

MY FIRST NIGHT IN MONTANA.

The first night which I spent in Montana Territory came so near being my last one on earth, that to this day the recollection of it sends a thrill along my nerves. It was sixteen years ago, in 1869, and I was by no means a "tender-foot" even then, for I had spent a year in Colorado, another in Arizona, six months in California, and about as much more in Oregon. Now, in the regular order of peregrination which a young man once fairly afloat in the far West, is apt to follow out, I "swung round" into Idaho and thence headed for Virginia City, Bannack City and Miles City.

Why was I going there? Gold, and as a miner and an honest one; I can honestly claim so much; in fact, I was rather too "innocent" for that place, as my story will show. Montana was a "hard country" then; I may say so now, with no offence to its good citizens of to-day. They will agree with me I think. The Henry Plummer "gang" was not then all "cleared out," though a most determined "vigilance committee," composed of the "best men" in the Territory, had already hanged a score or two of them, without judge or jury process.

Such rude acts of justice are apt to make eastern people shudder. But really, Montana could never have been settled without its "vigilants" and the aid of lynch law. The Plummer "gang" of "road agents" and robbers had previously terrorized everybody, and had brought all business to a standstill. It was impossible to possess any property of value and live. Court and law there were none.

This condition of things lasted for a year or two. Then the honest element rallied and formed a secret league, sworn to establish order, or die in the attempt.

From 1867 to 1880 the vigilants sometimes had a peculiar symbol which a rogue sometimes found affixed to his cabin door on a morning, or otherwise posted where he could not fail to see it. It signified that his further residence in the territory was not desired; in a word it meant "go," and if he was a wise man he obeyed the hint thus conveyed sometime that day, and did not return.

But as this mystic symbol has to do with my story, I will speak of it in that connection.

On the afternoon in question I was jogging forward, perched on a mule, with my outfit lashed and cinched to the back of another, expecting to get to "Bannock" by sunset; and I should have done so but for taking a wrong trail, eight miles back, and going off to the east of the town. At length, seeing a shanty with a smoke, down beside a creek among a copse of diamond willows, I rode in to inquire my way.

A lank, quick-eyed man of twenty-two or three appeared at the door as I came through the willows; and I noticed that he seemed to regard my approach very sharply, not to say suspiciously. But I did not much wonder at that, for all "strangers" are suspicious characters in these settlements.

I noticed, too, what did arouse in me a certain queer feeling of curiosity, namely, a placard of white paper, about seven inches square, pinned to the trunk of a cottonwood ten or twelve feet from the cabin door. On this placard, roughly drawn with a very black pencil, was a most truculently grinning skull with crossbones, underneath which were the large figures, "3-7-77."

At that time I knew nothing whatever of the interpretation of this cabalistic inscription; had never even heard of it. I merely glanced at it, then addressed myself to the occupant of the shanty and asked my way to Bannock. Meantime a Crow Indian squaw made her appearance at the door.

"Well, you have missed your way," replied the man, in exceptionally good English; not at all of the frontier sort, nor were his tone and inflection what we usually heard in those parts at that time.

"You are a matter of eleven miles out of the city," he continued, regarding me closely as he spoke, "I doubt if you could get in there to-night. The trail is a blind one. But" (he went on in a tone that seemed to convey to me some occult significance) "I am rather looking for a party of old acquaintances over to-night, after the moon rises, and I may go back with them. You are welcome to stop and go along with us, if you like. We have half a buffalo hump roasting inside, and there is grass for your mules along the creek."

Something in the man's manner and the way in which his eyes sized me up, gave me a sinister impression. Yet the offer was hardly one to be refused in my present situation. So I expressed my thanks, dismounted, and hobbling out my two mules, took my pack inside the shanty and began conversation.

Like myself, my host was a young man and of about my own size, build and complexion. He told me that he had been in Montana three months "prospecting" and elk-hunting; that he managed to get a living by the sale of buffalo and elk hides. In a general way he talked of the prospects for finding gold; and he told me one or two anecdotes of his experience hunting buffaloes, and also his name,—Albert Fairbanks.

