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THE NEW MEMBER.

He was a country Senator, and when he took the floor the eyes of fellow members slowly turned to look him over. His hair was long, his voice was loud, and whiskers decked his chin. His "newness" advertised itself before he could begin. He paused to gather dignity, with handskerchief in hand. His movements were deliberate, but very far from "grand." And well they knew, from former years, about what he would say. But still they couldn't smile in quite the same old way.

"I'm not a ready speaker, gentlemen," he slowly said. "And eloquence has never yet through me its lustre shed. But if you'll take my simple life, and its brief pages scan, I think you'll all agree that I have been an honest man. I represent constituents in this great body here. And I expect to serve them faithfully from year to year." He paused in awkward silence, and stroked his board of gray. But still they couldn't smile in quite the same old way.

It was his maiden effort, and while he strove to speak, His voice would sometimes quaver, and then again would speak; He talked against monopoly and over-reaching trusts— They recognized in his remarks the old reformers' thrusts. He cried against corruption, its baneful lust, and then He said they should be dealt with by true and upright men. They watched him as with fervor his form would bend and sway, But still they couldn't smile in quite the same old way.

It was the old, familiar speech—they used to call it "cent." And used to laugh within their sleeves to hear that kind of rant; But somehow when this new man spoke, although he was uncouth, They seemed to realize that he was dealing with the truth. Some glanced about with furtive looks, some trembled just a bit. For well they knew those shafts at last had found a place to hit; They were, of course, ridiculous, these things he tried to say, But still they couldn't smile in quite the same old way.

—Puck.

four black fellows, armed with spears and kyllies, going along the other shore, one behind another, all bent forward and moving quickly, as if tracking game.

I watched them a moment; and it then occurred to me, far more suddenly than was agreeable, that I had myself passed along there but a few minutes before on my way to the hut, and that I was the game.

The conviction was unmistakable, and gave me a most unpleasant thrill. I felt anything but certain as to my cartridges.

But I was not long reflecting that it was best to keep those spear and kyllie fellows on the farther side of the pool. So, stepping out in sight, I cocked my carbine and shouted across. All stopped short and stared at me. Then I saw one of them half-raise his hand—and all four dropped out of sight in the grass.

To let them know I was armed, as well as to try my cartridges, I took aim at the trunk of a large gum-tree over there, and fired. The well-crimped cartridge proved effective, and following the report I heard the bullet spat against the trunk of the gum.

Instantly the blacks sprang to their feet with a deaf "Ooo-arrrh!" and disappeared among the trees.

But there had been an accent of exultant hostility in the shout which made me think there might be more to come of it. I now took serious thought as to what I had better do, and was not long in deciding that our ranch would be a good place for me—before they raised the whole black country! I knew the general direction of our place from the river, and striking into a five-mile-an-hour jog, I soon left but and pool behind.

I had not gone far, however, when I found myself growing exceedingly weary. I had not eaten much for twenty-four hours; and falling asleep in wet clothes the previous night had been very unwise. I had felt feverish all the morning, and now headache and giddiness beset me.

I kept on for an hour, however, coming at last to rocky uplands, where lay great numbers of immense boulders of mica schist. Some of these were as large as a small house.

I climbed on one of them and sat down, where the drooping limbs of a gum brushed the top of it. I felt neither energy or care for what might happen. To go on seemed insupportable exertion; an unconquerable impulse to lie down came over me—and I must have dropped asleep there.

The sound of low voices roused me, and raising my head off the hard rock, I saw something which instantly awoke me.

A little way back on my trail were what looked to be ten or twelve skeletons, stealing forward. These skeletons carried shields, spears and kyllies, however. They were black fellows, painted according to their custom for war or a corroboree, outlining their ribs and other bones in white daub.

The pendent foliage of the gum had prevented them from seeing me. I drew back the hammer of my carbine, and under other circumstances it would have been amusing, at the click, to see those skeleton fellows stop short and look about them.

