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ROYAL RANGER RALPH;

—OR—

The Waif of the Western Prairies.

BY WELDON J. COBB.

CHAPTER XIV.

RANGER RALPH'S ADVENTURES.

We left Ranger Ralph in a very peculiar position of peril and excitement, an occupant of one of the wagons the outlaws had secured from the attacked emigrant train.

As has been stated, the scout believed that his presence in the vehicle was not known or even suspected.

He had crept thither, desperately wounded as he supposed, and while unconscious the wagon had started on its journey.

From what he saw and heard, the scout reasoned that Dutton had met a new section of Despard's outlaw band near the emigrant train, and they were at once returning to the bandit's headquarters at Lone Canyon.

The prize was not a pleasant one to the ranger. He dreaded great peril and trouble should Despard carry Inez to his mountain home. More than once the scouts had left the vigilantes to the place easy to infer defeat. The canyon was nearly impassable when guarded by the scouts.

Even were the girl rescued, it would be difficult to pass through the country infested by hostile Indians. Still, the scout was glad the spot now centered at Lone Canyon. Here he knew the hermit Walford lived.

The scout found that his wound, received at the massacre on the emigrant train, while painful, was by no means serious. He lay securely hidden by the hay and straw in the bottom of the wagon, yet he could see his enemies on the seat and hear their talk.

The course of the outlaws during the morning was over a prairie interspersed with trees. Toward evening they diverged to the mountains, entered Lone Canyon, and then followed the Pueblo River through the hills. It was but an obstacle when the road halted at a place well known to the scout. As he peered from his covert he knew that he was in the vicinity of one of the hardest trails in the territory. It was known as "Lone Canyon Tavern," and was kept by a man named Dutton, who, surrounded by fugitives from justice and criminals, defied all the laws in this isolated place.

The entire party had stopped here, and their loud voices and clinking glasses could be heard from the bar-room a few minutes later.

The scout was about to shift his position, cramped in position, and experienced a slight advantage of the authorities, when he heard a voice from the wagon when he supposed all had left.

Two men were passing the wagon and going toward the cabin. They were conversing, and he heard one of them say:

"I tell you, Despard is going to divide and leave the business."

"Yes, when we get up to the den," replied the other.

"There's considerable plunder to divide."

"I should say so. We got a lot from the emigrant wagons."

"Gold?"

"Great quantities."

"Where is it?"

"Maybe it's in this wagon."

"Nothing."

"Why not?"

"They don't leave good things around here."

One of the men, as if impelled by some whim of curiosity, had placed his hand over the back board of the wagon, stepped among the hay, he uttered a startled exclamation.

"What?"

"What is it?" asked his companion.

"There's some one in here."

"In the wagon?"

"Yes."

"Who is it?"

"Dunno, but it's some one."

"Let's have him out."

"No. That's Dutton's business. I wonder if he knows who it is?"

"May be a friend of his. We'll tell him about it anyway."

The man pulled vigorously at the scout's arm. Ranger Ralph gave utterance to a series of incoherent mutterings.

"Drunk!" commented one of the men. They walked away toward the tavern.

The scout foresaw that his discovery was only a question of time. He glanced toward the tavern and observed that several of the outlaws were hanging outside the place in full sight of the wagon.

"If I could only start up the horses around the ledge of rocks there, I would be out of range and could escape," he thought.

Ranger Ralph chirruped to the horses, and they instantly started. He had miscalculated what would occur, however.

The moment they turned the ledge of rocks the road led by a steep descent to the river. Unguided, and being forward by the impetus of the wagon, the horses dashed down this declivitous pathway.

The scout sprang to his feet and started for the seat. A swing of the vehicle dashed him against its sides, and then he gave up all for lost; for the wagon pitched from side to side, lurched forward, fell over the side of the cliff, and went tumbling to the rocky bed of the river, sheer forty feet below.

The startled outlaws hurried after the wagon as they saw it start forward. They saw the catastrophe, and heard the horses neigh wildly in terror as they struggled in midair. Then the traces gave way. The steeds disappeared under the waters of the river.

The wagon struck the water, was submerged, and then with its living freight was borne from sight into the shadows of the canyon, down the swift current of the Pueblo River.

CHAPTER XV.

WHITE FAWN.

