



The
Adventures
of Jones



JONES CHARGES THE ENEMY FURIOUSLY

THE ADVENTURES OF JONES

BY

HAYDEN CARRUTH

*Beholding the bright countenance of Truth in the quiet
and still air of delightful studies.—MILTON*

ILLUSTRATED



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TO
THE PRINCE, THE JUDGE
AND
THE CHERUB

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THE ADVENTURES OF JONES

I

THE GLOBULAR CYCLONE-HOUSE

JACKSON PETERS leaned back in his chair, and slowly blew a cloud of smoke towards the ceiling. "Jones," he said, "I want to ask your opinion in regard to the probability of a cyclone story which a friend told me the other day."

"Most cyclone stories are palpable lies, Jackson," was the prompt reply of Jones.

"No doubt. The point is this: He said he had seen straws driven through inch boards by the force of the wind."

"It never happened, Jackson. That is a stock lie told of every cyclone that blows. Your friend imposed upon your youth, my boy. He would never have dared to tell such a manifest and self-heralding lie to

Robinson or Smith. I must admit, though, that the force of the wind in a genuine cyclone is considerable. When I lived in Kansas, in the '70's, I had a quantity of poultry, but it was all blown away in the first cyclone of the season except one black Spanish rooster. He clung to a grass root with his bill, and allowed his tail to crack and whip in the wind like a yacht pennant. He rode out the gale, though most of his feathers were blown off. Subsequently I found some of them embedded over half an inch in my grindstone."

"Yes," said Peters, "I presume my friend *was* trying to impose upon my adolescence."

"I think so, Jackson. I had considerable experience with cyclones that summer in Kansas. But I learned to handle myself so that I did not mind them much. I soon saw the fallacy of depending on cyclone cellars and that sort of thing. The fundamental difficulty with all such things is that you try to hold yourself firmly in one place. It is as if a ship in a gale should tie up to a post (supposing mid-ocean posts, for the time being) instead of driving before the tempest. The first cyclone that summer I of course went down cellar, like other folks. My house was soon blown away, but I crouched

in the cellar and felt safe. The next thing I knew the cellar went too, rolling over and over like a silk hat. I was soon spilled out. With infinite labor I crawled back in the teeth of the wind, intending to take refuge in the hole the cellar came out of. To my consternation, I found that that had blown away also. I then followed the example of the rooster, clung to a root, and allowed my legs to flutter and snap in the gale like a weather-signal flag.

“When the wind subsided, towards night, and objects began to come down—a haystack here, a man there, a wagon somewhere else—I set myself at work on a plan to prevent any such awkward occurrence in the future. Applying the principle of non-resistance, I constructed a spherical house about twelve feet in diameter. It was an exact ball, covered with light boiler-plates, and with iron shutters for the doors and windows. It was not the most convenient house inside, but by fitting it up like a ship—that is, utilizing every inch of space, no matter where it was, for some purpose—it did very well. I had a bunk on one side for sleeping purposes, with straps to hold myself in.

“The next cyclone came up one afternoon

while I was hoeing my watermelons. Tucking my faithful rooster under my arm, I retired to my house and closed the shutters. I got into the bunk, taking the rooster with me, and strapped myself in. We got off in about ten minutes, rolling easily at first, but bounding along with greater rapidity after we had gone a short distance. The motion was peculiar, but not so violent as that of a Fifth Avenue stage. It was pleasanter when we were moving at right angles to the plane of my bunk than when parallel to it, as in the latter case we were standing on our heads a good part of the time. The rooster did not mind it so much as I feared he would, and occasionally I could hear him crowing lustily under the clothes.

“I fell into a light sleep after a while. When I awoke the motion seemed much steadier, though there was an occasional terrific bump. I peeped through a small crack and soon saw the reason. The wind had greatly increased, and we were being carried through the air near the ground, only striking on the high places. Afterwards we settled down to a fast roll on a long, level prairie. We passed several ordinary houses, which, being square-cornered, could not



JONES AND THE ROOSTER SEE THE CYCLONE

make so good time. I could see that the face of the country was being furrowed up, and the landscape blown about like chaff. I held my rooster up, and let him peep out. He crowed and flapped his wings heroically as we easily passed a large Episcopal church, which was pitching heavily and making poor time, owing to the fact that the steeple was ploughing into the ground every few rods. We crossed the Arkansas River with one bound, and shortly after rolled into a little gully—or draw, as they call it in Kansas—and lodged there. The wind soon quieted down. Leaving my rooster on the dressing-case, I went out, and ascertained from a man who had just come up from a deep well that we were in the Indian Territory. Fortunately a cyclone came along from the other direction two days later and blew us back home. When I released my rooster he went back and began scratching in the garden as if nothing had happened."

"How did you stop at your farm?" inquired Peters.

"Jackson," replied Jones, "your mania for inquiry has struck you too late. You should have become inquisitorial yesterday, when your friend told you of observing hay in the

act of perforating heavy lumber. You show a lack of the ability to judge of historical values when, after swallowing that story like a three years' child, you begin to demand sordid details of a plain tale from the prairies like mine."

II

THE CAT-MOTOR

"SPEAKING of cats," said Jackson Peters, in an easy tone, turning around sidewise in his chair, "I want to—"

"But, Jackson," interposed Jones, gently, and with a touch of weariness in his voice, "let us approach this profitable and diverting narrative of yours with a clear understanding of where we are and what we are doing. Favor your expectant audience, Jackson, with an exact statement as to *who* was speaking of cats."

"Well, Robinson said he was kept awake all last night, and I supposed it was cats, of course. It's usually cats, you know. As I started to say—"

"Jackson, you jump at conclusions like a man writing history. You show yourself better fitted for a geologist than a storyteller. In point of fact, Robinson was kept awake by your improbable tale of railroad

experiences in Arizona, where, you told us, they run over a steer whenever they want a steak in the dining-car. Quite enough to keep anybody awake, Jackson. Now, speaking of cats, since a definite person *has* spoken of cats, let me relate a little experience of my own which I had with them when I lived in Milwaukee.

“You know one of my greatest hobbies is the extraction of latent energy. I cannot rest when I see stored-up force, and work which that force might be doing. This brought about my great tramp-motor, of which I have told you. In that, you will remember, I constructed a pair of front steps on the principle of a tread-mill, on which I kept the tramp by an ingenious system of old bayonets, which rose up behind him, till his entire latent energy had been extracted. I baited my motor with my grandmother—as you must recollect, a most benevolent-appearing and tramp-attracting old gentlewoman, whose features, fortunately, I was allowed largely to inherit. Ah, I can see the dear old lady yet, in her white cap, sitting there on the stoop in the warm spring sunlight, knitting, and looking mildly over her spectacles at another 200-pound tramp coming

trustingly up the gravel walk—like a lamb, gentlemen, to the slaughter !

“But to my cat idea. I had a large cork and bung factory in Grand Avenue, and I needed power to run my machinery. You know, of course, that there is an immense amount of stored-up electricity in a cat. The problem for inventors has been to discover a way to extract it profitably. Franklin looked into the subject. His idea was to tie the cat to a kite string by her tail and let her skate along across the country, the friction between the cat and the face of nature generating the electricity, the same afterwards to be extracted from the kite by induction ; but the plan was too expensive. For five years it was impossible to keep a cat in the neighborhood of Menlo Park. Thomas A. Edison was working every night on the same problem ; but he, too, failed. More fortunate than they, I succeeded—chiefly, I believe, because I approached the subject scientifically.

“In the rear of my factory I constructed a one-story circular building, some sixty feet in diameter. On the floor of this I coiled a glass pipe six inches in diameter. The first coil ran around the outside of the room, the coils gradually growing smaller, till the last,

in the centre, was no larger than this table. It gave me something like a mile of pipe. The top and sides of this pipe were lined with rather stiff hair-brushes, the bristles being a little more than an inch in length.

“At that time Milwaukee was overrun with cats. It was impossible to sleep nights. I put a notice in the paper that I would pay ten cents a dozen for prime cats, delivered at my factory. I got sixty dozen the first day, and stored them in the basement of the power-house. The motor operated thus: Placing in the outer end of the glass pipe an imitation rat, made of rubber and propelled by a small interior storage battery, I would then adjust a cat immediately behind it. The rubber rat would start off at a terrific rate—it was made to go through the mile of tubing in from two to three minutes—and the cat, of course, followed furiously, thinking to catch the supposed animal throughout the entire distance.

“Gentlemen, it was exciting to watch a healthy, active cat whip about those spirals, with the mechanical rat about a foot ahead, and going like a cannon-ball. The cat’s back and sides rubbed against the brushes, and her electricity was thus extracted. With a stor-



JONES BUYS A FEW PRIME CATS

age battery, and by sending a cat through every five minutes, I generated enough electricity to operate my entire plant, light my factory, and sell power to run neighboring passenger elevators and small machinery. It also took the yowl out of the cats, and gradually the city became quiet. At the end of a week a cat could be caught and used again, an advantage which my tramp-motor did not possess, as even the most bland smile of my dear old grandmother could seldom lure on a tramp the second time."

There was silence around the table for a full minute after Jones stopped. Then Peters slowly said :

"Jones, the weak point of your stories is always the end. You build up some marvelous — I will not say impossible — structure, and then give a lame and impotent reason for its failure or final disappearance. Now I dare say a comet struck your cat-motor, or something of that sort."

An expression almost of indignation mantled the placid features inherited from a benevolent grandmother as Jones turned to Peters and said :

"You do me an injustice, Jackson. You might have heard the conclusion before mak-

ing your comments. Nothing happened to that cat-engine ; it is there yet. When I left Milwaukee I sold the factory to a man named Pumpernickel. He operates it still. He has also added the business of beer-bottling. On that very bottle standing before you, you will observe the words, 'Bottled by Pumpernickel, Grand Avenue.' That cork which you hold idly in your hand was shaped and forced into the bottle by cat-power—a cat-power, Jackson, which I conceived, invented, perfected, and for five years operated."

Jones turned in his chair and looked out of the window with a patient, resigned air.

III

INTERESTING MEETING WITH A PANTHER

"You are under the impression that you are thinking, eh?" said Jones, in a gentle, soothing tone, as he turned to Jackson Peters and observed that young man with a fatherly air.

Peters maintained his silence for another moment or two, and then answered:

"No, I hardly dignified my mental gymnastics with that term. I was simply turning over in what passes for my mind the notion of how little true greatness is appreciated. I told an acquaintance your circus-tiger story, and he pronounced it a monumental, epoch-marking lie."

"My young friend," returned Jones, "you are not associating with the right sort of people. There was nothing improbable about that story. Circus tigers frequently escape; surely your friend could believe this. A tiger's tail is long and supple, and easily tied

in a knot ; your intelligent friend could not deny this. The hole in the fence was only very slightly larger than the tiger's plain unknotted tail, so of course after the knot was tied it was impossible for him to withdraw it, and his capture was easy. If your friend thinks that a tiger under such circumstances would tear off his tail and go bounding away across the country without it, why, all I've got to say is that he has less intelligence than a friend of so brilliant a young man as you are should have."