They saw me now; but instead of throwing their spears, they dropped in the grass and wriggled away like snakes—in dread of the white man's deadly rifle.

Watching them disappear, I slid down from the rock and made off as fast as I could.

By this time it was three o'clock of a hot and lowery afternoon; the mists had wholly lifted. My head ached very severely; but I went on for two hours or more, over sterile, rocky hills to the west of the Fitzroy. Toward the northeast I could see the river lowlands and the clumps of lofty, flooded gums which marked its course. I was thus enabled to keep to the direction in which I knew our ranch lay. But it was evidently a long way off still; and as evening drew on, I grew quite discouraged, as much from illness and lack of strength as fear of my pursuers.

My plight, indeed, was an unenviable one. If I went on after nightfall I was almost certain to be "bushed," again, and if I lay down and fell asleep, the black fellows might steal up and spear me. But coming before long to a brook, I hit on a ruse for throwing them off my trail. I first crossed the brook, and went on for fifty or sixty paces, then came back on my own tracks and waded along the bed of the brook for a hundred yards or so, and finally emerged in a thicket of scrub and weeds on the bank. Here I determined to lie up till morning.

Night set in; the moon was not yet up. Bandicoots were scurrying about, giving vent to their harsh squeaks, but otherwise nothing was stirring; and after lying there in much discomfort for some time, I lapsed first into one uneasy drowse, then another, and another, for several hours.

A splashing of feet in the brook roused me at last, and I raised myself to peer out from my covert. The clouds had broken away, the moon was up; and there was my painted pursuer again, still looking for me!

Little trail as I left, they had followed on it to the brook and crossed over, but were now at a loss. For some time they stood, making signs to one another, without speaking; and anything more weird than their strange white-outlined bodies, like so many walking skeletons, I have never seen.

With my gun well in hand, I lay in the thicket and watched them. After courting about for a time, recrossing the brook once or twice, they moved away in the direction in which I had been travelling. Clearly, in spite of their usual dread of darkness, they were spending the night hunting me; but my ruse had bothered them.

The heated air had turned cooler and my head felt clearer, but I judged it better to remain there till daybreak; for I looked for the black fellows to come back presently.

They did not show themselves, however; and as soon as the east grew bright I set off, and in the course of half an hour reached the height of land ahead, whence I discerned the little dome shaped mountain and yellow cliffs to the west of our ranch.

I had not quite shaken off the black fellows, however, for as I descended the hills, a confused distant shouting was borne to my ears, and on a bare hilltop, a mile or more to the southward, I caught sight of several of them brandishing their kyllies and beating them on their shields. By way of a parting salute, I sent a bullet humming over their heads. That was the last I saw of them.

On reaching the ranch, I found my two partners in much anxiety as to my fate. One of them had just come in from a trip down to the beach, and had led home the pony, which he had found hitched out by the trail, as I had left him.

I had covered a distance of fully eighty miles, and a number of days passed before I recovered from the effects of the journey. The experience taught me never to set off again by night or day without a compass.

Beyond doubt these black neighbors of ours had intended to put in execution their threat to kill and eat a white man. If they could have surprised me, they would probably have done so. None the less, I was very glad I had not found it necessary to shoot any of them, or open a death-account with their tribe. Two of them have already come to our place of their own accord, and in time we shall no doubt establish friendly relations with them.—Youth's Companion.

The Rise in the River.

It is little short of astonishing to see how little water is required to float the southern river steamers, a boat loaded with perhaps a thousand bales of cotton slipping along contentedly, where a boy could wade across the stream.

Not long ago, however, the Chattanooga got too low for even her light draught commerce, and at Gunboat Shoals the steamer grounded. As the drinking water on board needed replenishing, a deckhand was sent ashore with a couple of water buckets.

Just at this moment a northern traveler approached the captain of the boat and asked him how long he thought they would have to stay there.

