

Daily Eagle A PAYMASTER'S STORY.

I had been waiting a week at Jefferson for instructions from Washington. I had written for permission to go to New Orleans, as I had relatives there with whom I wished to pass the winter; but at the end of the week my hopes were all nipped in the bud by the following message:

Major: You will proceed at once to Fort Snelling, thence, with all possible dispatch, to Fort Carson; and thence to Fort Kearney, at which posts you will pay off the enrolled men and officers, and also settle all duly authenticated bills against the office on account of provisions, forage, camp and garrison stores, etc.

It is particularly requested that you will be careful and exact in your return of estimates for the coming winter months. Capt. Goodwin will detail for you such escort as you may require.

"I have the honor, Sir, to be, Sir, Major and Paymaster, U. S. A. To G. S. Cochran. This did not reach me by the hands of Capt. Goodwin, however, when I should have been happy to meet him by the hands of some of the messengers of the government."

"Why did these words ring in my ears and echo through my whole being? Twenty times during that day I looked upon my message when I did not know it, and studied it over, and each effort seemed to bring the last connection nearer, without quite giving it into my hands. He seemed to know that I had begun to feel an interest in his antecedents, and therefore toward the latter part of the day he believed himself more as the officer of an escort."

That night found us at the foot of Brock's mountains, and at the extreme verge of civilization in that direction. Beyond here we were to traverse the old government supply road—a mere blazed path—with which Cochran and two of his men were perfectly familiar; and we would not strike another settlement until near Fort Snelling."

"I was my plan, when traveling thus, to make my partner's saddle the substratum of my pillow, with a pair of good revolvers in each pocket, and a small bag of supplies at my feet. I had no other power I was likely to meet could lay hold of. On this night I lay down as usual, having spread my tent on the leeward side of a large knoll, where I was completely sheltered, while the two tents in which my escort slept were set up directly before me."

"I went to sleep thinking of Sgt. James Cochran, and it must have been immediately after my waking senses left me that my dream seemed to take hold, and they took it up to some purpose. I was engaged in an ordinary routine of duty, and I was not to be disturbed unless it was for an emergency, or even seriousness, for I had not yet dreamed that a man of my escort could have entertained such a plan, and I had no faith that any other power I was likely to meet could lay hold of. On this night I lay down as usual, having spread my tent on the leeward side of a large knoll, where I was completely sheltered, while the two tents in which my escort slept were set up directly before me."

"I returned my look; but not a smile warmed the chilly gleam of his brown face, nor was there even a gleam of good feeling to beset up his hard crust of dogged reserve; but with an effort he ducked his head, and said: 'I'll try, sir, to do the best I can.' I could very near showing my dislike of this sort of behavior; but remembering that Goodwin had written me, I thought I would take the fellow for what he was and make the best of him. However, perhaps this hard crust might break under the influence of acquaintance."

"If you've got a God, you'd better thank Him that you never met me. You owe me no grudge." The man muttered something and passed on to attend to his cattle, while the sergeant placed his foot in his stirrup and as he did so he looked toward me.

"All's well that ends well, sergeant." He looked at me as though the proposition might be disputed, but presently, with a forced smile, he returned: "Aye, aye—that's so!" And the reply was emphatic, as though his decision were a matter of moment.

I rode on, the picture of Cochran's passage with the driver occupying my mind. Before this had faded that there was something familiar in the sergeant's face and in his general tone and bearing. He might be the man who swore, four years ago, at Snelling, that he had been underpaid; or he might be the man who had been accidentally overpaid at Columbus two years before, and who had come forward of his own accord and made restitution.

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"All right," I said. "We can none of us do more than try. We've a tramp of several days before us, and I hope they may be pleasant ones." "Certainly," Cochran responded.