The smoldering camp-fire of the Modocs burned low, and the spot where the triumphant savages had fired the funeral pile a few minutes previous was silent and deserted.

At the place where Darrel Grey had been tied to the tree its charred trunk and a heap of ashes alone showed.

The least sanguine of the Indians would have sworn that their intended victim had certainly paid the full penalty of his temerity in visiting their camp.

Yet the young scout had escaped.

It was a marvelous combination of circumstances which led to his timely rescue.

He had abandoned himself to his fate, and adjudged a struggle utterly useless when the fire was lighted.

He saw the Indians disappear.

He saw the fire creep upward—a hideous, menacing serpent of flame—and gave himself up for lost.

Suddenly hope revived in his breast. His hands were loosed; he was forcibly dragged back from the tree, and he turned to greet his unexpected rescuer.

A dark, expressive face peered into his own, a pair of mournful eyes met his glance.

"White Fawn!" ejaculated Darrel, in bewilderment.

It was indeed the Indian maiden.

"Yes, it is White Fawn."

"And here? You rescued me. Ah, how can I thank you?"

"Eagle Eye forgets."

"Forgets what?"

"That he saved the life of White Fawn."

"But how came you here?"

"Because here was the Black Crow."

"Despard!" exclaimed Darrel.

"Yes, so the palefaces call him."

"He is your enemy?"

The eyes of the Indian princess flashed fiercely.

"He is my most cruel enemy."

"Speak! What wrong has he done you?"

"Why would Eagle Eye know?"

"To avenge White Fawn's wrongs."

"You would do that?"

"Yes, for he has persecuted the friends of Eagle Eye."

"Come."

The Indian maiden led Darrel to a spot near the river, where they would not be discovered should the savages return. Then she told her simple, fateful story.

It seemed that a month previous she had been wedded at the camp of her father to the Jaguar, a chief of the peaceful Nez Perces.

The latter was to convey her to the reservation of his tribe, and off the wigwam of Shadow Snake he fastened with gold and jewels.

Dyke Despard and his men were to convey them to their destination.

Instead, he led them, behind the Jaguar, as White Fawn fled, and imprisoned her in Lone Canyon, where Darrel had rescued her.

Here she had been guarded by one of Despard's men until the return of the latter from Fort Spot. Then he had attempted to kill her, as he had a woman.

Darrel asked the Indian girl why he did not go to her father with his story.

"Not till White Fawn is certain the Jaguar is dead, and until she has killed Black Crow," she replied, ominously.

She listened intently as Darrel related his own adventures with the Jaguar.

Then she said: "White Fawn knows where Black Crow is now."

"Yonder?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"To Lone Canyon."

"Is it far from here?"

"A night's journey."

"And you would guide me thither?"

"Yes."

Before an hour had passed Darrel knew that the intrepid White Fawn was a valuable and daughtless ally in his cause.

She seemed inspired with but one idea, and that was to confront the man who had wronged her so terribly.

White Fawn scouted the country thoroughly, but they met with no success.

Many times they concealed themselves to avoid passing strangers, and it was night when they came to the canyon where the stronghold of the bandits was located.

The skirt of the ranch where the Lone Canyon tavern was situated, and descended into the wild gorge beyond, that was desolate and isolated in the extreme.

The moonlight showed the river with the towering hills on either side.

"Look!" said White Fawn. "Yonder is one of the hidden places of the palefaces in ambush."

Darrel saw a dilapidated log structure which seemed to be built out from a mammoth cave in the mountain side.

"You think Despard is there?" he asked.

"Yes."

"And the girl?"

"Is his prisoner there, or near by. Remain here. White Fawn will soon return."

"Where are you going?" asked Darrel.

"To find out how many there are to learn how we may reach them."

She was gone like a flash. Two moments sped by, and Darrel anxiously awaited her return.

He was standing on a ledge of rocks which jutted out over the river, and vainly scanned the scene for some indication of the presence of his foes.

Suddenly, to his right and inland, he saw a light flash.

He began walking toward it, clambered over a place to climb, and was amazed to view a natural basin in the landscape which resembled an immense pit.

Its sides were almost perpendicular, and were overgrown with vines and bushes.

The light moved across the open space at the bottom of this indentation. Apparently, it was a lantern carried by some person.

Darrel observed that the place was directly back of the elevation in which the log cabin was located. It was evidently a part of the abode of the bandits. As he stood regarding the lantern curiously it suddenly disappeared.