"Oh, only until that man gets back with a bucket of water to pour into the river," the captain replied. Presently the deckhand returned, and the stale water from the cooler was emptied overboard. Instantly, to the amazement of the traveller, the boat began to move.

"Well, if that don't beat thunder!" he gasped.

The fact was, that the boat, touching the bottom, had acted as a dam, and there was soon backed up behind her enough water to lift her over the shoal and send her on down the stream.—Harper's Weekly.

How Senator Tillman Lost an Eye.

Although his brothers were old enough to serve in the Confederate army, Benjamin R. Tillman was a schoolboy of 15 when the great struggle began. He knew that at 16 he must join the Confederate forces, and his brothers wrote back from the field entreating him to get as much education as possible, because the war might last so long that he would never again be able to go to school.

Even at night young Tillman would continue his studies, frequently carrying a lighted pine knot into the woods and lying down with his books beside it. He was a lank, tall, silent boy, dictatorial and brusque, but a natural student. The heat of the pine torch injured his left eye and a plunge in cold water brought on a tumor that destroyed it. It was the almost two years' illness following this mishap that prevented the youth from serving in arms against the Union.—Pearson's Magazine.

Airship Possibilities.

The following conversation, according to Health, took place between two airship owners:

"Have any trouble in reaching Mars?"

"None worth mentioning. I was fined four or five times for scorching on the Milky Way, and once for looping the loop on one of Saturn's rings—but that was all."

DEATH VALLEY TRAMPS.

THEIR SEARCH FOR FOOD, DRINK AND SHELTER.

Strange Life of These Chronic Hoboes—Prey Upon Ranchmen—Revenge of One Who Was Ordered to Leave—Crimes They Commit—The Tramp Prospector.

What would you who feed an occasional hobo from your back doorstep and wonder at his feet worn from tramping over a few miles of well laid roads, his clothes grass strewn from sleeping in haymows, think of a tramp who covers hundreds of miles a year, whose feeding places are from twenty-five to fifty miles apart, whose watering places are equally distant from each other—in short, whose bed and bed, so to speak, are the vast floor of the desert?

Yet there is exactly such a class, real tramps, yet as different from the tramps of cities as day is from night, tramps with nothing to do but eat. They do not have to beg; food comes to them through fear. They do not have to search out sheltering barns at nightfall; a greasewood bush is their shelter, the sands of the desert their couch.

In spite of its arid wastes, in spite of the discomforts and the positive dangers to which even well equipped travellers on the desert are subjected, says the San Francisco Chronicle, the great sandy plain is come to have a species of tramp all its own, not an outgrowth from civilized places, but an origination of its own, an interesting as well as novel branch of a worthless tribe.

Even Death Valley, the most barren and dangerous of all deserts known to civilized man, has its hoboes who wander up and down its dismal length through all seasons of the year save the very hottest part of the summer.

The headquarters of all desert tramps are in some small town on the borders of the region over which they wander. Daggett has more than its share of them. So also has Randburg, Johannesburg, Ivanpah, and all the rest of the scattered settlements that dot the level plain. They are not numerous, these foot travellers, yet in proportion to the population they are probably as plentiful as their brethren of the Coast are around San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Their methods of operation are vastly different from those of the Coast hoboes. Leaving Daggett, Ivanpah or whatever little town they have cumbered during the months of greatest heat, some time in late September or October they strike out alone across the desert. One peculiarity of this class of tramps is that they never move about in companies. Indeed, one desert hobo is usually the sworn enemy of all the rest of his kind. For clothing they have such things as they can beg, possibly a few earn a little money during their months of "idleness" in the town and spend that for clothing, but as a rule they are garbed in more different colors than was Joseph, though of more subdued hue.

Over his back the desert tramp slings a gunnysack, in which are a couple of empty tin cans, a beer bottle or two of water and such food as he can beg or steal. Thus equipped, usually without a weapon of any sort, he invades a country which has brought more men to death than any other equal area in the world outside the great battlefields.