"He didn't doubt any of these things," explained Jackson Peters. "Nor did he suppose that a tiger would leave his tail behind. What he wanted explained was how you induced the tiger to back up and put his tail through the knot-hole in the fence."

"Jackson, I am glad your scholarly and penetrating friend raised this question. I will explain. I had on the side of the high board fence opposite to the tiger a large tin pail of sweet cream. The idea of the sagacious animal was to put his tail through the knot-hole, insert it in the pail, withdraw it, and then lick off the adhering cream. I tied the knot in his tail before the far-sighted beast could complete the execution of his

well-laid plan. What you want to do, Jackson, is to get the tail off of a stuffed tiger, load it heavily with lead, and then use it to beat some sense into the head of your valued friend. If the able gentleman ever gets to know half as much as that tiger, he may count it the luckiest day of his life.

“While on the subject of tigers and that sort of thing, I want to mention a little experience I had a few years ago with a mountain lion in Montana. You may call it a mountain lion, or jaguar, or panther, or tiger, or what you will—it makes no difference, of course—the fact remains that it was some ten or twelve feet long, almost as big as the circus tiger. You may remember my dog Bones—I mentioned him recently in connection with certain wolf operations. Bones, you will recollect, did not make a specialty of wild beasts; he preferred the society of man, and the only wild animal I ever saw him bristle up to and put to flight was the common cotton-tail rabbit. He went at rabbits with a ferocity which was awe-inspiring, but the mere sight of the picture of a wild-cat in a book of natural history would cause him to howl dismally and creep under my chair.

“I had a large cattle ranch in Winchester

Trigger Valley. The country was new then and overrun with Indians and wild beasts. I went out one day on horseback to look after some stray stock. When about twenty miles up the valley my horse stepped in a prairie-dog hole and broke his leg. I shot the poor beast to put him out of his misery, and proceeded on foot. I forgot to say that Bones was with me. I soon found that my rifle was heavy, so I cached it and pressed on. I was going across a little open park, when I was startled by the fierce, almost human, cry of a jaguar. I looked back, and saw the beast bounding toward me, covering thirty feet at each jump. My first thought, of course, was of the unfortunate Bones. Tucking him under my arm, I ran. I reached a small cottonwood tree about three yards ahead of the enraged panther, and climbed it, still holding close to my valuable dog.

“We remained in the tree some two hours, during which time the baffled jaguar screamed and roared below, and, as it were, beat the air to a foam with his tail. I remained calm. Poor Bones, however, was in an agony of fear, and clung with desperation to a small limb on which I had placed him. I was becoming sleepy, and was arranging for a nap

on my limb, when my attention was attracted to a cloud of dust about a mile away. I soon saw that it was a band of mounted Sioux Indians, and that they were coming directly for me. Gentlemen, it was not a time for esoteric speculation; rather it was an occasion for prompt, decisive, buzz-saw action; and I hope I may venture to say that I am not altogether out of place at such a time as this.

"Reaching in my pocket, I drew out my knife, and hastily cut off the limb to which Bones clung. It was a small branch, and made a pole about ten feet long, with Bones glued to one end of it. The Indians were now less than two hundred yards away. Taking the other end of the pole in one hand, I hurriedly began to descend. The jaguar had spied the Indians, and stood looking at them. Their blood-thirsty yells swept down the narrow valley like a destroying wind. The tiger screamed back to them in a voice which drowned their cries as Niagara might drown the ticking of a lady's watch.

"When six feet from the ground I made a flying leap and lit astride the back of the tiger. Swinging my pole around, I held Bones about a yard in front of the beast's nose. He leaped for the unhappy dog with

all the fierceness of his cruel nature, whetted as it was by hunger. Of course he did not get him, as I retained my hold on the pole and my position on his back. Pointing Bones towards the Indians, I charged them, the tiger thinking to get the dog at every bound. My appearance so terrified the savages that they turned and fled ignominiously. I chased them two miles, scattering them right and left, and by joining my own cries with the yells of the tiger and the howls of poor Bones, I readily scared a number of the Indians to death.

“When the last one had disappeared, I turned the tiger in a broad curve by swinging Bones slightly to starboard, and rode him to my ranch. The distance was twenty miles, which I covered in one hour and ten minutes, the optimistic animal thinking that he would grasp Bones at the next jump for the whole way. I was so pleased at the success of my experiment that I kept the jaguar, tamed him, and used him for a saddle-beast during the three years that I stayed in Montana. I soon taught him the use of the bit and the spur, however, as the exertion of holding Bones out before him was too great.”

“Would you advise me to tell my friend



JONES PLACES BONES IN AN AWKWARD POSITION

this story?" asked Jackson Peters, after Jones had been silent a moment.

"No, sir, I would not," answered Jones, decisively. "Evidently your friend has no appreciation of an artistic tiger-story. Tell him that story of your own about the uncle of yours who was ridden on a rail by discriminating fellow-townsmen till he got to like it, and indignantly tore off a cushion put on the rail by some kind-hearted ladies. That ought to just about fit your friend's calibre."

IV

THE RISE AND FALL OF JONES CITY

"THAT was a good elephant story," briefly observed Robinson.

"Thank you," returned Jones. "As I have remarked so many times before, I simply related the facts. Of course Jackson will pretend that he does not believe it. Instead of treasuring up such things for use in the future, he rejects them, and thus misses golden opportunities to improve his young mind. He will see his mistake when it is too late."

"How long did you stay with the circus?" asked Smith.

"Two years," answered Jones.

"But what I'd like to inquire," broke in Jackson Peters, with some earnestness, "is if you pretend to tell us that you could take any elephant and teach him to swing on a trapeze by his tail, like a monkey?"

"I don't know why I couldn't, Jackson,"

replied Jones. "I taught that one, and he was just a plain Asiatic elephant. The swinging was comparatively easy—the hardest part was to teach him to twist his tail about the bar and raise himself up. He would have been performing yet if that rival showman hadn't greased the second trapeze-bar, so that his tail slipped and unwound in making his final \$10,000-challenge flying leap. After that I went out to Dakota and began in the real-estate business by founding Jones City, and making it the capital of Tumble Weed County."

Jackson Peters did not seem to be wholly satisfied. "Perhaps the bears out there swung from branch to branch by *their* tails," he suggested, in a tone of fine sarcasm.

"Impossible," answered Jones. "It was a prairie country, so there were no trees, and consequently no bears. Besides, bears have no tails. You show a lamentable ignorance of both geography and natural history. It was while at Jones City that I patented my Dakota pumpkin anchor. Before that it was impossible, as you doubtless know, to raise this nutritious vegetable in the territory."

"No, I didn't know it," returned Jackson Peters. "Why was it impossible?"

“The vines grew so fast that they wore the pumpkins all out dragging them along the ground. I sold my patent for \$5000, and used the money in booming Jones City. I built two churches and a theatre, and started a daily newspaper—the *Jones City Volcanic Eruption*. But it was a severe blow to the town when it lost the county-seat. At that time—it was ten years ago—the Dakota court-houses were kept on wheels, I may almost say. One afternoon a party of men from Jumpersburg crept up, hitched six mules on my court-house, and trotted away with it to their own town.

“But I was not discouraged, and determined on the boldest stroke ever attempted in the territory. It was nothing more nor less than to bring the Capitol building down from Bismarck and put it in the place of my court-house, thus making Jones City the capital of the territory. Fearing that the old territorial officers might not come, I hired a new set of officials, including a governor, auditor, judges, attorney-general, and so forth, choosing them mostly from my old county officers, who had been left behind. Borrowing the court-house wheels from Jay Bird County, I took my territorial officers,

fifty leading citizens, and ten spans of mules, and proceeded to Bismarck. Under cover of darkness we adjusted the wheels and hitched on the mules. Most of my officials took their places in the several rooms, and as the level rays of the rising sun shot athwart the great broad plain, carpeting it with cloth of gold, and waking the song-birds to melody and the wild flowers to prodigality of fragrance, I touched up the wheel mules from the front portico, and we rolled away out of town, with my governor on the roof blowing a tin horn, and my superintendent of schools, a very conservative man, on top of the chimney firing his revolver into the air and singing 'Hail Columbia.' It was a noble scene, and one which lives in my memory, but the effort was a failure. Gentlemen, I left Dakota without a cent in the world."

Jones rested his cheek in his hand and looked at the floor.

"But tell us what was the difficulty," said Robinson.

"Yes, it is no more than right that you should know. When we were about ten miles out my attorney-general came to me and raised a point of law. It was this: That

Jones City would not become the legal capital of the territory unless we had the cellar which belonged under the Capitol building. I gave the reins to my territorial secretary, and directed the attorney-general instantly to bring a test case before the District Court, then sitting in its chambers on the first floor. It decided that he was right. Then, as we rattled along across the prairie, I appealed the case to the Supreme Court, on the second floor. It confirmed the decision of the lower court. I instantly stopped, unhitched the mules, and went back for the cellar. We were arrested at Bismarck, with the aid of troops from Fort A. Lincoln, for, of all things, abduction. It appeared that the beggarly janitor of the Capitol was hidden in his room in the attic, and that we had kidnapped the scoundrel without knowing it. We got off at the trial, but it cost me every cent I had. To-day the antiquarian who searches for Jones City finds only the spreading, trackless plain, with the June roses looking up saucily for the warm kisses of the sun, and a sea of prairie-lilies billowing itself in long rolling waves under the bold caresses of the ardent wind."

No one spoke when Jones stopped, but all



JONES HELPS MAKE GEOGRAPHY

looked at Jackson Peters. His eyes were closed as if in sleep, but there was a nervous, half-painful expression on his face, and even the waiter, when he came in, knew that he was not asleep.

V

RAPID RIDING AT GETTYSBURG

"YOU seem to have been very fond of fast travelling all your life," encouragingly remarked Robinson, as Jones finished a somewhat stiff narrative of having had his coat tails caught on the rear platform of the Chicago limited as it passed through Dunkirk, and of flying behind from there to Toledo.

"Of what other rapid travelling did I ever tell?" inquired Jones.

"Well, there was the time you rode your hen-farm down Pike's Peak, the turn you took on the Montana jaguar, and the trip you enjoyed in your cyclone cottage, not to mention when you stopped the balloon by taking hold of the drag-rope, and went across the country, putting down one foot here and the other from a quarter to a half mile farther on."

Jones smiled complacently, and flicked the ashes off his cigar. The rehearsal of his enor-

mities appeared rather to please him than otherwise. Then his eye fell on Jackson Peters, who seemed to be meditating treasonable sarcasm. He arched his eyebrows, and said to him :

“Still, I dare say that on none of those occasions did I go so fast as did my young friend Jackson on that night when he ran twenty blocks while returning from a late club dinner, having mistaken a fire-fly for the head-light of a locomotive which had jumped the track and was chasing him with murder in its iron heart.”