The squaw soon prepared dinner, and

gave us a fine roast of buffalo meat, along with a sauce from some kind of wild plums which she had gathered. We partook bountifully. But once, as we sat eating, I noticed that a slight noise outside the cabin, made by one of my mules, caused my host to start uneasily, and that he went hastily to the door for a look about.

As soon as we had fairly finished eating, he observed to me, confidentially, that he had promised "Maggy" (the squaw) to set her on her way to her "folks" that evening, she being desirous of returning to her tribe; and he asked me if I would mind "sitting by" in the shanty to look out for things, for an hour and a half, possibly, while he started the Indian woman on her way.

Such a request, involving no service or trouble on my part, was not easily refused to a man who had just furnished me with a good dinner. I assented, made myself comfortable before the fire in the shanty, for the night was rather chilly; and immediately Fairbanks, accompanied by the squaw, set off on foot.

An hour passed, perhaps more; night had fallen, and it was quite dark outside, the moon not having risen yet. I had hitched up my mules to a tree outside, when my ear caught the gallop of horses' feet coming momentarily nearer, evidently a numerous party. "It's Fairbanks' friends," I thought to myself, getting up and walking to the open door.

There, by the wavering reflections cast out from the wood-fire in the fireplace inside, I saw ten or eleven men on horseback facing me, each with a revolver pointed straight at my head.

"Throw up your hands!" cried a stern voice from behind one of the pistols.

I obeyed instinctively, resistance was out of the question; I had, I concluded, fallen into the clutches of road-agents.

"We've unpleasant business with you my friend," the leader continued. "You probably know what's coming—since you've paid no heed to our warning," and he pointed to the placard on the tree by the shanty.

I utterly failed to understand, or gain so much as a hint of their meaning. Even as the leader spoke, they all sprang off their horses, which two of their number took to hold; two others, stepping determinedly forward, seized me by my upraised arms, one on each side, while the fifth, whipping a lariat from beneath his coat, threw a noose over my head which drew rather uncomfortably tight and held so.

I now saw that it was a case of prospective lynching, and that I was probably mistaken for some other man—Fairbanks, most likely. I immediately and most vigorously remonstrated with them.

"Whom do you take me for?" I exclaimed with great heat. "What are you hanging me for?" etc.

"Forward!" the leader ordered; and in the midst of my remonstrant outcries, I was forced along, out through the willows to the trail and thence onward to a crag beside it, where two cedars grew, overhanging the path below.

My shouts, my frantic denials of having been guilty of any crime, and my vehement assertions that my name was not Fairbanks, made not the least impression on my captors, and were received with nothing more than an incredulous laugh.

The leader now spoke again. "Al Fairbanks, alias Henry Dothan, alias Charles Campbell," he said slowly, implacably, "we know all about you. Montana's no further use for ye. We gave you a fair chance; and if you had been disposed to be a decent man, none of your old record would have been dug up, though you were a double-dyed criminal when you came here. You robbed sluices at Deadwood and Silver Gulch. We knew all about ye when ye first came here. But we gave you a chance for yourself. You would go on the old road though. Last week you broke into a camp at Bannock; and not a month ago, you shot and robbed a miner not two miles from here. Fact, we've let you run altogether too long. If you've any remarks to make, we'll listen—two minutes."

Again I protested that I was not the man, that my name was Stuart, that I had but just arrived at Fairbanks' cabin; and for a moment or two I hoped that my frantic asseverations had produced some effect. The leader took a lantern which one of the party carried and held it close to my face. They looked at me searchingly.

"This is Fairbanks' fast enough!" one said; the others agreed with him.

"Don't waste your breath in useless lies about yourself," said the leader of the committee.

I thought of home, and of my sister, the only living relative whom I now had. "If you will murder me," I exclaimed, "send my watch and my pocket-book to my sister, Miss T. R. S., Pennsylvania."

"Give that address again, please," said the leader, taking out a note-book and pencil. I repeated it and he wrote it down, saying, "All right; they shall go as you direct."

While he spoke two others of the party seized my arms. Suddenly they stopped and spoke to the leader, who stood in front of me. He went round; I felt that they were examining my wrists. But why?

