece of business, and that man
Caffery is a disgrace to the uniform he wears.
He is now under arrest, and you may be sure
that he will not go unpunished. I shall want
to see you two young gentlemen at my office in
the morning at ten o'clock sharp. I will not
trouble the ladies, as there will be evidence
enough without them. By the way, in the pre-
sent position of the affair I will be obliged to
keep your money until the question of owner-
ship is properly settled; but you may rest as-
sured that it will be safe in my possession—prob-
bly safer than in yours, considering what has
happened. How many bags of the gold were
there?"

Sam gave him the number.

"They are safe, then, and will be kept safe.
Now, Miss Dibble, I will leave you at your
home, if you are willing to accompany me."

Mrs. Challis and Lucy, who had become very
generous toward Nettie Dibble, insisted upon
her remaining with them, as the hour was
too late; but she preferred to return to her boarding-house, and went with Colonel Chappell in the carriage.

CHAPTER XVII.
CAFFERY'S HARD LUCK.

The next morning George Challis and Sam Spence put in an appearance at the office of the Provost Marshal by ten o'clock. They found a good rush of business there, many civil matters being mixed up with military affairs, and it was some time before the case in which they were interested came up for consideration.

When Captain Caffery was brought in, they would hardly have known him, the night had made such a change in his appearance.

His usually ruddy countenance was pale and haggard, and he was a picture of dejection, not at all the man he had been when he drove in triumph from Mrs. Challis's house with his bloody load of plunder.

The investigation was proceeded with in a very summary manner.

Sam Spence and George Challis gave their account of the entry of the accused into Mrs. Challis's house, and his outrageous performance there.

"The rest of the facts are within my own knowledge," said the Provost Marshal. "Now, Captain Caffery, what have you to say to this charge?"

The accused made a final attempt to blister his way out of the scrape.

"I am a loyal citizen of the Confederate States, sir, and have proved my patriotism by goin' into the army."

"And drawing the pay of a captain," interrupted Colonel Chappell.

"That young chap, sir, is a Yankee spy. I have good reason to believe him to be a spy, and thought I had a right to arrest him."

"And steal his money," interposed the colonel.

"As he is nothin' but a Yankee spy, sir, and his fri'nd there is a Union man, I would like to know if they are to be allowed to disgrace a Confederate soldier. If so, it is a mortal shame, sir, and mightily poor encouragement for many parts to enter the service."

"You don't seem to get the right hold of this business, Captain Caffery," remarked the Provost Marshal. "The question is whether the Confederate soldier has disgraced himself and the service, and the evidence is very clear that he has. As for these two young fellows being Union men, there are more of that class of people in New Orleans than I wish there were; but nobody that I know of wants to harm them, as long as they behave themselves and mind their own business. The Confederate Congress has not yet passed any confiscation law, and if it had, no person would be allowed to take the property of Union men for his own use. I would never suspect this lad of being a spy. I say, Spence, have you been spying anything about here?"

"Not that I know of, sir," answered Sam with a smile.

"I don't know what he could spy," continued the colonel, "or what good or harm he could do anybody by spying. I have heard his story, and know that he is here by accident, as I may say, rather than of his own will, and that he remains here because he can't get away. As long as he behaves himself nobody has a right to interfere with him or his property. I suppose you have nothing more to say, Captain Caffery.""

"I jist say, sir, that it's a shame that a Confederate officer should be disgraced by the likes o' thin' chaps."

"As I intimated to you before, it is a shame that an officer should disgrace himself and the service. You will be kept under strict arrest until a court-martial can sit upon your case, which I will report to the commanding-general without delay. Now, Spence, I wish you would step around here, as I want to say a few words to you privately."

Sam followed the officer to a corner of the room, wondering what could be wanted of him; but the object proved to be a friendly one.

"As regards that money of yours," said the officer; "of course you can do what you please with it; but I would advise you not to hide it in any cellar, or store it in any private house. Better put it in the Bank of Louisiana as a special deposit, and it will be safe there. I will send it around for you, if you wish, and send one of my clerks with you to show you what to do."

Sam thanked Colonel Chappell for his kindness, and promised to be guided by his advice. "I think you can do better than keep it there," resumed the colonel. "I don't know that I ought to tell you, as it may look a little like giving aid and comfort to the enemy; but I like your style, my lad. I have taken a fancy to you, and am going to give you some advice which I believe to be valuable. Put your money in cotton. Cotton is cheap now; but the time may come when it will be worth a great deal of money. Who attended to the salt business for you?"

"Stephen Prole, the warehousem'n."