Peters smiled weakly but made no reply, though it was the first he had ever heard of the incident. But after a moment he said :

“I was just reading of a young man who recently got married and bought five dollars’ worth of merry-go-round tickets and rode them out with his bride for a wedding-tour.”

“Not a bad idea,” observed Jones. “He didn’t have the humiliating experience of attempting to deceive a hotel clerk by trying to register ‘and wife’ for the first time like a man who had been married ten years, and having the eagle-eyed fellow call a boy and direct him in a distinct voice to ‘brush the

rice off the gentleman's hat-brim and show him up to the bridal-chamber.'

"Now that the subject of rapid transit has come up, if you gentlemen will pardon me I will tell you of my fastest experience in that line. I was, as you must remember, a captain in the Sixteenth Minnesota Cavalry during the late war."

"Why do you never use your title?" asked Smith.

"For the first few years after I came out of the army I was always called 'Captain.' I was living in Illinois at that time. I moved to Iowa, and the people there called me 'Major.' I then went on to Nebraska, and they called me 'Colonel.' I made another move to Colorado, and found myself referred to as 'General.' I saw that promotion depended simply on moving West, and decided that it was beneath a man of parts, and have always since asked my friends to refrain from calling me by anything but my name.

"As I started to say, it was at the battle of Gettysburg. The Sixteenth Minnesota played an important part. We were exposed to a severe fire, and after several hot charges I found that every officer above me had been killed. I instantly put myself at the head of

the troop, and determined to break the enemy's centre, two miles away across the valley. We were in front of a battery of heavy New York artillery, which was stationed on a ridge above us and was firing over our heads. Calling my men about me, I told them that I proposed to smash the enemy's centre or die in the attempt. They were wild to have me lead them to victory. I waved my sword, with some laconic remarks, which, had they been my last words, would have gone thundering down the corridors of time, inspiring soldiers yet unborn, and we were off. We were superbly mounted, and rode like the wind. I clapped spurs to my horse, and dashed down a little declivity, certainly faster than I had ever ridden before. Suddenly my horse plunged a forward foot into a hole in the ground, and went down like a flash. My momentum was so terrific that I rose from the saddle and shot forward. I did not strike the ground, as I expected, but instantly felt myself riding on even more rapidly than before. The noble animal had risen under me, apparently, and was carrying me on to victory faster than ever. Still, I was not going fast enough to satisfy me. I waved my sword, shouted to my men, and

again applied the spurs furiously. What was my surprise when my heels dashed together ! I looked down, gentlemen, and was dumfounded to find myself astride a twelve-inch conical shell from the New York battery, and riding it across the valley for the enemy's centre, thirty feet from the ground.

"My first thought was to dismount, but I could not disappoint my gallant men. I knew they were coming. Once more I waved my sword, and again I shouted. The speed was awful. The air cut my face like knife-points. The shell was two feet long, and gave me a good seat, but I held on with difficulty. Suddenly I noticed a lighted fuse projecting from near the front end of the shell. I dared not let go with either hand, but I was not ready to become a nebulous bit of star dust. There was but one thing to do. I leaned over, pulled out the fuse with my teeth, and began smoking it like a cigarette. A dozen yards before the shell struck the ground I dismounted. It tore on through the ranks of the enemy, and I shouted, ran forward, and began laying about with my sword. I held my own for five minutes, when my men came up, and we cut the line to pieces and won the battle."

Robinson seemed to be the only hearer left

with the power of speech. "You must have been highly commended for your action," he said.

"The newspapers spoke favorably of it, yes ; but I came near getting court-martialed for pulling the fuse out of the shell, thus impairing its efficiency. It was expensive for me financially, too, as I acquired the habit of smoking fuse in place of cigars, and it cost me ten dollars a week for the stuff till I was mustered out."

VI

HOG-RAISING IN THE BLACK BELT

JACKSON PETERS had just observed that a friend from the South was visiting him.

"Indeed?" was Jones's comment. "Well, don't tell him any of your impossible stories, or he'll never visit you again. How do you think that soulful symphony of yours about the Idaho young lady you used to know, who killed the mountain lion, twisted off his agile tail and wore it for a boa, would impress a personal friend?"

"That is one of your own stories, Jones," returned Peters, stoutly.

"Originally, of course; all of your stories, Jackson, were once mine. But I long ago foreswore such crass, open-faced romances. If I can't tell an artistic story now, I keep still. By-the-way, speaking of the South, did I ever relate my experience at hog-raising in the Black Belt?"

Jackson Peters was inclined to think that he had, but Smith said, "No."

"I thought not," replied Jones, as he looked at Smith complacently. "I seldom repeat myself. The recollection, Jackson, which is galloping through the reaches of your mind is of my experience in Ohio at crossing the common honey-bee with the fire-fly, and getting a bee which could work all night. You should strive not to allow your memories to become confused.

"I went down into the Black Belt shortly after the war, when it was a good deal blacker than it is now. It was in central Alabama. Theniggers, gentlemen, were so thick that they actually darkened the landscape. The whole region was gloomy with Africans. It seemed like a partial eclipse of the sun all the while. I had a plan at one time to set up reflectors about, here and there, to lighten up things a little, but I never carried it out. I said that I engaged in hog-raising. I did, but I did not grow the native razor-back variety. You know the old Southern excuse for this style of swine—that it doesn't pay to raise a hog that can't run faster than a nigger. Still, I determined to grow the obese style of porker which we see in the fashion plates of the agricultural papers." Jones paused and puffed reflectively at his cigar.

"Makes me think of an experience an uncle of mine had in Georgia," said Jackson Peters. "Raising chickens—chickens disappeared every night. He rigged up an artificial explosive pullet on the principle of a torpedo, and set it on the ground near his hen-house. After that neighboring negroes disappeared every night. Ran on until finally the pastor of the African Methodist church mysteriously dropped out of sight, and then the government—"

"Jackson," broke in Jones, solemnly, "who was telling a Black Belt story—you or I? As I was saying, gentlemen, I determined to raise portly, short-legged hogs. I knew what I had to contend with. I owned at that time a fine full-blooded bull-dog named the Whited Sepulchre. He was a very intelligent beast, and game. I sent to New Orleans and had made a rubber hog—that is, a rubber bag which, when inflated, had the exact outlines of one of my fine swine. It was light, strong, and pliable. I put this on my dog precisely as a diver puts on his suit. I allowed the animal's feet, nose, and eyes to remain on the outside; and then I blew up this artificial skin with a small bellows. It transformed him into a very presentable



JONES INSPECTS THE IMPROVED WHITED SEPULCHRE

half-grown blooded pig. A farmer or stock-raiser could no doubt have distinguished him from the genuine article, but I believe that he would have deceived the editor of an agricultural paper. I then trained him to stay with my swine, but not to run off with them when they were frightened. In fact, intelligent as the beast was, I doubt if I could have taught him to run from anything. The chapter on 'The Retreat' seemed to have been lost from that dog's book of military tactics.

"The first evening I had my hogs turned out in the pasture in charge of my inflated dog I determined to watch the proceedings. The swine were busily engaged in hunting for pecan-nuts, when a friend and brother in the guise of a large colored person with a fondness for fresh pork emerged from some neighboring brush. Instinct seemed to teach all of those hogs except one to make off as fast as their short and largely ornamental legs would carry them. The dark voter came up rapidly, and started to fall upon this loitering swine. Gentlemen, I was myself startled to see that hog rear on his hind-legs, utter a deep, blood-curdling bark, and leap for the throat of the gentleman from Africa. He just missed, and the nigger turned and

ran as I never saw another free American citizen run before or since. The Whited Sepulchre kept close behind, giving vent to hollow barks. They crashed away through the underbrush and were lost to sight. In a half-hour the dog returned, and I was alarmed to see a calm expression of satisfaction in his eye which made me fear the worst. However, I conducted my hog plantation for two years and never missed a hog. I cleared \$30,000, but lost it all the next year on a pop-corn farm in Kentucky."

Jones paused, leaned back in his chair, and looked at the floor thoughtfully. Jackson Peters gave a little sniff and said :

"Jones, this is unworthy of you. This silence is but a flimsy pretext to make us ask you how it happened."

"As usual, Jackson, you're mistaken. It is a matter of public record in the Reports of the Agricultural Department that tramps fired my barn where I had my crop stored. Of course the corn popped, and there being several thousand bushels of it, it foamed all over the township to the average depth of ten feet. I was sued on all sides for heavy damages, and came out, gentlemen, with only two thousand dollars in the world."

VII

THE PARALYZER AND CONSERVATOR

THE waiter had withdrawn, after prinking out the last imaginary wrinkle in the cloth with the ends of his fingers, and the cigars of the four men around the table were well started; but the usual conversational flow did not begin. Peters was commencing to show signs of nervousness. It was a rainy night outside, and the rounded backs of the pavement stones were clean and shining under the lights. A cab rattled by, and Peters grasped at the incident eagerly.

"I wonder," he said, in an earnest tone, "why a cab makes twice as much noise on a rainy night as it does on a dry one?"

"Would not your question come more properly before the National Academy of Sciences?" inquired Robinson.

"Or why not bring the subject to the attention of the public in a Letter to the Editor in the *New York Tribune* or the *Evening*

Post, and sign yourself 'Old Subscriber' or 'Pro Bono Publico'?" asked Smith.

"Speaking of driving," went on Peters, not seeming to hear—"speaking of driving—"

"Jackson, Jackson," broke in Jones, gently, "nobody said a word about—"

"Speaking of driving," insisted Peters, with unwonted firmness, "I just read a new story about the late William R. Travers. He was one day riding on the box-seat of a six-horse Western stage. The driver was extremely drunk, and finally dropped one of the lines, and the horses began to run away. The fellow leaned over and fumbled about for a minute or so, trying to recover the rein, when Travers suddenly said, 'L-l-let it go, you d-darn' fool; you've g-g-g-got more'n you can handle now!'"

"Very good," said Robinson. "Brings to my mind the practice which obtains among English country-gentlemen when hiring a new coachman. They do not ask, on such occasions, 'Do you drink?' but, 'Can you drive when you are drunk?'"

"Clever idea," assented Jones. "While the subject of stopping runaway horses is up, I might say that I have looked into the matter considerably myself. When I lived at

Fostoria, Ohio, I owned the worst runaway horse in the State. Driving him consisted simply of clinging to your seat and letting him run till he was tired. I tried the Griswold Horse-controller, and it worked well. As you may know, this consists of a stout perpendicular timber back of the seat, with a horizontal beam extending out over the horse, precisely like an old-time gibbet. It is fitted with tackle, which is connected with a stout canvas or leather band which goes around the horse's middle. When the animal begins to run, you pull on the rope and raise him about eighteen inches from the ground. When I pulled up my horse, which was named Sir Landslide, after he was well started, his legs would continue fanning the air so rapidly that it was impossible to follow the movements with the eye. It would often take him ten or fifteen minutes to run down, such was his terrific momentum."