"W. S. on both of them," one said. Then I recollected the initials on my wrists, in Indian ink, with which, when a boy at school, I had been pricked on each arm, and along with them an anchor.

"Those are my initials—for William Stuart!" I exclaimed. "They were put there years ago. That is my name."

"It is just possible," the leader said

to the others. "We will keep him till to-morrow."

Forthwith I was hurried back to the shanty, mounted on a horse and thence taken, closely guarded, across the country, by moonlight, to Bannock City. Here I was thrust into a cellar, and left in darkness till the following evening, when three men appeared at the door and bade me come up.

With some natural anxiety I responded to the call, when a brief apology was made me for the "inconvenience" to which I had been subjected. I was, moreover, advised to keep a close mouth as to what had occurred, and also to be more cautious in whose company I was found in future.

Fairbanks, alias Campbell, I never saw nor heard of afterwards. It is quite apparent that having received a "permit to travel" from the vigilants, he had seen fit to do so and leave me to explain to these summary gentlemen as best I could.

I found the law of keeping one's self among good associations was the way of safety even in a new country, and I was glad enough afterwards to follow the advice of my new friends, and "to be more cautious in whose company I was found."

ENGLAND'S GREAT BANK.

An Army of 1,100 Employees Who are Paid \$300,000 Per Annum.

The total number of employes all told in the bank is about 1,100, and the salary list, including pensions is about £300,000 per annum, says the Fortnightly Review. There is an excellent library and reading-room in the bank, to which the directors have liberally contributed both money and books.

There are also a Widows' Fund and Guarantee Society, a life insurance company, a volunteer company, and a club, or dining-room where clerks can dine cheaply and well, connected with the bank, which owe very much of their prosperity to the liberality and kind consideration of the directors. The governors and directors of the bank divide between them £14,000 per annum. Of this the governors receive £1,000 each, and the directors £500 each. Beyond the status which their position gives them they derive no benefit from their office, while they tax themselves most liberally by their contributions toward the welfare of their clerks.

The governor and deputy governor remain in office for two years only, and this short tenure of office is, with considerable reason, thought to be detrimental to the efficient and consistent administration of the functions of government. The great blot of the system seems to be the want of continuity of policy which is engendered. A governor, let us say, is an enlightened financier, for two years his policy is paramount; but his successor then comes and perhaps reverses everything, and the onus of the change, so far as the bank customers are concerned, is left to be borne by the permanent officers of the bank, who have perhaps never been consulted in the matter, or whose opinions, based on the experience of many years may be ruthlessly ignored. The two-years' system undoubtedly has its advantages for the constant introduction of new blood; it also strengthens the governors from above and below the chair. The directors below the chair give the governors loyal and hearty support, because they feel that one day their own turn may come, while those above the chair, having passed through the ordeal know the value of their colleagues' support.

But the result of this is, nevertheless, the institution of a sort of one-man power, which is well enough when there is a Hubbard, Hodgson or Crawford in the chair, or if there is a Baring, Hambro, Rothschild or Goschen to follow, but which may have its disadvantages.

Population of the Soudan.

It is estimated that there are 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 of inhabitants in the Egyptian Soudan, which has an area of 2,500,000 square miles, and comprises a vast amount of fertile land along the Nile and its tributaries. Three millions of these people are Arabs and their kindred, while the remaining 9,000,000 are of the negro race. All the Arabs and Moslems, and many of the negro tribes have adopted the religion of Mecca, and are faithful followers of the Prophet. The Pagan negroes have united with the Arabs in the effort to drive out the Egyptians, and, though their religions are unlike, they have a common interest in ridding themselves of oppression. Most of the Arab tribes are on the eastern side of the Nile, while most of the negroes are on the western. Between the Nile and the Red Sea are the tribes whence come the men of Osman Digna's army, now in front of the Suakim, while along the valley and to the west are the people who flock to the Mahdhi's standard. Out of a population of 12,000,000 of people, animated by religious zeal, and smarting under the cruelties of their recent masters, it is easily possible for the Mahdhi to raise an army of 200,000 men. The wonder is not that Khartoum fell so soon, but that it was able to hold out so long. The theory is certainly very plausible that the Mahdhi could have captured it long ago if he wished, but he refrained from doing so until the British army had come too far into the Soudan to be able to retreat.