"I know him. Prole is an honest man. Get him to buy cotton for you, and to hold on to it, and keep it insured. That is the best advice I can give you, and I ought to know what I am talking about, and I mean well by you."

Sam thanked the friendly officer for his kindness, and proceeded to carry out his instructions with regard to the money.

His bags of coin were placed in bank, and he got a receipt entitling him to the return of that sum in case of demand. "I don't see any cause to be afraid of the army, after all," he remarked to his friend as they walked home. "We have met one good man, anyway."

"That is true; but I am afraid there are many of them who would have taken that Irishman's part, and found some way to keep you out of your money."

"But nobody did it. Don't let us think ill of them, George, unless they give us cause. We have no right to complain, so far. What do you think of the cotton scheme?"

"It seems rather suspicious to me, Sam."

"I am afraid you are too suspicious."
"But, it is queer advice for a Rebel officer to give a Union man. If you were a rebel, and were willing to run the blockade, you might make a big hit if you were lucky. But he don't mean that, as he tells you to hold the cotton. I wonder if he thinks that the city may be captured. If that should happen, it would be worth while to own cotton. But I think you had better wait a bit, Sam, and turn it over in your mind."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

It was not many days after the interview with the Provost Marshal when George Challis came to his friend in a state of great excitement.

"Colonel Chappell was right, Sam," said he. "The thing for you to do is to buy cotton."

"What has put you in that mind so suddenly?" inquired Sam.

"New Orleans is bound to be captured. The Government is determined on that, and a big force is to start before long to do the work. Lucy Trimble's father is to be in it."

"How did you get hold of this news, George?"

"Lucy has just received a letter from her father."

"Indeed! How did she get it?"

"By the underground mail."

"What is that?"

"That is more than I can tell you. I only know that packages of letters are occasionally received from the North, and are distributed among the people to whom they belong. This is done with such secrecy that nobody knows how the letters come, or who is the postmaster at this end of the route. Lucy is overjoyed at the prospect of meeting her father."

"Colonel Chappell's advice was good, then."

"I wonder, Sam, if he can have guessed what was going to happen? If he did, he surely meant to do you a good turn. Yes, his advice was sound, and the sooner you put your money into cotton, the better for you."

Sam Spence immediately invested in cotton, with the assistance of Mr. Prole, all the money he had received for his salt, with the exception of what he believed to be a sufficient amount to cover his current expenses for several months. Then Sam and his friends patiently awaited developments.

After a while they had the pleasure of "assisting" at the court-martial of Captainaffery, who was convicted by their evidence and that of Colonel Chappell of the charges and specifications that were brought against him.

He was condemned to forfeit his commission and be reduced to the ranks, and no doubt he heartily wished that he had let the salt business alone.

No further move was made toward the prosecution of the other conspirators; but Sam Spence, with the aid of Judge Sarpiguy, contrived to let Marks know that if he should in any way attempt to molest Nettie Dibble, he would be immediately arrested and compelled to pay the penalty of his crime.

So Nettie was left in peace, and she became a frequent and welcome visitor at Mrs. Challis's, and Sam Spence made her a handsome present, to show his appreciation of the service she had rendered him.

The conscription gave the two young fellows no little uneasiness; but they discovered that they could evade it by purchasing substitutes, and quietly availed themselves of that privilege.

Then they were happy again, and awaited patiently for something to turn up in their favor.

Something turned up against them—something that sorely troubled Mrs. Challis and Lucy Trimble.

George Challis was arrested on the charge of being concerned in what he had styled the underground mail.

He was followed by detectives and pounced upon unawares, and on his person were found some letters from the North which he had undertaken to deliver.

George was placed in close confinement until more arrests could be made and further evidence procured.

Mrs. Challis and Lucy were almost heartbroken by this misfortune, as they were given to understand that the offense with which George was charged was a very serious one, such as might even cost him his life.

Colonel Chappell, the Provost Marshal who had taken such a kindly interest in Sam Spence, was not then in the city, having been ordered to "the front," and they had no friend in authority to whom they could apply. Consequently they could only wait and fear the worst.

While they were waiting and worrying, there came great news to New Orleans.

It was news that saddened the hearts of most; but there were not a few to whom it gave great joy.

A great "Yankee" fleet was reported at the mouth of the river—a fleet of war-ships accompanied by transports loaded with troops.

They could never pass the forts. Everybody said so, and what everybody said must be true. But Admiral Farragut steamed right by the forts, under terrific fire and then silenced them into surrender.

Soon the fleet and the army came up to the city, and ere long the old flag floated once more over the citadels of the Crescent City.