At the same moment, in leaning too far over the edge of the pit, he lost his balance and fell forward. Down, down he went, slightly breaking a very heavy fall by catching at the vines and shrubs. He landed at the bottom of the pit, badly bruised and half stunned.

There was no way of climbing out of the place, and as he recovered his senses he endeavored to find some other outlet from his strange place of imprisonment. He finally groped his way to an opening that seemed to lead into the mountain side.

Undoubtedly, he reasoned, the man with the lantern had disappeared by this egress.

He crept along a narrow passage-way, and saw, some distance ahead, a glimmer of light. Darrel paused, as against its radiance he made out a large cave-like apartment. Two men were conversing within it.

One was Dyke Despard. The other was a man bearing a sinister to his mind.

"Well," the former asked, "is everything all right?"

"Yes, Captain."

"No spies or visitors since we left?"

"None."

"And the way of escape by the pit?"

"Is closed up until we need to use it."

"Very well. Now, then, as to your expedition down the canyon?"

"In search of the old hermit?"

"Walford—yes."

Darrel started. He remembered that this was the name of the man to whom Inez Tracey had left the fortune for Inez.

"I have located him."

"Good."

"It is about ten miles from here."

"Could you guide me there?"

"Readily."

"Is he alone?"

"Always."

"And not prepared for visitors?"

"His business no one knows the way to his abode."

"Then we will make a visit."

"When?"

"To-morrow."

The two men left the place. Darrel followed them at a distance. Suddenly the light was shut out from his vision. A large stone seemed rolled into an aperture leading from the cave.

He approached it and peered beyond the edge. A cry of delight escaped his lips. In an underground apartment stood the object of his quest.

It was Inez Tracey, the girl he so devotedly loved.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

grandmother's Pantry.

A correspondent of the *Youth's Companion*, who evidently has a "sweet tooth," waxes eloquent over the goodies made by our grandmothers who, as he truly says, had few cook books, but knew how to cook. He writes tolerably well, but if he is a married man it is, perhaps, fortunate for him that his letter is printed anonymously.

It is long since some of us have seen any of the crullers of which we were so fond when grandmother made them.

She used to make also a tooth-some little seed-cake, fragrant with caraway and anise seeds, with sugar on top, the like of which we have not seen since we used to sip it in her pantry, and help ourselves out of the old blue china jar in which they were always kept.

There was another and larger stone jar on the same shelf, in which she kept those big, partly twisted and braided gingerbreads that neither looked nor tasted like the degenerate descendants of them of present day.

Sometimes we chewed a rocky instead, and my, was it a rocky! not a thin, wafer like, dry cracker, like the cracker of this generation, but a full inch thick and square as large as a saucer, crunchy to delight the heart, and stay more the stomach of a hungry boy.

You remember, too, the box brown turnover with your initial on it, full to the brim of wholesome and unwholesome dishes you have never tasted another better than that turnover.

You found many things in your grandmother's pantry that you never find in any place now. And perhaps, with the exception of your own mother, you have never found any one so kind and generous as grandmother herself.

Not a Crime.

The St. Paul *Pioneer Press* relates an anecdote at the expense of a clergyman whom we will call Dr. Brown. He is noted for his good works as well as for his good preaching, and is always ready to take a hand in the enforcement of the laws against sin. One day he appeared at the office of the City Attorney, leading by the hand a boy of about twelve years.

"Mr. Murray," said Dr. Brown, "I want to have a word with you. This boy, who lives in Fourth street, arrested. He gave this boy a drink."

"Well? Alcohol" was the first charge terrific utterance of the attorney, as he clutched his hand over his head and bore "What else were you in that saloon, my lad?" he inquired, turning to the boy.

"Just come out a minute ago," replied the orphan, modestly.

"Hum! Yes, yes! How did you come to go in?"

"Don't know. Just happened to."

"Have you a drink, did he?"

"Yes."

And the boy wiped his face with an upward stroke of the palm of his hand, while Dr. Brown looked on with an expression of satisfaction. Mr. Murray scratched his head a moment, and proceeded:

"Alcohol. Well, what did they give you to drink?"

"Glass of water," answered the boy.

"Why didn't you tell me that?" exclaimed the minister, turning very red in the face.