"I've heard of that thing," interposed Jackson Peters. "And the other day I read of some sort of an affair called the Talking-horn Runaway-preventer. It is connected with the bit in some way. A young man at Lansing, Michigan, tried one while taking his

girl out riding. They had to ford a considerable stream, and the Preventer went off in some way while they were in the middle of it, and they had to sit there three hours before they were rescued. And now the girl's mother accuses the young man of letting the thing off on purpose, and there is a good prospect that he will lose the girl."

"When you are quite done with this kindergarten business," said Jones, "I will tell of the Centennial Runaway Paralyzer and Conservator of Force. It was a little invention of my own for use in connection with Sir Landslide. The Griswold Controller worked well, but I saw a loss of force which annoyed me, as I did when I conceived my tramp and cat motors, and my Morning-Star Milker, operated by the motion of the cow's jaw in chewing her cud. In the Centennial Paralyzer and Conservator I had recourse to a dynamo and storage battery under the carriage seat. Beneath the carriage and near the ground I swung a tread-mill track which could be extended out in front like the gang-plank of a steamboat. Hitching up Sir Landslide, I would start out as usual. At the sight of the first telegraph pole, baby-perambulator, umbrella, or other object which in his judg-



JONES TAKES THE AIR OF A MORNING

ment furnished a sufficient excuse for running, he would start.

"When he had got well going I would push forward the track under his feet, and he would find himself standing still, though running with all the fierceness of his vicious nature. My dynamo, propelled by the flying track under the feet of Sir Landslide, would revolve with lightning-like rapidity, and I would divert a part of the force to propelling the carriage, and would jog along at the rate of six miles an hour with my horse going at the rate of twenty-five. The noise of the machinery excited him a good deal, and he would often run for two hours, leaving me with enough power in my storage battery to propel my carriage for a week. People used to come for miles to see me make a quiet morning drive with Sir Landslide and the Paralyzer and Conservator."

"Why did you never put your great invention on the market?" asked Peters.

"Too many other interests, Jackson. But I got it patented, and if you would care for it I'll make you a present of the patent, and you can begin the manufacture of the apparatus along with that of your own ingenious pneumatic galoches for cab-horses, so they won't make so much noise rainy nights."

VIII

TERRIBLE ENCOUNTER WITH WOLVES

"SPEAKING," said Jackson Peters, "of the ingenuity of man—I just spoke of it myself," he explained hastily, as he eyed Jones; "speaking of—"

"Pardon me, Jackson; one moment, please, before we listen to your fascinating narrative," broke in Jones, with great suavity. "It occurs to me that you may be a descendant of that historic man who had but one story, a long gun story. You remember he used to bring his fist down on the table after dinner with a terrific bang, and then remark: 'I declare, sounds like a gun, doesn't it? Oh, by-the-way, speaking of guns,' and then he would reel off his gun story for the next thirty minutes. Father's or mother's side, Jackson?"

"You are in uncommonly high spirits, Jones," replied Jackson Peters. "Perhaps we are to be favored to-night with the exact

facts in regard to your encounter with the blue-racer, having taken a month since you promised it to construct them. My reference to the ingenuity of man was legitimate, and was prompted by the subtlety of the waiter in whisking away an imaginary fly with his napkin in the hope of augmenting his tip. From that I was about to tell of a Texas horse-thief I had just read of, who ten years ago had the operation of tracheotomy performed on himself, and a silver tube inserted through which he could breathe. He has been lynched twenty-three times since that, but as the rope always comes above the tube—”

The young man was interrupted by a cheery laugh from Jones. “Really,” broke in that individual, “that *was* an ingenious idea. Do you know, Jackson, I believe you come of a clever family.”

“Thank you, Jones.”

“Extraordinarily clever family. I knew as soon as I gathered that the fellow was another uncle of yours that he’d do something bright, but I was hardly prepared for this. Friends have in the past been so kind as to say that I am myself ingenious in getting out of difficulty, but I never rose to any-

thing like that. I remember a little brush I had with wolves in Northern Wisconsin before the war. The wolves there were of the large, timber variety, and, it being a hard winter, they were constantly hungry."

"But, Jones," interposed Robinson, "somebody mentioned the blue-racer story?"

"Not to-night, Robinson; not to-night. I have got to look up certain facts and figures which I noted in my diary at the time before I can trust myself with that. There are always temptations in a blue-racer story which I must guard against. Those wolves, I repeat, seemed always to have a gnawing sensation in the stomach. They were fierce and dangerous, and would readily attack a man even when there were no more than two or three of them together. One day in January I was going from Ojibway City to Pomme de Terre River on foot, accompanied only by my dog, which was named Bones, from his fondness for this article of diet. He was a good dog, but he had read somewhere that discretion is the better part of valor. Bones was not a dog that would ever go about the country asking folks in his poor dumb way where he could probably find a large pack of wolves. If a wolf ever succeeded in meeting Bones he

had to bring good letters of introduction from mutual friends.

“When about fifteen miles from Pomme de Terre I noticed that Bones was becoming uneasy. Five minutes later I observed that he was wearing the hair on his back pompadour. I suspected wolves, and I was right. They soon came up, not fifty yards behind. There were at least one hundred of them—large, gaunt, hungry, savage wolves. Their fierce howls reverberated through the startled forest like the diabolical shrieks of frenzied demons in torment. I saw that a hand-to-hand conflict with them was out of the question. Flight was my only hope. Picking up Bones by the nape of the neck, I tucked him under my arm and started. For forty minutes, gentlemen, I ran like a cat in a dog show. I suppose I covered ten miles, notwithstanding that the snow was deep in some places and that in others the underbrush interfered. The wolves kept close behind. When I turned my head I could feel their hot, venomous breath on my cheek. They leaped up and nipped at the tail of poor Bones, which was waving and tossing behind on the terrific wind which my flight engendered, like the plume of a knight of old going

into battle. Their howl, weird and hideous as the sinking wail of ten thousand lost souls, shook the pine needles from the trees and tore the nerves of the unfortunate Bones in a way which was painful to behold. At the end of ten miles I began to tire. A large spruce-tree stood in my path, and I climbed it. Perching myself on a lower limb, some fifty feet from the ground, and tying Bones in place on another with a bit of string, I looked down on the angry, surging sea of wolves below.

"I felt safe, and lit my pipe and gave my faithful dog a ham-bone which I had in my pocket. But soon, to my surprise, the wolves began most extraordinary tactics. Nothing less, gentlemen, than gnawing down the tree. One hundred sets of ravenous fangs tore and bit at the trunk. I saw that the tree could not stand half an hour. I knocked the ashes out of my pipe and began to look at the situation seriously. I noticed on the branches around me chunks of raw spruce-gum about the size of my fist. Taking my pocket-knife, I pried one off and dropped it to a wolf below. He snapped his jaws together upon it with famished greed. He never opened them again, the resinous mass holding them



JONES AND BONES OUTWIT THE FEROCIOUS WOLVES

firm as a vise. At the end of twenty minutes I had the jaws of every wolf welded together past all hope of opening. I then descended with Bones, who now barked savagely and attacked the wolves with great spirit. With his assistance I drove the baffled, helpless creatures to Pomme de Terre like a flock of sheep. There was at that time ten dollars bounty on wolves. We rounded them up in the court-house yard, and I drew a thousand dollars from the county treasurer, after which I repaired to the Le Grand Monarque Hotel and ordered supper, not forgetting to bespeak the largest soup-bone in town for my trusty dog. I returned to Ojibway City the next day, but saw no wolves. That is all, gentlemen. Pardon the tameness of my narrative; I doubt not our time might have been better employed."

"Jones," said Jackson Peters, "you refused to tell us the blue-racer story because you had not yet looked up the exact facts, did you not?"

"Yes, Jackson. What of it?"

"Nothing."

IX

THE WILD-CAT FRIGHTENER

"You remember that trip I made out through Michigan over a year ago, doubtless," said Jackson Peters. "I never told you of the odd genius I met at Pontiac, who was going to do away with carpets on floors by sticking little pieces of carpeting on the feet with mucilage."

Jones looked at the younger man with severity. "Jackson, I was just on the point of telling a story about a little idea of my own when I lived in Iowa several years ago. Enrich us with the tale of your bright friend some other time."

"Yes," returned Peters, "it does very well for you to say that, but *my* story was going to be a true one."

"Young man," answered Jones, "you seem to forget that I am somewhat older than you."

"Give us your story, Jones, give us your story," said Smith, encouragingly.

"I was going to," replied Jones. "It was a number of years ago. I was living out in Iowa, near Des Moines. My place was on the Des Moines River bottom, and the bluffs were literally alive with wild-cats. The wild-cats from all over the country seemed to be in the neighborhood that year holding a wild-cat World's Fair. I had a fancy stock farm, and between the resident and the visiting wild-cats they played the very deuce with my blooded chickens. I don't need to tell you, gentlemen, that I am mortally afraid of a gun."

"Seems to me that's a pretty serious admission for a man to make who only last night was telling how, down in Arkansas, he used to spring up bears with a four-inch hickory plank and shoot them on the wing, like clay pigeons," said Jackson Peters.

"An idle tale, Jackson, an idle tale. A man must relax a little sometimes. As I was—"

"But you offered to bet fifty dollars that—"

"I couldn't shoot those wild-cats, you see, so what could I do? Night after night they walked off with my choicest fowls. One day a bright idea occurred to me. It was noth-

ing more nor less than every time I heard any disturbance among the chickens to put my head out of the window and cry out 'Scat !' in a loud voice."

The narrator paused and looked at Jackson Peters defiantly. But Peters only blew a cloud of smoke ceilingward and raised his eyebrows slightly.

"That was a clever notion," observed Robinson. "Very clever notion. Worthy to rank with your plan for extracting the latent energy from tramps."

"No, Robinson, no," answered Jones, smiling, and evidently much gratified. "No, you are too kind. My tramp idea showed genius; such things come to a man but once in his lifetime; this was simply an indication of a special talent for dealing with wild-cats. Still, if you would believe it, my plan proved utterly valueless so far as frightening the cats away was concerned. I 'scatted' myself hoarse every night for a week, still those wild-cats went right on carrying away my poultry. But I felt that the principle was a sound one, and I looked about for the weak point in the application of it. I soon found it. I was employing the same volume of scat for wild-cats which is used in the case

of tame cats, and wild-cats are three times bigger than tame cats. My first thought was of a speaking-trumpet, but I soon decided against it. I determined to make a clean sweep of the whole matter. I sent to Chicago and got an improved Edison phonograph with intensifying attachment. I set the intensifier at the ratio of three to one. I then shouted a battery of seats into the receiver in my natural tame-cat driving voice. I wound up the clock-work, and set the phonograph near my hen-house. A small wire connected the clock-work with the hen-house, so that a cat on entering the door would set the phonograph off, causing it to speak once.