Usually his first stop will be some twenty-five miles out at a desert ranch or a solitary mining camp. On the way he travels as slowly as his food supply will let him. The cactus fruit is ripening about the time of year in which he reaches the cactus fields, and this helps him a bit on his way, and there are huge chuckawallas (lizards of two feet in length or more with edible tails) to be had for the killing, and with these he can live for some time on a small actual ration.

Where night overtakes him he sleeps and by dear experience he knows which water holes he can depend on yet to contain the life giving fluid. Should one of these "tanks" fall him in time of exceptional drought he must push on to the next one or retreat to the settlement whence he came. If either of these is too far for him to reach he dies, as many of his kind have died in the years that are gone, uncared for by man or beast, for not even the dogs of the desert will accompany these tramps on their journeys. Teamsters and prospectors do not stop to bury the tramp when his body is found, which is not often; the sun and the storms of the boundless space take care of him when he dies, as, indeed, they did in life.

But if the water hole toward which he tramps does contain plenty of water he will sometimes camp near it for several days. To these springs, too, come occasional prospectors, alone save for their faithful burros. When one of these whose "grubstake" was extra large disappears his taking off is usually charged to the Plutes. More often, so I am told by old desert men, some tramp has felled him with a stone and then, after robbing his saddlebags or the pack on his burro, pushes on into the heart of the desert. It is days before the dead miner is discovered, sometimes the days run into weeks,

and then all trace of the murderer has been covered up and he is somewhere far out on the winding white trail, living on the food he committed an awful crime to get.

The circuit of the desert tramps who start out from Daggett frequently runs entirely around Death Valley. From Daggett they go out to the China Ranch or to Resting Springs, thence on across low lava hills into the Furnace Creek country and down to the old borax works at the north end of the valley. From there it is a short and comparatively safe hike of a couple of hundred miles into some one of the mining camps, so that their tramp, all told, reaches very close to three and sometimes four hundred miles.

On this journey water holes are far apart and very uncertain, ranches are scattered and the network of trails so interwoven by the feet of prospectors and of burros that they become a veritable maze to the man who does not keep close watch on them year by year. To make this circuit requires at least nine months of the year—from late September or October to the last of May. For the remainder of the year as has been said, the tramp loafers around some border town, where he has to behave himself; ropes and telegraph poles and willing men are too near at hand for the committing of crimes.

It is the lonely ranches on the desert that suffer most from this class of wanderers. Coming to the ranch house they insolently demand food and clothing, and they get it, too. If they do not the haystack is burned that night, or even the house is set on fire if the family depends on a spring of water, as likely as not the water hole will be filled with stones and earth frequently springs along the trail, and so treated when the tramp thinks the one of his enemies is likely to pass that way in the near future and depend on the presence of water in the tank for himself and his stock.

One incident of this kind may be told to illustrate the devilish scheme these fellows concoct. A new manager was sent to the borax plant on the northern rim of Death Valley. He was a most excellent man for the work hand, but he knew nothing of the people with whom he was to deal, and the first tramp who came along was roughly ordered to "get out and stay out." Now the road over which the borax from this particular plant was hauled to the refinery was long and dry, the company had placed wooden tanks at necessary intervals, keeping them filled with water and depending them for the use of the wagon teams and their drivers. The tramp, angered and revengeful at his treatment, set out along this road and for hundreds of miles emptied every tank, result can be better imagined than scribed; the next wagon train out, huge desert wagons, drawn by two mules and handled by two men, went to the first tank and finding water pushed on to the next; by the time they reached that the men were well nigh crazed with thirst, but water awaited them there, and on dragged their weary bodies, until presumed, abandoning the team, wandered away and died.