"You didn't ask me, sir," said the new

DECLINE OF SPAIN.

GREAT LOSS OF TERRITORY IN A HUNDRED YEARS.

Once Owned Nearly All of Both Americas—Cuba All that Is Left—That Likely to Be Dropped Because Too Hot to Hold.

Sold and Lost in War.

In looking at Spain's hold upon Cuba we see an almost its last possession in the New World. It still holds a few islands, but these it only as a coaling and provision station.

Columbus found a continent across the Atlantic and took possession of it in the name of his sovereign. Then Spain "owned" the New World. But other explorers soon early took possession of countries in Europe. England took a big slice. Dropping some from Holland and parts of England and, finding themselves together, finally called themselves the United States.

In 1801 Spain found herself deprived of the continent she had discovered 300 years before to a great extent. The entire eastern coast was gone, both in North and South America, and there were adverse inroads in the center. But Spain still owned California, Florida, Central America and all the eastern part of South America.

Today she owns nothing. Cuba is practically gone from her. She does not govern it, neither does she get its products. The rest of North America has passed away by conquest, by grant or by purchase. South America, true, has Spanish blood in it. But they have formed independent colonies and are known as Chileans, Bolivians, Peruvians and Colombians. They have Spain, but they have themselves more. They will not pay direct tribute or join in her government.

Spain must soon withdraw to the Eastern hemisphere, where she has a lovely little peninsula, and confine herself to that territory and a few such little islands in the Pacific that still belong to her.

In losing North and South America Spain has shown not such bad generalship, nor in the opinion of her conquerors even bad judgment. England is the only country that has been able to divide herself peacefully and govern kingdoms on an ocean. She does it by a broad policy that allows home rule and almost absolute independence on the part of the Governor General. Victoria Regina's name is upon the official newspaper and her head upon the money, but she does not "govern" the people of Canada, she compels them to pay more than they would have to pay to their own government if they were "free."

Spain in giving up her western lands had made some pretty good deals. Others were not so good. The outcome of the Cuban war will tell whether she has profited by the Cuban struggle. If she gets it absolutely back it will be here, forever to hold in a state of mental subjection to punish and starve for generations to come. But if she parts with it and makes it self governing, she will not get the tribute from it which the island needs to pay its own debts.

Spain's first loss, in the early part of the century, was the great district called the itself Louisiana. Spain had got Louisiana in 1762 from the French, who originally discovered it. But when Napoleon became Consul he got Louisiana back and the big "New Orleans territory," and held them secure. The enclosed all the southern and middle portions of the United States, and was the largest and richest piece of land then known.

The United States got it from the French in 1803 by paying $15,000,000, and it is said that the Spanish have never ceased to mourn that they could not have held it, since this purchase, which would have excluded them from all colonies entirely.

Spain's next loss was Mexico by conquest, in 1821. On that date Mexico declared itself free. And then began a long series of wars, in which all countries joined, but which resulted in Mexican independence on land and surrender in 1848. Spain lost heavily by this war.

Texas still was Spanish territory. But by act of United States Congress in 1845 Texas was purchased from Spain. It had a debt of $7,500,000, which it seemed as if it could never pay off, and Spain allowed the United States to take Texas if it would assume that debt. There was vigorous opposition at the time, as the country was in a state of financial distress. But Congress decided, and with what good results the subsequent history of Texas shows.

Spain by the act lost a territory of 318,000 square miles, and takes as large as Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania all three put together.

Florida meanwhile had been purchased of Spain in 1819 for $5,000,000. There were 67,000 square miles, and the whole country was rich in vegetation and minerals. It was called the dismal region of the New World and was named for the Spanish Easter, upon which day it was discovered.

England, all this while, had been taking pieces of country from the original Spanish owners. Part of its present Canadian territory it got because the Spanish wanted to join the English. Much it got from the French, who had taken it forcibly from the Spanish. A little it got by purchase.

So rapidly did the land pass out of the hands of the Spanish Crown that, within a generation the lower half of North America from being a Spanish country became part of the United States. California was added to the United States in 1848, after the Mexican struggle. It embraced the immense tract that is now divided into six States, and in 1849 it became the Territory of California. A few men now known as "the forty-niners," went there and came back with such astounding reports of the richness of its front, the fineness of its wood and the variety of its soil, that others started out. There were forty miles full of life, glittering sand. In 1850 it became a State and soon proved to be the pride of all. Fabled stories, holding money that could be traced off with foreign countries for their wealth, the United States needed.