"I went to bed, gentlemen, and slept soundly till morning. After breakfast my foreman told me that at about midnight, when the first wild-cat started to enter my chicken-coop to feloniously abstract my poultry, that phonograph sort of cleared its throat and remarked, 'Seat!' in a voice which rattled the windows. Gentlemen, my foreman was a man in whom I had the utmost confidence, and he said that after that phonograph spoke he observed a long gray streak of wild-cat reaching from my hen-house door to the underbrush about two hundred yards distant.

The same phenomenon was noted by my foreman in the case of subsequent cats. I lost no more chickens through the depredations of this obnoxious form of vermin."

Jones paused and lit his cigar, which had gone out. He blew an aggressive cloud at the lamp, elevated his chin, and looked at Jackson Peters.

Peters rested his cheek in his hand and seemed thoughtful. After some seconds he drew a long breath, and said:

"Jones, may I trouble you to tell us when this interesting and valuable incident took place?"

"Certainly, Jackson, certainly. In the summer of 1871."

Peters smiled. Then he said: "The phonograph, Jones, is given a later date by the more advanced historians and archæologists. You are, Jones, guilty of an anachronism."

"No doubt, Jackson, no doubt," answered Jones. "Most men who tell the truth are. I shall not lie to avoid an anachronism—no, not if I am guilty of an anachronism with every word I utter, if my whole life becomes one vast anachronism. Truth, Jackson, truth first always. We will now listen to the important and educational account of your un-

cle in Michigan, that brainy and scholarly gentleman who proposes to do away with floors by having everybody wear wooden shoes. Proceed, Jackson."

Peters looked at Jones with a weary air, tossed the stub of his cigar into the fire, and answered: "It's of no importance. Some future day will do as well—a year from now—two years—any time."

X

ACTIVE COLORADO REAL ESTATE

"WHEN I was visiting at my uncle's in Wisconsin last fall, I went out to Lake Kinnikinnic and caught a shovel-nose sturgeon which weighed eighty-five pounds."

It was Jackson Peters who spoke, and he did it rapidly and with an apprehensive air, for Jones was watching him closely. As he finished, Peters drew a long breath, and seemed much relieved that he had got through the story without an interruption.

"Eighty-five pounds," mused Jones.

"Yes, eighty-five pounds and ten ounces, to be exact, but I called it eighty-five."

"Exactness does not help your story in the least, Jackson," continued Jones. "You might give us the fractions of the ounce, and your story would still remain a crude production. I am in the habit of speaking plainly, and I will do so now. I take it that we are to consider your story simply as an exagger-

ation—that the fish probably didn't weigh ten pounds. Simple exaggeration, Jackson, is not art, and is unworthy of a man of brains. Anybody can exaggerate—the street laborer as easily as the man in Congress. But artistic story-telling is another thing, and the greatest may well hope for distinction in it. Why did you not, Jackson, tell an artistic lie, and say that when you pulled your fish out of the water the level of the lake fell two feet?"

Peters moved about uneasily, but made no reply.

"You never tell fish-stories, Jones?" observed Robinson, in an inquiring tone.

"Seldom, Robinson. The trail of gross exaggeration is over them all. Fish stories have become the common property of the in-artistic multitude. Of course I do not for this reason suppress facts having a scientific or commercial value. For instance, last winter I went before the legislative committee on fisheries, and laid before it an account of my experience when I had a farm near Omaha, on the Missouri River bottoms, and baited two miles of barbed-wire fence with fresh pork just before the June rise, and after the water receded removed thirty-eight thousand four hundred fish from the barbs, weighing,

in the aggregate, over ninety-six tons. The Legislature passed a special vote of thanks for the facts."

Jones was becoming warmed up. "You have observed, Robinson," he went on, "that I seldom relate the marvellous. That is because it is too easy. I prefer to have the reputation of telling a plain tale artistically to that of telling a fabulous one like a realistic novelist. That is the reason I never told any one of my experience at breaking one hundred and sixty acres of land to ride."

"Tell us, by all means, Jones," said Robinson.

"Yes, go ahead," added Smith. Jackson Peters hid himself behind a cloud of cigar smoke.

"It was an exciting experience," said Jones, thoughtfully, as he gazed into the fire, "and one which I have never mentioned to anybody, although it happened twenty years ago. There is nothing so easy to lose as a reputation for truthfulness. I have my own to maintain. More men have lost their good names by telling the plain, straightforward truth than by indulging in judicious lying. However, I will venture this time. It was, as I said, twenty years ago. There was a

great mining boom in Colorado, and I closed my defective-flue factory in Chicago, to the intense joy of the insurance companies, and went out. I saw more money in hens than I did in mines, and decided to start a hen ranch. Eggs sold at five dollars a dozen. The hen, you know, requires a great amount of gravel for her digestion, and she also thrives best at a high altitude; so I went about two miles up Pike's Peak and selected a quarter-section of land good for my purpose. There was gravel in plenty, and I put up a small house and turned loose my three hundred hens. I became so interested in getting settled that I forgot all about establishing my right to the land before the United States Land Office at Colorado Springs.

"One day a large, red-headed man came along and erected a small house on one corner of my ranch, and said that he had as much right to the land as I. He turned out two hundred head of goats, and started for Colorado Springs to file his claim. He had a good horse, while I had none. It was ten miles to the town by the road, and only five in a straight line down the mountain, but this five was impassable on foot or in any other ordinary way. But I did not despair.

I had studied the formation of the land, and knew what I could do. I took a half-dozen sticks of giant powder and went over to a small ridge of rocks which held my farm in place. I inserted the powder, gentlemen, and blew those rocks over into the next county. I then lay down on my back and clung to a root while I rode that one hundred and sixty acres of good hen land down the mountain to Colorado Springs. It felt very much like an earthquake, and I made the five miles in a little over four minutes. Probably ten acres of my farm around the edges were knocked off along on the grand Colorado scenery, and most of the goats jolted off, but the hens, gentlemen, clung, the hens and myself. The corner of my front yard struck the Land Office and knocked it off its foundation. The register and receiver came running out, and I said:

“Gentlemen, I desire to make claim entry on the northeast quarter of section twenty-seven, township fourteen south, of range sixty-nine, and to prevent mistake I have brought it with me.’ The business was all finished by the time the red-headed man came lumbering along, and I gave him ten minutes to get the rest of his goats off my land. He



JONES OUTRIDES THE RED-HEADED MAN

seemed considerably surprised, and looked at me curiously."

Jackson Peters was the first to speak after Jones paused. "It is one of the saddest things in this life," he said, "that the man who always adheres to the exact truth often gets the reputation of being a liar."

"You are right, Jackson," said Jones. "I know of nothing sadder, unless it be, perhaps, to see a young man forget the respect he owes his elders. This life, Jackson, is full of sad things."

XI

FARMING IN VERMONT

A REFERENCE by the volatile Jackson Peters to a recent experience of a friend of his with an excited bull, which he met while on a botanical excursion, had awakened a slight discussion as to the best course to pursue on such occasions. Robinson favored flight. Smith announced his adherence to the plan of luring on the excited animal with a red handkerchief, and then jabbing him severely in the side with his cane as he rushed by; but the possibility of the victim not always having a red handkerchief and a cane, and the probability of his not being able to use them if he did have them, being pointed out, Smith attempted gently to turn away the adverse criticism with the observation that he once knew a man who always carried a celluloid ear of corn in his pocket, which he would toss to the beast and escape while the guileless creature was making efforts to masticate it.

“Why not carry a gummy, resinous ear, which would stick his jaws together, as Jones did those of the wolves?” asked Jackson Peters, with renewed interest.

“Jackson,” said Jones, now speaking for the first time since the subject came up, “your idea is very bright, and would be extremely useful if the bull was given to biting; but he is not. The common domestic bull, Jackson, does not use his fangs to seize his victim. The bull is not a carnivorous animal. Naturalists do not class him as a beast of prey. He does not range the forest and spring upon the belated traveller from a tree. The spectacle of the common agricultural bull bounding away to his lair with a man in his jaws would be new, and would attract the attention alike of the zoologist and of the Department of Agriculture. The bull, Jackson, even the trained Veragua bull, prefers to toss his subject with his horns, and he can do it as well with his jaws closed as open. You have made remarkable progress, Jackson, but you need to complete your education with a short course of natural history.

“Speaking of things appertaining to the farm,” Jones continued, “reminds me that I have sometimes done something in the agri-

cultural way myself. I have already told you of my experience in Vermont at raising Christmas trees. I sank the profits of this, as you will remember, in my experiments at crossing the red willow and the common white birch in an effort to produce natural barber-poles. I grew some good poles, but I found the plan too costly to be practical. The sheriff closed me out and left me without a cent. I tried the application of cantharides and bay-rum to sheep, in the hope of being able to shear them four times a year, but this too proved a failure.

"I was about to leave the State in disgust, when my attention was drawn to a neighboring tract of land on the side of one of the hills for which Vermont is noted. There were about two hundred acres in it, and it stood at an exact angle of fifty degrees. It was so steep that it had never been cultivated, and I bought it for fifty dollars. I went up on my farm some two hundred feet with scaling ladders, and found it to be excellent wheat land. I determined to plough it and sow it to this kind of grain. I accordingly sent to Brattleboro, and got a large brass cannon, used for Fourth-of-July celebrations. This I mounted at the lower edge



JONES DOES HIS FALL PLOUGHING

of my farm, loaded it, and blazed away. The ball ricocheted and tore up the ground like a steam gang-plough. It struck the stone wall at the upper edge of my farm and rolled back, smoothing off the surface considerably. At the end of five days, gentlemen, I had my farm ploughed beautifully, at the expense of a few pounds of powder. Two days more sharp and decisive bombarding with paper shells charged with seed grain sowed my crop, which I harrowed in with grape and canister. You never saw wheat grow as that did. The soil was rich, and I had the largest yield of any man in the neighborhood." Jones stopped as if he had finished.

Said Robinson, "You harvested it with—"

"With a raking fire of musketry, of course," interrupted Jones. "There was no other practical way. I sold the place for eight thousand dollars and went down to South Carolina and began the manufacture of the Jones Ne Plus Ultra Effervescent Watermelon, with a faucet in the stem end, shell to be returned to the factory for refilling. It failed, because there were no rinds for sweet pickles."

XII

RAPID RISE OF A DUCK GROWER

"EVER since I went to the poultry show," said Jackson Peters, "I have felt interested in chickens. I wish I had some."

"Yes," observed Robinson, "it wouldn't be a bad idea for you to keep a few good fowls in your room. They could roost on the foot of your bed, and you could make nests for the hens in your last year's hats and coop your chickens in the grate, and—"

"I believe, Robinson, that you are becoming almost as facetious as Jones. You should be careful that the attack does not run into a low form of improbable adventures. What I want to do is to go out into the country and raise chickens."

"Why not ducks?" inquired Jones, in a serious and interested tone.

"Well, they might be all right. I could get a place where there was plenty of water and raise ducks."

"Yes, ducks need water ; but I have a theory that it is best to go where there is no water naturally, get it in some way, and then raise them there."

"Why?"