The wagons and the mules, later quite dead, were found two or three days later, but not even the skeletons of the men were ever seen. The man keeps his secrets better than the water and this was one of them. Men followed the tramp, some say he caught. The men who follow still live on the desert; I have seen one of them, but none can remember whether they caught this particular tramp or not. Possibly a pile of cactus could tell if it could speak, for shrift is meted to the man, a tramp or mine owner, who is not with water on the desert. More valuable than gold it is, and worth human lives when thrown in the balance.

On the desert, too, there is a kind of tramp, by no means final, and yet one of the most interesting characters of the whole western tramp prospector. He makes a rest living of any man in the west, excepting the promoter of mines. And, like the promoter, lives by fleeing the credulous tramp prospector is forever being a fabulously rich prospector from the heart of the desert he laden with samples, supposed his new discovery, but really on the dump of some established prospect. Armed with these it is little for him to enlist the help of some man with more money than knowledge of the desert to develop the "find." His first demand is, of course, "grub-stake." This will come in the form of a sack of flour, or two, if the man can get out of them, a sack of beans, flour, molasses and cooking oil, as well as other things needed to work he says he is going to take. Thus provided, the man sets out, camps at some water hole and there spends until the grub-stake gives out.

The wheat crop of western for 1905 aggregated the total of 34,175,226 bushels, oats 74,211,289 bushels, and crops the province of Massachusetts fully two-thirds.

FOLLOWED HOME BY BLACKFELLOWS

By Curtis Mulhall.

During the first two years of our experiment in raising ostriches in Dampier Land—from 1900 to 1902—we had to depend for our supplies on the "pearlers" of King Sound.

There are as yet no regular means of transportation here; but we had a credit account with the general store at Cossock, two hundred and ten miles down the coast, and made an arrangement with the skipper of one or another of the pearl-fishers to bring us flour, sugar and canned goods, and land them at a little log shed on the beach not far to the west of the mouth of the Fitzroy River.

The distance from our inland ranch—fifteen or sixteen miles—is too great for signalling with rockets or guns. We could only conjecture when the pearler might put in there. Sometimes her visits would be a month, sometimes three months apart; and the only way to find out was for one or another of us to go down to the beach.

On an evening in March I set off to make this trip with our one "brumby" pony. We had been having some trouble with the black-fellows up the Fitzroy; and they had recently thrown into our stockyard a curious hieroglyph picture, scrawled on a kangaroo's thigh-bone, which we had no great difficulty in deciphering, as a threat to kill and eat three white men in the course of two moons—and the inference was easy that we were the three.

Dampier Land and the Fitzroy River district all the way up to Port Darwin are now almost the only region in the world where whites are in danger from aboriginal savages. Here may still be found black tribes of the true stone age, armed only with spears, "kyllies" and flint axes. It is one of the last haunts of primitive savagery.

Provided as we were with modern breech-loaders, we stood in no special fear of these blacks, and took no notice of their "compliments" on the kangaroo bone, save to keep a sharp watch. They never showed themselves near our ranch. The only danger from them, we concluded, was that they might surprise some one of us out alone or throw their spears or kyllies from the cover of a thicket. These Fitzroy and Lake Flora blacks throw a spear thirty or forty yards with considerable accuracy; and as for their kyllies, or boomerangs, the distance at which one may get a rap on the head from this queer missile is altogether problematical.

With all these North Australian blacks, however, the white settler has one great advantage; he can travel anywhere by night in well-nigh perfect safety—except from snakes. For owing to superstitious fears of evil spirits, "Jacky" is generally found lying up close by his fire during the hours of darkness. Sight or sound of anything moving about him at night affrights him, and he crouches, groveling, trembling, and muttering strange incantations.

So we usually made these trips down to the coast by night—if possible, when there was moonlight. The March heat, too, is much less oppressive by night. March is the first month of autumn in this southern half of the world.