ADROITLY FOILED.

Cincinnati Inquirer.

On the morning of August 29, 1868, Senor La Barrier, an immensely wealthy Spaniard, died suddenly at his home in St. Thomas. His young and beautiful wife acted as though demented when she learned that her husband had passed away, and her intense grief and prolonged hysteria gave rise to the belief that the unfortunate woman would herself soon follow the husband whose loss she seemed to feel such poignant grief for. When Senor La Barrier's will was probated it was found that he had bequeathed his entire fortune to his wife, and as no one disputed the testament, the young wife decided to turn the fortune left her into ready cash and leave St. Thomas.

Shortly after senora's departure, the servant who had been employed in the family of Senor La Barrier informed the chief of police that he had occasion to believe that his late master had been poisoned, and that no less a personage than La Barrier's wife had committed the crime. He handed the chief a vial of prussic acid, which he said he saw drop from senora's pocket, wrapped in a handkerchief, a couple of nights before his master's death, and though a doctor's certificate declared that death was occasioned by peritonitis, he was morally certain that the man had been poisoned. The body of La Barrier was subsequently exhumed, and a post-mortem revealed the fact that death was occasioned by prussic acid.

Suspicion pointed to the wife as the murderer, and steps were at once instituted by the murdered man's sister-in-law to discover the whereabouts of Senora La Barrier. "Black Pedro," the detective, was at the time we speak of probably better known to the criminal class of Cuba and Mexico than any other man living. To him was intrusted the finding of Senora La Barrier, and it was under peculiar difficulties that the officer started out to find the woman. His ability in such cases was never doubted, and his daring and bravery were bywords with every one.

"Black Pedro" had reached Vera Cruz in his search for the missing woman, and one day he imparted the object of his visit to a fellow-officer. After explaining all the circumstances which had come to his knowledge concerning the young and beautiful widow, he said that there was no doubt in his mind whatever but that she had murdered her husband and fled to a place of safety with all his wealth. The friend became silent for a few moments, and then brightening up said he thought he could put his friend on the track of the party he was in search of. That evening the two visited the theatre, and seated in a box, resplendent in jewels and silks, sat a woman whom "Black Pedro" recognized by the description and portraits given him, as the party he was in search of. When "Black Pedro" and his friend parted that night, the latter said: "Be careful, Pedro, or that handsome creature will trick you and make her escape."

On the following morning Pedro stood in an ante-room adjoining the elegant apartments of Senorita Lapuerta, awaiting that lady's presence. As she appeared in answer to his card the detective quietly said:

"Senora, it is my duty to arrest you!"

"You dare not!" The woman's lips were white with passion, rather than fear, and she stood before the detective like a lioness at bay.

He himself could not help but note the striking beauty of the woman. Tall and slender, eyes black and flashing, almost lurid at the time, the spectacle she presented standing there in the middle of the room was more the appearance of a queen than a hunted criminal.

"I must," replied "Black Pedro." "I do not doubt your innocence. Looking in your face, it is strange that any one could couple it with guilt. But I am constrained to do my duty, senora, however unpleasant it may be to my feelings."

"Will you allow me to change my dress?" she said, in a tone almost pleasant. The hard lines around the mouth had relaxed and the passionate glow on the face gave way to a pleasant smile. "Certainly. I will wait for you here."

"I also wish to send a messenger for a friend. Will you permit him to pass?"

"Certainly." As the woman left the room "Black Pedro" stepped to the window and said to his mate, who was waiting at the street door:

"Senora desires to send a messenger for a friend; permit him to pass."

Almost the same instant the door of the apartment that senora had entered, opened, and a youth—apparently a mulatto boy—came out and passed hurriedly through the room into the hall, and from thence into the street. It was no doubt the messenger, Pedro thought and he picked up a book and began reading.

Nearly an hour passed, and still senora did not make her appearance, nor did the boy return. The friend she had sent for must have lived at some distance. "Black Pedro" thought, or senora was unusually careful about her toilet, and so another hour went by.