"More demand for them where they are scarce, and therefore a better price," answered Jones. "Go out to the arid region, Jackson, to start your duck ranch."

"Well, there may be something in that," replied Jackson, much interested. "What place would you recommend?"

"I tried Dakota," said Jones, softly.

"Oh, you've tried it, have you?" returned Jackson, suspiciously, beginning to catch the drift of the other's remarks.

"Certainly, Jackson. I was just going to tell you about it."

"Very self-sacrificing of you, I am sure. No doubt you utilized their voice and set up a thousand quack-power motor, or—"

"Now, hold on, my young friend ; this is not a debate in the Senate, but a serious discussion of weighty agricultural problems. If you will listen you may learn much. When I decided several years ago to engage in duck culture I went out to Dakota. I first called on the governor. 'Governor,' I said, 'for

what is there the greatest demand in your territory?' 'English capitalists,' he replied. 'I would gladly start a ranch to raise that sort of stock if I could,' I answered; 'but you see how impossible it is. For what practical product is there the heaviest demand?' 'Ducks,' replied the governor; 'there is not a duck in the territory.' 'But they require water,' I said. 'Irrigate 'em,' returned the executive."

"But," interposed Jackson Peters, "couldn't the settlers raise them along the rivers?"

"So I hinted to the governor. 'There's the Jim River,' I said to him; 'there's a place for ducks to swim.' 'Not deep enough,' answered the governor.' 'Well, the Missouri, then.' 'Too thick.' The upshot of it was that I went down into Brulé County, bought some land, sent to Illinois for five hundred prime live ducks, and began boring an artesian well.

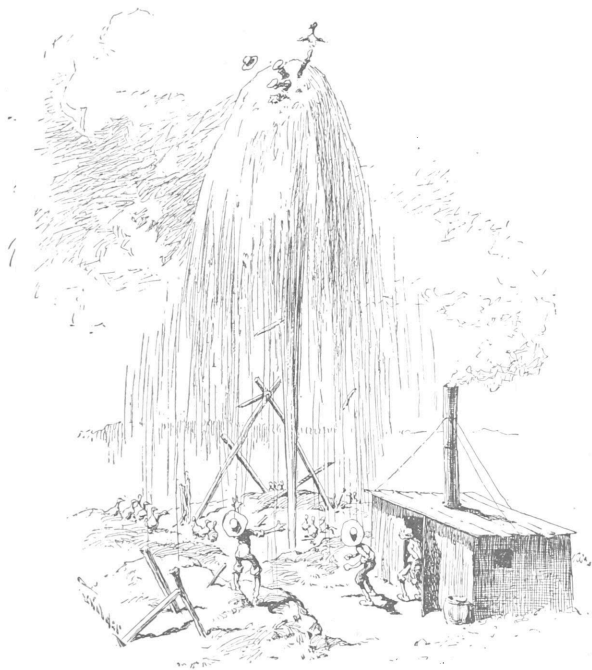
"When my well was down something like a thousand feet, and still no sign of water, I became anxious, and spent much of my time about the mouth of it. The ducks were also becoming impatient, and would cluster around the hole, six inches in diameter, peer down it, and quack in a thirsty voice which touched

me deeply. One day while my workmen were sharpening their drill I was leaning over the hole, measuring its depth with a small cord and weight, when suddenly, with a terrific explosion and a roar which shook the earth, a stream of water burst out of the hole and shot one hundred feet into the air. Being directly over it, I was of course carried up, along with one duck. The first thing I realized was of being tossed up and down on the top of the column of water, precisely as you will sometimes see a small ball tossed up and down by the central jet of a lawn fountain.

"Gentlemen, I am not ashamed to admit that for a moment I was frightened. The top of the stream spread to a foot and a half in diameter, and was soft and foamy. It rose and fell somewhat, and I was gently bounced up and down on my face. I had seized the duck by the legs while coming up, that he might not be injured, but I now released him and turned over and sat upright. My workmen and neighbors came rushing up to the well, but though I could see them making signs, I could hear nothing owing to the frightful roar of the escaping waters, which was as great as that of Niagara. The duck

floundered about at my side and quacked with joy, but I own that I was somewhat disturbed by the prospect. I dared not jump off on account of the height. As for sliding down the column, it was impossible to make any headway against the terrific upward current. I saw I was in for a considerable stay, so decided to make the best of it. I signalled my men to send up some dinner, a newspaper, and a handful of corn for the duck. This they did, enclosing all in a stout tin can, and I soon refreshed myself and began looking over the paper, finding especial interest in an article on 'The Advantage of the Artesian Well on the Farm.' The duck ate the corn out of my hand and seemed grateful. After finishing the paper I tossed it off and allowed it to flutter to the ground, and spent the rest of the afternoon in surveying the neighborhood, my elevation giving me a fine prospect in all directions.

"After supper, which was sent up as dinner had been, I began to think about sleeping accommodations. Finally I signalled my men to send me up a cot, which they did simply by throwing it into the column of water as they had the other things. It came up and struck me with considerable force, but bal-



JONES RISES WITH THE DUCK

anced nicely on top of the stream, which now flattened out rather more, and I soon retired, placing the duck on the foot of the bed. I slept quite well, though I woke up once or twice, possibly from the novelty of the surroundings.

"The days which followed were much like the first. My meals were sent up regularly, together with books and papers, and I spent most of my time in reading and teaching the duck many interesting tricks. People came for miles to see me in my odd position, and I was an immense boon to local photographers. I also wrote a series of articles for the *Territorial Agriculturist* on 'The Artesian Well Outlook,' and others on 'How the Farmer May Rise in the World,' and 'Ups and Downs of Duck Culture.' I may say that these met with much favor, and were widely quoted and commented upon. Friends have sometimes chided me for not devoting more of my time to work with the pen."

Jones stopped abruptly and gazed into the fire.

"Well," said Smith, after a pause, "you forget that you are down now."

"Yes, that's so ; I am. But I stayed up there six weeks. It was in the latter part of

October when I went up. Early in December there came a cold snap and froze the column of water solid. Tossing my duck off, which readily flew to the ground, I took a rope previously sent up, tied it to my cot, which was frozen on top of the stream, slid to terra firma and received the congratulations of my friends. That, I think, is all."

Jackson Peters moved about uneasily in his chair for a few moments. Then he said:

"Well, your duck farm was a success, I suppose?"

"A decided one, Jackson. Next summer the ducks soon learned to hop into the stream, ride up, fly off, and repeat the performance. They thus avoided the work of swimming, and turned the energy so saved to the production of feathers and eggs. There was a procession of ducks going up the column of water and fluttering off the top all day long, as if it were a duck volcano. A correspondent of a New York paper, a somewhat superficial observer, conceived it (with slight help from me) to be such in reality, and sent an interesting despatch to his sheet, entitled :

GREAT DUCK GEYSER!

IMMENSE VEIN OF NATURAL DUCKS TAPPED
IN DAKOTA

A Discharge of 300 Prime Live Fowls per Minute

PROPOSED PIPE-LINE TO TIDE-WATER

“Yes, Jackson, my duck farm was a success; and if you embark in the business I advise you to go to the arid belt. But avoid leaning over your artesian well unless you are interested in the study of the upper atmospheric strata.”

XIII

THE KING OF ROARING CREEK

"THE great fault of story-tellers is their absurd struggle for striking effects," observed Jones, with a sententious air, after getting his second cigar well started. "Unless the average story-teller has something out of the way, or blood-curdling, or utterly impossible, he thinks he has nothing to relate at all. Hair-breadth escapes and marvellous encounters are not the only things in this world. The interesting lies all about us. Better a quiet tale well told than a story of shipwreck on the coast of lost Atlantis in the style of a Patent-office report. Genius, gentlemen, illumines the lowly and gilds the every-day with the splendor which rested on Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold."

"That's a very true observation, Jones," returned Jackson Peters. "Oddly enough, I was just on the point of relating a little incident which illustrates it to perfection. I was

out in Kansas last fall on election day. It seems that in one precinct a woman had by mistake voted a receipt for currant-jelly instead of the regular ticket; and when the female inspectors of election came to it while counting the vote, they read it, and got into a dispute as to whether or not currant-jelly made by it would jell, and—”

“Come, come, Jackson, our friends here do not want to listen to any such stuff as this. You somehow fail to give to it that touch of genius for which you are so celebrated. Besides, I made those discriminating remarks of mine as a prelude to a humble tale of an experience of my own in Missouri.”

“But, Jones,” said Robinson, “you often relate the exciting and marvellous yourself.”

“Certainly — when it is true. I am not afraid of the striking, or even the improbable, if it come within my experience, and I can vouch for each word of it. For instance, when I told you recently of my neighbor, when I lived in Indiana, who was tarred and feathered by White Caps, kept his plumage on, and exhibited himself in a dime museum at fifty dollars a week, did I seem ill at ease? I think not. The more subdued incident which I started to relate happened to me when

I had a 'store in a little backwoods Missouri town. I had not been open a week when one day a large, angular man, with a protruding lower jaw, came in and asked my prices on plug tobacco, revolver cartridges, bowie-knives, and bear-traps. He was a strikingly large man, probably six feet four, and must have weighed considerably over two hundred pounds. He was well proportioned, and seemed as quick and active as a cat. He carried a heavy pistol in a holster, and appeared irritable and captious. I gave him the figures he asked for, and also mentioned casually that I carried a full line of pocket-flasks, brass knuckles, and tools suitable for breaking jail. He listened, and then said :

“Podner, my name is Whipsaw Pepper, and I'm the King of Roaring Creek. I live up at the head of the creek, where the Old Giasticus sharpens his fangs on the bones of his dead. Everybody on Roaring Creek looks up to me and does as I says. They all trade at the store where I say, and I'm in the habit of getting my terbacker and things free for directing of 'em to a store. I'm willing to do this by you.’

“He stopped, and his hand rested lightly on the butt of his revolver. Gentlemen, I

saw that my success in that neighborhood depended on my action. I laid down the dredge which I used for scratching dried apples out of a barrel, stepped around from behind the counter, and kicked Mr. Pepper heavily. Before he could express his surprise, either orally or Delsartely, I kicked him the whole length of the store, about ten feet at each kick, and through the front door, leaving a large, jagged hole in it. I then painted this sign, and put it on the front of my building:

Roaring Creek men are directed to buy their goods at this store. Those disobeying this order will be shot. Enter by the hole through which I kicked the old Giasticus.

JONES, King of Pike County.

"I had no further difficulty, and did a lively business for eighteen months, my chief trade coming from the Roaring Creek settlement."

Jones paused and silently took a match from Smith's proffered box.

Robinson straightened up and said: "Jones, that was an interesting story."

"Thank you, Robinson, for saying so.

Merely a plain account of what happened. But what would our condition now be had we listened to the depressing tale of my young friend here, Jackson Peters, of the lady who cast a curl-paper for Prohibition? Jackson is all right, but he is young yet. No man can be a good story-teller till he is fifty years old, and has had large experience in different parts of the world."