Sam Spence, with Mrs. Challis and Lucy Trimble, was among the first to greet their deliverers, and it was not long before Lucy was clasped in the arms of her father.

George Challis was released from prison, and the affection that had sprung up between him and Lucy was sanctioned by her father and consummated by marriage.

Swarms of cotton-buyers followed in the wake of the army; but Sam Spence was independent of them.

He was able to make his own shipments and to sell in the best market, and thus the small fortune which his salt had brought him became a big fortune.

THE END.
125 The Land Pirates; or, The League of Devil's Island. By Capt. Mayne Reid.

126 Blue Blazes; or, The Break o' Day Boys of Rocky Bar. By Frank Dumont.

127 Tony Fox, the Ferret; or, Boss Bob's Boss Job. By Edward L. Wheeler.

128 Will Wildfire's Racer; or, Winning Against Odds. By Charles Morris.

129 Eagle Kit, the Boy Demon. By Oll Coomes.

130 Gold Trigger, the Sport; or, The Girl Avengers. By T. C. Harbaugh.

131 A Game of Gold; or, Deadwood Dick's Big Strike. By Edward L. Wheeler.

132 Dainty Lance, the Boy Sport. By Joseph E. Badger, Jr.

133 Wild-fire, the Boss of the Road. By Frank Dumont.

134 Mike Merry, the Harbor Police Boy. By Chas. Morris.


136 Old Rube, the Hunter. By Capt. Hamilton Holmes.

137 Dandy Rock, the Man from Texas. By G. Waldo Browne.

138 Bob Rockett, the Boy Dodger. By Chas. Morris.

139 The Black Giant; or, Dainty Lance in Jeopardy. By Chas. Morris.

140 Captian Arizona, the King Pin of Road Agents. By Philip S. Warne.

141 New York Neil, the Boy-Girl Detective. By E. L. Wheeler.

142 Little Texas; or, The Young Mustanger. By Oll Coomes.

143 Deadly Dash; or, Fighting Fire with Fire. By Chas. E. Badger, Jr.

144 Little Grit, the Wild Rider. By Col. Prentiss Ingraham.

145 The Tiger of Taos; or, Wild Kate, Dandy Rock's Angel. By Geo. Waldo Browne.

146 The Cattle King; or, Cortina's Right Bower. By Frank Dumont.

147 Nobby Nick of Nevada; or, The Scamps of the Sierras. By Edward L. Wheeler.


149 Bob Rockett, the Bank Runner. By Charles Morris.

150 The Mad Miner; or, Dandy Rock's Doom. By G. Waldo Browne.

151 The Sea Trailer; or, A Vow Well Kept. By Col. Prentiss Ingraham.

152 Dandy Darce; or, The Tigers of High Pine. By W. H. Eyster.

153 Wild Frank, the Buckskin Bravo. By E. L. Wheeler.

154 The Boy Trailers; or, Dainty Lance on the War-Path. By Jos. E. Badger, Jr.

155 Gold Plume, the Boy Baz tid. By Col. Prentiss Ingraham.

156 Will Wildfire in the Woods. By C. Morris.

157 Ned Temple, the Border Boy. By T. C. Harbaugh.

158 Deadwood Dick's Doom; or, Calamity Jane's Last Adventure. By E. L. Wheeler.

159 Patent-Leather Joe's Defeat; or, The Lady Road-Agent. By Philip S. Warne.

160 Buffalo Billy, the Boy Bullwhacker; or, The Doomed Thirteen. By Col. P. Ingraham.

161 Bob Rockett, the Crackman. By C. Morris.

162 Little Hurricane, the Boy Captain. By Oll Coomes.

163 Deadwood Dick's Dream; or, the Rivals of the Road. By E. L. Wheeler.

164 Tornado Tom; or, Injun Jack from Red Core. By T. C. Harbaugh.


166 Will Wildfire Wins and Loses; or, "A Trump Card." By Charles Morris.

167 Dandy Rock's Pledge; or, Hunted to Death. By George W. Browne.
169 Dixy Champion. By Edward Willett.
170 Bob Rattler. For Life; or, Shadowed in New York. By Charles Morris.
171 Frank Morton, the Boy Hercules. By Oil Coomes.
172 The Yankee Ranger; or, Dusky Darrell. By Edwin Emerson.
174 Dandy Rock's Scheme; or, The Golden Hand. By G. W. Browne.
175 The Arab Detective; or, Snoozer, the Boy Sharp. By Edward L. Wheeler.
176 Will Wildfire's Pluck; or, The Hidden Hand. By Charles Morris.
178 The Maniac Hunter; or, The Mysteries of Night Island. By Burton Sax.