After descending from the plateau, my route lay through a tract of lowland flats, covered with high grass and a sparse growth of "flooded gums," the roosting-places of thousands of sulphur cockatoos and bronze pigeons. Everywhere on these flats the spear, ripe grass came to my brumby's whetters; and while ambling through it here, he broke into a handi-cott's hole and went lame. All these brambles are addicted to shambling lameness; but I soon found that the little chap had given his near fore leg a serious wrench, and was in no condition to go on.

My first thought was now to go back to the ranch and lead my pony. It would have been far better for me if I had done so. But I was already six or seven miles on my way down to the coast. We needed to know about our supplies, and I decided to leave the

pony hitched out in the grass and go on. So securing the brumby, I shouldered my gun and set off afoot, my provision for the journey being merely a "snack" of bread and cheese in a leather wallet.

I had proceeded but a little way across the green flats when the moonlit sky darkened. Clouds had risen, and soon a hollow growl of thunder burst forth. Within three minutes it was raining copiously.

The downpour continued for half an hour; nor did the gum trees afford much shelter, for Australian foliage has a notable tendency to turn edgewise to the sky. This mattered little, however, for the thick high grass now wet me to the skin at every step; but I felt somewhat concerned for my cartridges.

Another shower, even more violent, succeeded the first, heralded by a blinding flash and a roar of thunder. In the course of a few minutes the clay flats were flooded. What was even worse a mist rose, following the showers, and it became quite impossible to keep to my course or find the gums, previously seen across the lowlands. Gladly would I now have retraced my steps to the pony and returned to the ranch; but before I was really aware, I lost my way, and was hopelessly "bushed."

Not to make bad worse, I sat down, with my back to a gum, to wait for daylight; and wet and uncomfortable as I was, I presently fell asleep sitting there.

Day had dawned when I waked, but that dense mist still enveloped everything. Apparently the sun was up, yet for the life of me I could not tell which was east. For an hour or more I sat there, hoping that the fog would lift, and meanwhile made a frugal breakfast off my bread and cheese. My general impression was that the sea lay to my right; and I finally set off in that direction, walking fast for an hour or two.

The thick grass thinned out at last, and I came to a little creek, swollen and turbid. "It is all right, now," I thought to myself. "I will follow this creek down," for I had no doubt that it flowed into the sound somewhere to the westward of our supply shed.

Then for fully three hours I followed that creek, expecting every minute to come out on the seashore. At last I grew quite bewildered. I could not understand it, for I knew I had come a distance of fourteen or fifteen miles.

Presently the mystery was cleared. Right ahead of me I suddenly saw a broad channel of deep, swiftly flowing water, into which my wandering creek debouched. It was, it could be, nothing else than the Fitzroy river, which at its nearest point is twenty miles to the northeast of our ranch. There is no other such large stream in north west Australia. And all the time I had thought that I was going to the west!

Now, at least, I knew where I was; and as I was still determined not to give up my trip, I ate what was left of my food, and set off to follow the river to salt water.

I had gone but a little way, however when I came to a deep lagoon, or arm of water, which opened back from the river. A strong current was setting into it, too strong to cross; and I followed it back and round for a mile or more, and then found that it broadened in a large pool three or four hundred yards in diameter.

As I stood looking across it, I espied what looked like a log hut on the farther side; and thinking that this might be the camp of white hunters, naturalists or prospectors, I at first "cooped" across, and then, receiving no answer, went round the pool.

It proved to be a log cabin, evidently constructed by whites, but had been for some time deserted; grass and a few young oaks were growing about the doorway. Except a mildewed copy of the London Times and two beef tins, there was nothing whatever indoors; and I was about to proceed when, glancing across the pool, I saw

four black fellows, armed with spears and kyllies, going along the other shore, one behind another, all bent forward and moving quickly, as if tracking game.

I watched them a moment; and it then occurred to me, far more suddenly than was agreeable, that I had myself passed along there but a few minutes before on my way to the hut, and that I was the game.

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