XIV

THE FRESH BEAR CO.

A GLOOM seemed to rest upon the usually genial party gathered around the table. Even the vivacious Jackson Peters was somewhat downcast, especially after Jones thwarted him in his attempt to tell of a St. Louis man he had just heard of who recently took first prize in a homing pigeon-match by inserting a small rubber-tube in the throat of his bird and inflating him with hydrogen gas. Jones indignantly denounced the story as improbable. After this silence settled down upon the group for some time ; but when the waiter withdrew, Jones casually observed: "I see the usual summer trouble with the ice-men has begun."

"Yes," Robinson returned; "my ice-man complains of the expense of having to carry one large piece of ice in his wagon to keep the little ones from melting before he can deliver them to his customers."

"Precisely," answered Jones. "That is the way with ice-men. I once knew an ice-man in Detroit who presented each of his customers with a volume of Dr. Kane's *Arctic Explorations*, and then cut down the size of his pieces of ice fifty per cent. But speaking of ice-men, how inadequate, after all, is our vaunted system of cold storage. I speak, gentlemen, *ex cathedra*, having been the originator and president of the Scranton Fresh Bear Supply Co. We raised black bears, and put fresh bear-meat on the market in car-load lots, whether bears were in season or not. I will tell you about it in a moment."

Jones leaned back in a chair and puffed at his cigar with an air of blended expectation and resignation. At the end of one minute he remarked, simply, "Well?"

"Well what?" demanded Jackson Peters, sharply.

"We are waiting, Jackson, for the story of an uncle of yours who invented a canary-bird cage which could be used as a rat-trap at night."

"There was never anything of the kind in the family," answered Jackson Peters, with a suspicion of indignation.

"Indeed? I anticipated that a direct ref-

erence to black bears would remind you of canary-bird cages. But to our story. It was at Scranton, Pennsylvania, the State bear headquarters. In fact, Scranton is the wild-animal capital of the United States. At no other place are they so intelligent. I was once, eight miles north of Scranton, jostled by two black bears while a third picked my pocket of a tobacco-pouch and sixty cents in change. You may well look interested, Jackson; that is worth remembering. A young man of your age can learn many valuable facts by listening quietly to my conversation. Still, I never had an uncle who invented a folding-bed which could be used as a sloop-yacht in the daytime, utilizing the sheets for sails, and the space under the mattress for storing the champagne.

“But we did not have to do with the wild bears except to make a beginning. We caught one hundred prime black bears and started a bear ranch. At the end of four years we had five thousand head of bear. We began to put them on the market, and the Scranton Supply Co.’s bear-meat became famous in this country and Europe. But we found our profits largely eaten up by several peculiarities of the business. Our bears all became beau-

tifully fat in the fall, but to keep them so and supply the year-around demand which had sprung up was expensive. We tried raising the price, but the public would not stand it, and many people ceased to buy our meat. We tried cold storage for our bear-meat, but this our customers also objected to, demanding absolutely fresh meat. Indeed, local butchers soon came to insist on having the live bear shipped directly to them. When we abandoned cold storage we found ourselves fifty thousand dollars in debt, and with two thousand fat bears on hand ready for the abattoir, and practically no demand for bear at remunerative prices. I may say, gentlemen, that it was not a good day for b'ar.

“At this juncture the president of the company arose and took complete control of affairs with a firm hand. I think I mentioned the fact that I was the president. I asked for unlimited authority, and the stockholders gave it to me. I turned to the abandoned cold-storage warehouse, started up the ice-machines, and although it was in June, reduced the temperature inside to five below zero. In the meantime I had procured from the woods around Scranton two thousand



JONES IS BUNCOED BY THE SCRANTON BEARS

hollow logs. These I placed in the cold-storage warehouse. I then drove in our two thousand fat bears. They sniffed the air once or twice, growled a little, and began nosing around among the logs. They thought they saw that a hard winter was upon them, and, gentlemen, each one of those intelligent animals crawled into a hollow log and began to hibernate. By keeping the temperature at the same low point we found we could leave a bear there for any length of time we chose—three months, six months, one year, two years—and he would come out as fat and fresh as when he went in. When we got an order from a butcher we would nail a cover over the hole in the log and ship it to him with the bear inside, like a silk hat in a paste-board box. The butcher could, if he wished, put him in cold storage and keep him still longer. We advertised our bears as ‘hibernated at the ranch,’ and at the end of two years I retired from the company with eighty thousand dollars in cash.”

Jones rose, walked firmly to the mantel, and helped himself to a match. The voice of Jackson Peters was heard in the room, as he sniffed the air, and said: “I suppose you lost it raising rabbits to slaughter during the dark

of the moon in a convenient cemetery for their left hind-feet, eh?"

"Young man, I didn't lose that money at all. I went to Chicago and began the publication of pocket Testaments for the Iowa trade. I had strong competition in the Iowa Family Supply Company, but as its Testaments held only a pint, while mine would all hold a quart, I got the bulk of the trade, and doubled my money inside of eighteen months."

XV

UNIQUE EXPERIENCE ON LAKE SUPERIOR

IN some way the conversation had drifted around to the subject of college education.

"No one," said Jackson Peters, "can esteem college training higher than I do, but it's a fact, nevertheless, that a man can acquire a liberal education by keeping his ears open. For instance, a month ago, when I was in Chicago, a man at the hotel told me of an interesting fact which, I presume, has never penetrated the school-rooms. He lived on the north shore of Lake Superior, near Frontenac River, a stream about sixty miles long. Last winter this river froze solidly to the bottom.

"Water, as you know, expands about one-eleventh of its bulk when it freezes. Now, the lake being frozen also, this river could not expand in that direction, consequently the expansion all went in the other, and its head-waters pushed out on the prairie between

five and six miles, and lie there yet, slowly melting in the spring sun, an average of sixty feet wide and twenty feet high."

"Jackson," said Jones, with considerable vigor, "the fellow imposed on you. I know that Frontenac River. I spent two winters on the north shore, and the idea of the sharp end of that stream shoving out across the country like an animated icicle is absurd. Of course it freezes to the bottom, and of course it expands, but the spring which forms its source is under a high hill, consequently that river cannot snake itself over the prairie on its stomach, however much it may want to. What it does do when it freezes and expands is to hump itself up like a satchel handle and stand all winter with its back two hundred feet in the air. In this condition it makes the finest toboggan slide I ever saw, and it shines like a frozen rainbow."

"Maybe the man did impose on me," said Jackson Peters, in a sarcastic tone. "I am young. But I am glad that I have got back among friends who will respect my innocence and guilelessness."

"You spent some time in the Superior country, eh?" said Robinson, as a diplomatic way out of the threatened trouble.

"Four or five years," answered Jones, carelessly. "Part of it on the south shore, however. It's a cold country. Prime Kentucky whiskey from December to March has the appearance of maple sugar. I had a trading-post one winter on Isle Royale. One night wolves attacked me. I soon exhausted my supply of bullets, and certainly would have been devoured had I not bethought me to break a dozen thermometers and use the congealed mercury in the bulbs for rifle-balls."

"You must have had many other interesting experiences," said Smith encouragingly.

"Oh, life there had its passing incidents, of course, though, on the whole, it was monotonous. One winter I carried the mail from Marquette to Copper Harbor, Keweenaw Point, both on the Michigan peninsula. They are about sixty miles apart, and I drove the entire distance on Lake Superior. There was no snow that winter, and the ice was from three to four feet thick. I used to start before sunrise, as it was a long drive.

"But, after all, it was less formidable than it would seem, as the ice was smooth as glass, and I used a light cutter with thin runners, and carried usually only one or two mail-sacks and half a dozen small express pack-

ages. My best horse, and the one I drove the most, was named Lightning Streak. He was a tall, powerful, long-legged beast, a good trotter, and remarkably intelligent.

"It was an exceptionally cold winter, the mercury making but few and timid excursions above zero. One morning in the latter part of January I started as usual from Marquette, intending to make the return trip the next day. But I was not feeling as well as usual, having sat up the entire night working on a new invention, an improved night-latch for club-men and diners-out, in which the key protruded three or four inches from the door, the user carrying the hole in his pocket, and readily slipping it over the key even after the most enjoyable dinner. I soon found myself very sleepy.

"There was a fresh west wind and the air was cold, but the sky was perfectly clear. My road lay straight to the northwest, and though it consisted of a mere scratch on the glare ice, I did not doubt the ability of the Streak to follow it. Accordingly, just as the sun rose, making quivering diamonds of the dancing frost crystals in the air, I snuggled down in my furs and went sound to sleep.

"My intention was to take a nap of a

couple of hours, but what was my astonishment when I awoke and discovered that it was three o'clock in the afternoon. I looked forward for the headland of Keweenaw Point, but was dumfounded not to find it. Nor was land anywhere in sight; and I soon discovered that I was off the road, and traveling somewhat east of north.

"The whole thing flashed upon me. The intelligent animal, not liking to face the cold wind, had borne off to the right and carried me all day as fast as he could go towards the British possessions. I brought the valuable beast to a stop and considered the situation.

"I own, gentlemen, that the prospect did not please me. The thermometer on my dashboard showed twenty degrees below zero, and as I stood there the wind freshened and veered to the northwest. I knew the mercury would sink twenty degrees lower before morning, and that to remain on the ice all night meant to perish. I estimated that I was fifty miles from the Canadian shore and seventy-five from Copper Harbor, my destination. But the north shore was utterly barren, so I knew that I must make Copper Harbor, and make it before dark, as the sky was becoming overcast and a blizzard threatened.

I saw that I had about one hour in which to cover this seventy-five miles. There are men, I suppose, who would have despaired ; but I faced the problem with resolution.

“I got out of my cutter and patted Lightning Streak encouragingly on the neck. It had just occurred to me that among my parcels of express was a bundle of skates. I broke this open, selected two pairs, and in five minutes had a skate firmly attached to each one of the animal’s feet. I got into the cutter hastily, faced him about, gave him a sharp cut with the whip, and we were off.

“Of course he made some awkward motions at first, and nearly fell once or twice; but he soon got control of himself and started like a cannon-ball, leaning forward and reaching out with a long swing which covered one hundred feet at every stride. It was the fastest travelling I ever did behind a horse. Ten minutes after sunset I noticed a speck a half-mile ahead. As we drew nearer I saw that it was an arctic or snowy owl flying some seven or eight feet from the ground in exactly the same direction we were going. This owl, as you know, is one of the most rapid fliers known to ornithologists. As we passed under it I reached up and plucked a

single quill from its tail for a memento. I looked back, and I must say that I have seldom seen a more astonished owl.

"We dashed on, the Streak's skates ringing on the ice like the shriek of locomotive whistles. Gentlemen, in precisely one hour to the second I sighted the lights of Copper Harbor, and six minutes later I took off the animal's skates on the beach and proceeded to the post-office. I drove the rest of the winter with skates exclusively, and the Streak before spring did one hundred miles in one hour, and covered a measured mile in thirty-one seconds. I have the owl quill yet, and intend to use it some day in writing my memoirs."