There was a slight relief in the tone, and I took hope. I went on with the sergeant and found the six men on the piazza, standing at ease under cover. They were really fine-looking fellows, and answered, respectively, to the names of Smith, Adams, Mealy, Ogan, Van Wert and Conolly. Smith was a Yankee; Adams was an Englishman, and had been in the queen's service as a dragoon; Mealy and Conolly were Irishmen; Ogan was a Dutchman, and Van Wert was a German. A wide range of nationalities for so small a squad, but a fair sample of our standing army, nevertheless; and, furthermore, six men of one nation could not have been more brotherly than were these six. Unlike their sergeant, they were free and pleasant, and seemed to be sensible of the privilege of talking the forest tramp with me, while I, in turn, gave them an opportunity to understand that I would do all I could to make them comfortable. The squad had come with good baggage, so the only preparations I had to make for the start were to get my own baggage ready and draw my money.

"My estimates had been to the amount of \$200, and this I took with me; and I went to the bank with the sergeant, and three of the men, and got the money, which I took away in four small canvas bags, weighing about forty pounds each; but at the hotel I packed the gold in a sort of paucine saddle, a contrivance which I had invented myself, and in which I could so pack any quantity from 100 to 400 pounds of gold that it would either away nor jingle. In short, a horse could bear in this saddle pack a burden of dead weight almost as easily as he could bear a human rider. And I had a horse on purpose for the work—one that I had used for several years, and that understood his duty as though he had all been re-issued out in his mind."

Bright and early on a clear, cool October morning, we set forth from Jefferson with three days' rations in our haversacks, for St. Louis is 120 miles away, and we would be doing well to make the trip within the time indicated. I rode in all cases a mule, as I desired it, but because the others were inclined to fall to the rear. We were passing over a narrow bridge, just on the outskirts of Jefferson, when we met two men and two boys driving before them a drove of cattle. I had not time to clear of the herd without difficulty, and was thinking how I would like to take one of the fatter bullocks along with me, when an exclamation of anger arrested my attention, and on turning in my saddle, I discovered one of the cows—well, I presume things—on the side of the road. It had been quickly done—a trick—a trap—a huge of the great driving horns at the horse's side—the rounding of the latter, and the consequent unseating of the sergeant. When Cochran had regained his feet the foliosse bullock was away from his reach; but not so the immense driver. The two men were near together, and directly by the side as he grasped his sword hilt and turned upon them. I did not think Cochran would harm them; but they were terribly frightened, nevertheless, and the younger of the two, who was a stout, fair-looking fellow, was the first to speak an intelligent word—the sergeant had uttered one or two oaths. "Excuse us, my good friend, I am sorry—truly sorry, for this mishap; but I assure you it was no fault of ours."

As Sgt. Cochran then stood, his face was turned very nearly toward me, so that I caught nearly every line and shade of expression upon his features. He had been terribly shaken, and was exceedingly wrathful; but his wrath was in a greater part based up of elation at being unharmed in so ridiculous a manner than from a mere attack of the bullock. A few seconds he glared into the face of the man who had spoken to him, and then, proferring his remarks with an oath of condemnation, he overwhelmed:

He put his head further up, and seemed puzzled. It was, of course, very dark in there, but yet he could probably see that the horse did not look as though there was a man in it. Once I raised my pistol, full sure that the man was after my life, and fearful that if I threw a chance away he might get the better of me; but I did not fire. Something seemed to whisper in my ear: "Hold on! You've hit him once. Be sure you're in danger before you hit him again!" and I lowered my pistol and watched. Presently:

"Major!" came from his lips, carefully but earnestly. "Major—Maj. Cochran?" "There was something in the tone of that voice that gave me heart. It was a sort of imploring, prayerful tone, as of one who has a great favor to ask. I determined to answer him; but before I kept my pistol ready at hand."

With a yawn, as though just started from my sleep, I returned: "Aye! Hello! Who's here?" "Eh! Down here! It's me, major—Sergeant Cochran. I was passing round back of your tent and thought I heard you talking with yourself. So, thinking you'd be awake and havin' something that I wanted particularly to say, I made bold to come around and look in. 'The fact is, major—I couldn't sleep till I set matters right.'"

By this time the fellow had turned so that I could see that he had no weapon with him, and I began to think that I had been a little too fearful. However, I got up and stepped out into the center of the tented area, and then said:

"Go ahead, sergeant, I'm all attention." Without further preliminaries he went on: "Of course you know me?" "I think I have a good reason to remember you, sergeant."