At last the detective grew impatient, and knocked at the door.

"Senora I can wait no longer."

There was no reply. He knocked repeatedly, and at last determined to effect an entrance. Strange fear harassed him; he began to suspect he knew not what. It took but a moment to drive in the door, and, once in the apartment, the mystery was revealed. Senora's robes lay upon the floor, and scattered over the room were suits of boys' wearing apparel, similar to the one worn by the mulatto boy. On a table was a cosmetic that would stain the skin to a light delicate brown. "Black Pedro" was foiled for a certainty.

Senora had escaped in the guise of a messenger. Why had he not detected the ruse? He felt humiliated and determined to redress his error. He knew she would not remain in the city an instant longer than she could help. He hurried to her bankers', but found that she had drawn the amount due her an hour before.

"Who presented the check?" asked the detective.

"A mulatto boy—it was made payable to bearer."

There was yet a chance. A steamer left within an hour for America; it was possible she would seek that means of escape. "Black Pedro" jumped into a carriage and arrived at the wharf ten minutes before the vessel left—just in time to assist an aged and decrepit gentleman into the cabin. There were few passengers; none of them answered the description of the person the detective sought. He stood on the wharf watching the receding vessel until it disappeared. He was in the act of turning away, when a driver of one of the carriages at the landing, and who was personally acquainted with "Black Pedro," approached the officer with the remark:

"Pedro, did you see that old man on board; he had a long white beard and hair that fell on his shoulders?"

"Yes."

"Well, sir, there's something curious about him."

"Why?"

"Why, when he got into my carriage he was a mulatto boy, and when he got out he was an old man!"

"Black Pedro" uttered an exclamation that could hardly be used in type when he heard this announcement, for he knew the vessel would be far out at sea before she could be overtaken. He was foiled by a woman. Nor could he help rejoicing, now that the chase was over that the woman had escaped. Innocent or guilty, there was a charm about this woman that none could resist. The spell of her wondrous beauty affected all who approached her.

"It lingered for years after in my memory," said "Black Pedro" one day while narrating the incidents of the case. "and I could not have the sin of her blood upon my conscience."

On the morning of January 23, 1875, the City of Mexico was startled by the announcement that a murder, the most brutal and fiendish that had ever reddened the criminal annals of the dark side of Mexican life, had been committed, and that the victim, a stranger in the community, was a woman who, when alive, was of surpassing beauty. She had arrived at the house where the murder had been committed on the day before, and was accompanied by a handsome gentleman, who introduced her as his wife. He had been seen to leave the house about 10 o'clock the same night, and that was the last ever heard of him. The following morning a servant, by mistake, entered a side door leading to the apartment where the murdered woman lay on a bed, and the sight that met her gaze froze the blood in her veins. She gave the alarm and the police were immediately notified. The woman lay cross-wise on the bed with only her chemise upon her, and her head, which hung by a few sinews to her body, was within a few inches of the floor. "Black Pedro's" friend, of the detective force of Vera Cruz, and the one who pointed out the widow of Senor La Barrier in the theatre to Pedro, recognized in the murdered woman the one and the same person. Her murderer was never apprehended, and immediately after the inquest was held the body was buried in the public graveyard, a frightful example of the wages of sin.

Patronage That is Fatal.

New York Letter in New Haven Register.

"It may surprise you to be told," said an old hotel clerk, to whom I had remarked that probably Garmoy's presence as a guest was a good thing for the Brunswick, "that the patronage of the foreign aristocrats was a damage. Fifteen years ago nearly every titled foreigner who came here put up at the Clarendon—now demolished. That house had for a while the exclusive favor of such tourists. It bankrupted its keepers. Ten years ago the Brevort got this run of business, and held it until lately, and the proprietor is a bankrupt. The Hotel Brunswick succeeded to the business of feeding and lodging the aristocrats, and the concern has been in the hands of the receiver for a month. The reason is very simple. The guests demand the very best, but are not willing to spend money freely enough to make a profit for the landlord. In short, they want the fare of Americans without paying as Americans do. Their presence has ruined every hotel which has had it in this city."

Senator Camden of West Virginia is worth \$2,000,000