Neither Spain nor Mexico would have parted with California, including Oregon, if they had known what lay there. The old Spanish possessors tried to keep the secret, and even that land under the romantic Spanish shadow of the West.

WRITES JUVENILE FICTION.

Western Author Whose Stories Are Popular with Young People.

Writing juvenile stories seems to interest and hold an army of boys and girls numbering not less than hundreds week after week and year after year, in a task incredible to not only skill and judgment, but positive genius. There has come about a vast change in fiction for the literature during the past decade. Gone the wishy washy and the blightly spiced sensational have been relegated to the background, and freshness, reality, and above all, vim, have taken prominent position, among more elaborate and fashionable readers.

Eastern publishers say that it is the Western feeling bold that pays best for work. A Western man holds the palm for juvenile fiction. Western Colorado has been known to title him under his own name multiple years. Lynn Thompson has contributed to Eastern magazines for years, and in the matter of juvenile literature he has for some time ranked among the best.

As Dr. Wilbur McKenzie, Ralph Hamilton and Paul Jacobus, however, Mr. Cobb has since 1884 been very prominently before the reading public. "Jim Beckle Boys" was given the best reception in boating and "Story of six shooter" and "The Tethered Bear," which won the Manuscript prize, the reading of 212 votes, were the work of the same author. There is a lady writer, one New York publisher, putting out nine books this year to a single year.

Mr. Cobb presents to the latest and the average boy of today, a type far better informed and more critical than the youth of the last generation. It is of the best stamp of the time to deal in this way from the tinsely and impossible, and in this vein Mr. Cobb has been a crusader. Incomplete literature, while his readers, he tells, only choose their preferences and preferences to such near home, indeed. But, since the series hundred and juvenile boys and social boys and girls' clubs in the country, his name is a household word.

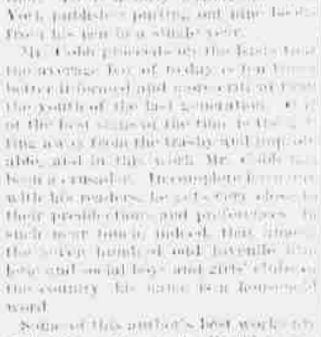
Some of his author's best work is in "The Oldest Man in the World," "The White Dwarf Elephant," "The Golden Bar," and his best great story, "Home Bright," which reached a sale of 10,000 copies. Mr. Cobb resides with his stepmother, wife and two longer children in Lincoln, Ill., a beautiful Chicago suburb. He is about 38 years of age, and while rather retiring in his social disposition, seems to understand how to reach the juvenile heart.

SEXTET PASSENGER CYCLE.

Will Accommodate Four People Besides the Drivers.

In Chicago the other evening a sextet party of people formed the back with the usual attention to bicycles. A seven passenger carriage which accommodates four people besides the drivers. The latter are on ordinary saddles and propel the machine, while the passengers occupy three handsome upholstered seats in the box. There is room for two in front and the other at the rear affording a lounge. It is a beautiful machine, built with a view to perfect grace and strength. The frame is of regular bicycle tubing, only heavier, and has a carrying capacity of 1,200 at a speed of fourteen miles an hour on an asphalt pavement. The box has been carefully tested by six of the best men in the factory where it was made. It is a foot wheel of regulation, with heavy spokes and steel rims and the carriage is of well seasoned hard wood, and is fastened on the frame by clamps. It is durable, and the machine can be ridden without it. It is a very clever invention.

NEW BICYCLE.



NEWEST INVENTION IN BICYCLES.

BLOOD FORETELLS DISEASE.

Early Symptoms May Be Easily Recognized Under the Microscope.

The physicians of the future will predicate his prognosis rather upon the products of the microscope than the Doctors of the nineteenth century. Tuberculosis, pneumonia and diseases can now be detected as long before they

the normal blood corpuscles are round and flat, and have a depressed spot in the middle. The abnormal ones are oval, and have no depressed spot. In the blood of a person who would have, if they had a cause, the disease specified, the oval corpuscles are found in the blood, and in the blood of persons who are free from the disease they are all round and flat. In the blood of persons who are free from