"And you remember the last words I ever spoke to you in the old years?" "I have not forgotten them."

"Well," he said, with a palpable latent of feeling, "them words have been haunting me ever since I met you at the hotel in Jefferson. When I was ordered to report to Maj. Cochran I never thought of you. The old affair had almost gone from my mind; but when I saw your face I was awfully, and when you looked up at me I was awfully. I forget you might not remember me. If you did not I meant to hold my tongue. But I couldn't act like myself. However, I held up till to-night. But after we'd done supper I kept watch of your movements, and made up my mind that you were going to look out for me. But, major, don't let it go no further. I'm too old a soldier now not to know that the harm I suffered at Snelling was of my own making. I don't bear the old grudge any longer, and I tell you the truth when I tell you that you did me a good turn that time. I know how I was going to look out for me. So, will you take my hand and cry quits of old memories?"

"I never gave my hand to a man more readily, nor more cheerfully; and I doubt if in all the western wilds there was a more sociable and jolly party than we made on the following day. As an individual, I was particularly happy, for I am free to confess that there were a few moments of that first night in the wilderness weighted with about as much dread and uneasiness as a man would care to experience. But, as I remarked to the sergeant on a former occasion, 'All's well that ends well.' And our tramp of four weeks continued the pleasantest that the end might have been longer deferred without any complaint from us."

Chloral and Its Effects. The action of chloral hydrate is very similar to that of opium, but it does not lessen the pain nor contract the pupils of the eyes to the same extent. It does weaken the action of the heart and lessen the production of heat in the body to a far greater degree than opium. In ordinary cases of pain, moderate doses of opium are avoided by its use. The fatal dose is a large one. Its taste and odor are also unpleasant to most people, hence the risk of acquiring an appetite for it are not so great as with the latter drug. The habit, once formed, is much easier to give up than that of opium eating. The treatment of a case of chloral poisoning is exactly the same as for an overdose of opium. One important fact to be remembered in such a case is to scrupulously avoid the loss of animal heat. Not attending to this point has cost many lives. The patient should be kept warm, the stomach must be emptied of its contents, and stimulants should be given to keep up the action of the heart until the poison has a chance to escape by the lungs and kidneys.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Skidding Logs with Steam. One of the best things that attracts the attention of visitors to Mr. Foster's crane, near Fairchild, is the famous "steam skidder"—the only one in the state. It is a great sight to witness two or three huge logs being dragged, from a distance of thirty-five rods, over brush, fallen trees, stumps, etc., as if they were mere sticks, and dumped on top of a huge pile alongside of the track. And to do all this requires only one man to manipulate the levers on the steam engine and one way off where the logs lie to put the chain around them. It makes no difference if the logs to be drawn are heavily encumbered with logs or fallen trees. The moment the chain is put around them of they go, the forward end somewhat elevated and the rear end dragging over any obstruction in the way. Sometimes the whole load makes a leap of several rods without touching the ground.—Augusta (Wis.) Eagle.

A Rich "Clean Up" in Prospect. Frequent and heavy fires, inflicted upon those who violate the regulation prohibiting the burning of waste, has resulted in the virtual closing of this business. One of the best of the noticeable cleanups of the Feather, American, Yuba and Sacramento rivers, which used to be red and muddy. For twenty-five years these rivers haven't been so clear as during this season. For several years water has been carried on in the big tunnel intended to divert the waters of the Feather river, so that the bed of the river could be worked for gold. Recently water was turned in, but it was found that the tunnel was not large enough to carry all the water of the river. It will take several months to enlarge the tunnel, but when this is done there is no doubt that a rich "clean up" will be made.—New York Tribune.

An Evidence of Affection. "You don't love me as fondly as you did before we were married," said the husband of a few years. "Yes, I do," replied the wife. "Well, you don't show it as much as you used to," remarked he. "I don't know how I could show my affection more than I do and still be fashionable," replied she. "Just mention one little act."

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