179 Dainty Lance; or, The Mystic Marksman. By J. E. Badger, Jr.
180 The Boy and Hunter; or, Navajo Nick's Scout. By T. C. Harbaugh.
183 Jabez Dart, Detective; or, The Hermit Trapper, by Capt. C. M. Convery.
184 Featherweight, the Boy Spy. By Ed. Willett.
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186 Dainty Lance and His Pard. By Joseph E. Badger, Jr.
187 The Trapped Tiger King; or, Davy's Plot. By Col. Preniss Ingram.
188 The Ventioliquis Detective, A Romance of Rogues. By Edward L. Wheeler.
189 Old R-caky's Boys; or, Bonito, the Young Musician. By Maj. Sam S. Hall.
190 Sim Simpkins, Scout; or, The Faithful Mountain Masiff. By James L. Bowen.
192 Hickory Harry; or, Roaring Ralph, the Ventioliquis. By Harry St. George.
193 The Swindling Smith Grim; or, The Young Gladiator's Game. By Edward L. Wheeler.
194 Prospect Pete, the Boy Miner. By Oil Coomes.
195 The Tenderfoot Trail: or, F Buckley Phil, of the Vinegar Hill. By T. C. Harbaugh.
196 The Dandy Detective; or, The Abducted Boy Mystery. By Charles Morris.
197 Roy, the Young Cattle King; or, The Texan Cowboy. By Col. Preniss Ingram.
199 Dictionary Nat. Detective; or, Bill Bravo, the Bear Trapper. By T. C. Harbaugh.
200 The Twin Horsemen; or, The Brothers of the Plumed Lance. By Capt. Frederick Whitaker.
201 Dandy Darke's Pad; or, The Hawks of High Pine. By Wm. E. Ryster.
202 Tom, the Texan Tige; or, Old Luke's Luck. By Oil Coomes.
203 Sam, the Office Boy; or, The Tables Turned. By Charles Morris.
204 The Young Cowboy; or, The Girl Trailer's Triumph. By Col. Preniss Ingram.
205 The Frontier Detective; or, Sierra Sam's Scheme. By E. L. Wheeler.
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211 Little Giant and His Band; or, Despard, the Duelist. By P. S. Warne.
212 The Jimtown Sport; or, Gypsy Jack in Colorado. By E. L. Wheeler.
213 The Pirate's Prize; or, The My-terious Yankee Schooner. By C. Dunning Clark.
214 Dandy Dave, of Shady Valley; or, 'The Frisco Flash o' Lightnings. By T. C. Harbaugh.
215 Daring Dan the Ranger; or, the Denver Detective. By Oil Coomes.
216 The Cowboy Captain; or, Ranger Ralph's Ruin. By Col. Preniss Ingram.
217 Bald Head of the Rockies; or, The Ang' of the Range. By Maj. Sam S. Hall.
218 The Miner Sport; or, Sugar-Coated Sam's Claim. By Ed. L. Wheeler.
219 Buck, the Detective; or, Paul, the Boy Pard. By Albert W. Alken.
220 Crack-Shell Frank; or, Bill Bounce, the Mountain Bravo. By Charles Morris.
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224 Frisky Ferguson, the New York Boy. By G. L. Alken.
225 Dick Drew, the Miner's Son; or, Apollo Bill, the Road-Agent. By Ed. L. Wheeler.
226 Dakota Dick in Chicago; or, Jack, the Old Tar. By Charles Morris.
227 Merle, the Boy Cruiser; or, Brandt the Buccaneer. By Col. Preniss Ingram.
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230 The Three Boy Sports; or, The Sword Hunters. By Capt. Frederick Whitaker.
231 Sierra Sam, the Detective. By Edward L. Wheeler.
232 Merle Monte's Treasure; or, Buccaneer Brandt's Threat. By Col. Preniss Ingram.
233 Rocky Rover Kit; or, Davy Crockett's Crooked Trail. By Ensign C. D. Warren.
234 Baldy, the Miner Chief. By Capt. J. F. C. Adams.
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249 The Boy Chief of the Rocky Pass; or, Daring Darko. By Edward Willett.
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251 Benny Jim's Terror; or, Ranger Rainbolt's Ruse. By Oll Coomes.
252 Kit, the Girl Detective. By T. C. Harbaugh.
253 The Girl Rider; or, Nimble Ned's Surprise. By Capt. J. C. Cowdric.
254 Dead Shot Dandy's Double; or, Benito, the Boy Bard. By Col. Prentiss Ingraham.
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