"Jones," said Jackson Peters, "I presume you neglect to mention that it ruined your valuable horse for summer driving at a trot."

"My young friend," answered Jones, "if you could have seen Lightning Streak next summer doing his sixty-five miles an hour on roller-skates you wouldn't talk that way."

XVI

TEN WEEKS IN AFRICA

"JONES," said Robinson, "isn't it somewhat odd that you have never been abroad?"

"But I have been abroad," answered Jones.

"Is that so? Well, then, isn't it odd that you never had any adventures there?"

"I don't know as I can truthfully say that I ever had any adventures anywhere, Robinson. There have been incidents in my life of which I am weak enough to tell my friends, but my adventures have been few or none at all. Our young friend, here, Jackson Peters, is the man who has had adventures. Think of the night the bottom dropped out of his cab, and he ran inside of the vehicle for two miles before he could make the driver hear."

Jackson smiled in a sort of a forced way, intended rather to express inward pain than pleasure, and said, apparently addressing the ceiling:

"I am curious to know if Robinson's un-

guarded reference to 'abroad' is going to produce a Greenland tale of catching a polar-bear by the hind-legs and making him walk about like a wheelbarrow, or bring forth an account of playing seven-up with gorillas in Africa."

"I propose sticking to Africa to-night, Jackson," answered Jones, with the utmost complacency. "I think I've already told you of being hired several years ago by the Philadelphia Rights of Savages Society to go to Africa and investigate the condition of the small and medium-sized dwarfs. The society had heard that they were suffering great indignities from having to cut down and wear the cast-off clothes of the standard-gauge natives. I called a meeting of the savages, assorted sizes, and found that none of them, big or little, had ever heard of clothes, and so reported to the society, much to its relief; though I understand that it has since begun sending to Africa a garment which will pass as a jacket for the big fellows, a Prince Albert for the mediums, and an ulster for the dwarf varieties.

"This trip made me interested in Africa, and I went back to do a little exploring. I soon came to those dense forests which other

explorers, more given to rushing into print than I, have told you about. I found it slow travelling in them, since the trees are so close together that the sunlight never penetrates their interwoven tops. But I soon rendered matters all easy-going by making large Indian snow-shoes for myself and men out of light bent wood and thongs of rawhide. Then we all climbed a tree, got up on top of the forest, and found the walking very good after we became accustomed to the snow—or, rather, the tree—shoes. In this way we proceeded rapidly, and passed over several warlike tribes, both mammoth and early dwarf, without their knowing anything about it.

“But I soon became tired of exploring, especially when I began to come upon other explorers, and saw them scurry off, while they shouted for me to go ’way, thinking that I was coming to rescue them. I saw that the business was overdone. I accordingly returned to this country. Here I organized the Jones African Trading Company and the Jones African Lecture Bureau, and again went back to the Dark Continent. As president of the Trading Company I strove to reach both the natives and the explorers by putting on the market for the former a su-

perior nose-ring, warranted to hold as long as the nose stayed on, and for the latter several improved varieties of sporting rifles, lecture-manuscript paper, and fountain-pens. I found great difficulty in working up business, owing to the lack of advertising facilities. For a long time I was at a loss what to do. I tried posters on the trees, but the forest was so dark they couldn't be read. Out on the plains there was nothing to attach a poster to. I tried handbills, and hired a small seedling dwarf to stand at the cross-roads and give them to the explorers and rescuers as they chased each other by, but he threw them away and decamped with the money. I was on the point of giving up, when, as I was one day watching a large herd of elephants, a bright idea struck me. 'We'll bill the elephants!' I exclaimed to my men. And we did.

"Elephants, as you know, are very sound sleepers, so I was sure it would not be difficult to bill them in the night. I accordingly went out with my men that night, taking a large roll of posters and a barrel of paste. In two hours we had the entire herd billed without one of them waking up, though when the wet paste-brush slapped up and down their

sides some of them stirred a little, perhaps dreaming that they were in a barber-shop getting shaved. We attached a file-hook full of small bills to the tail of each, so that interested persons could help themselves, and then retired to camp and went to bed.

“The next morning this herd of five hundred elephants scattered about, each bearing a big poster on one side reading :

Try the Celebrated Jones Nose-Ring.

NON-JERK-OUT.


Stylish and Comfortable.

Agents Wanted.

And on the other side this :

For Africa—Jones's Sporting Rifle.

For America—Jones's Lecture Bureau.

 Warranted to fetch the Natives in either case !

We were much pleased at seeing many interested persons snatch a small bill as the elephants switched their tails and fluttered the bunches in the air.

“I immediately began to bill elephants



JONES'S ELEPHANT PRODUCES EXCITEMENT AMONG READERS

right and left, and soon an animal without my posters was a novel sight. The attempt to make similar bill-boards out of the hippopotami failed, because they went into the water and soaked off the literature ; but with a large stencil and oil-paints we readily placed our advertising with them after all. I found them, too, a valuable medium, reaching readers along the rivers where the elephants did not circulate. My liberal use of pachydermatous space soon began to bear fruit, and business revived. In two months I had closed out my entire stock of rifles and nose-rings, and booked three-fourths of the explorers and rescuers for lecture tours. Then I came home and boomed the lectures, advertising in the newspapers rather than on elephants. I consider the newspapers the best advertising medium we have in this country ; but, after all, a newspaper doesn't move about like an elephant."

"I think, Jones," said Jackson Peters, "that you deserve our thanks for the remarkable self-restraint you have shown this evening in not hanging lithographs on the zebras and putting sandwich-boards on the giraffes."

"Your uncle would have done those things, Jackson—I mean the uncle you told us about

the other evening who projected the Peters Duckling Natatorium, that ingenious and efficient apparatus for teaching young ducks the art of swimming. Your uncle missed a great career when he neglected Africa and stuck to Puddleford Centre, New Hampshire."

XVII

AT PORT HUDSON

"JONES," said Robinson, "isn't it odd that you do not tell us more of your army experiences? Your somewhat fast ride on the shell at Gettysburg is the only incident that I remember your ever mentioning."

"I led a rather quiet life in the army," answered Jones, slowly, and apparently letting his mind wander back over the half-forgotten scenes. "I had no horses shot from under me. By-the-way, it has always seemed to me that we owe an inestimable and little recognized debt to the attraction of gravitation. If it had not been for this salutary force, the air of many states, at the end of the late war, would have been well-nigh filled with able brigadier-generals whose horses had been shot from under them and who had not been hauled down yet. But nature provides for every emergency."

"You were in the cavalry arm of the service, were you not?" asked Smith.

"Principally, though I was connected at different times with the infantry and artillery as well," answered Jones, guardedly. "My service with the cavalry was with the Sixteenth Minnesota, as you remember. I had a fine horse, which I called Hot Cakes. He was a very quick horse. One day when the bugle sounded the charge he started so suddenly that his tail dropped off."

"Now hold on, Jones," said Jackson Peters, firmly; "that won't do. I've heard that story before."

"No doubt, Jackson, no doubt," replied Jones with the greatest blandness. "The whole brigade saw the incident happen, and it became a subject of common discussion all over the country. Perhaps you got it from the history you studied at school. Bancroft mentions it."

"My service with the artillery," continued Jones, "while lacking the dash of my connection with the cavalry, was really of much more importance to the country. I became interested in the artillery through so often charging up to the cannon's mouth. Rushing fiercely up to the cannon's mouth, and,

as it were, examining its back teeth, is no child's play, as you may imagine ; and after a year's acquaintance with this disagreeable and petulant end of the cannon I determined to get into touch with the other end, and accordingly got transferred to the artillery. I soon found myself a colonel, and in charge of a small battery.

“At the siege of Port Hudson an incident occurred which may be worth repeating, for the benefit of Jackson, at least, who, by his interest in the sudden start of my horse Hot Cakes shows that he is not averse to storing his mind with facts having a military value. It was during the first day's bombardment that my attention was attracted to the small amount of apparent injury inflicted on the enemy in return for the expenditure in labor, ammunition, and noise. That night it happened that I did not sleep well, my throat being hot and parched from lack of water, the tin cup having been shot out of my hand every time I had tried to take a drink all day. While tossing on my feverish cot I conceived the notion that the difficulty with my battery at least was that the projectiles were not heavy enough. At the first streak of light, my tent having been shot out of exist-

ence during the night, I walked away from my cot, summoned my orderly, and made a requisition for a certain eight-inch steel shaft which I happened to know was within our lines. It had been taken from a dismantled iron-clad, where it had served as the ram, and was but a short piece some six or seven feet long. My heaviest gun was an eight-inch smooth-bore, and I had decided to use this shaft as a projectile, and tear a breach through the enemy which would hopelessly cripple him.

“At about six o’clock the piece of ram was brought to me. I instantly caused a double charge of powder to be inserted in the eight-inch gun, and then had the shaft forced home on top of it. It was a close fit, which pleased me, as it assured accuracy in firing, and if my aim was good, I doubted not to do terrible execution. We were behind earthworks, on a bluff overlooking the enemy’s position. My guns pointed downward at a small but noticeable angle. At eight o’clock the bombardment opened sharply all along the line. It was the heaviest firing I ever experienced. I worked the remainder of my battery vigorously for half an hour, then I determined to give the enemy my eight-inch. I had decided to aim the



JONES TOUCHED THE VEST WITH HIS CIGAR

piece myself. Stepping to it I leaned forward against the breech, put my head down closely, and aimed with the greatest care. My nerve was firm as iron. I felt that the moment for crushing the rebellion had come. The aim was perfect. I touched the vent with my cigar.

"Gentlemen, I have to confess to a miscalculation. Though possessing a thorough knowledge of gunnery, I had made the mistake of having my projectile heavier than my gun. As a consequence the projectile rested where it was and the gun shot back. I was clinging to the breech and went with it. The trajectory which we, the cannon and I, described, was said to be very beautiful, and was observed by the entire army. We struck the ground about three miles back of the Union lines. Leaving the unfortunate piece of ordnance where it fell, I returned to my battery."

"Then your idea was of no practical value?" said Robinson, as Jones paused.

"On the contrary, it ended the siege. The next day General Banks reversed every cannon in our lines, loaded them with shafting, and threw them into the enemy with such ef-

fect that what little was left of him surrendered."

"Does Bancroft mention this?" asked Jackson Peters, softly.

"Bancroft wasn't there, and knew nothing about it," answered Jones.

XVIII

THE LEVIATHAN TRANSPORTATION LINE

"It is strange," said Jones, reflectively, as he puffed vigorously at his cigar, "that Jackson Peters never tells us of any more of his ideas for inventions. The last thing he mentioned was his ingenious notion of putting hinges on the trunks of orchard trees, so that in case of high wind they could be turned down. You never perfected that plan, did you, Jackson?" and Jones looked at the young man with great apparent interest.

"The thing could be done," answered Peters, as if Jones had cast doubts on its practicability. "And it would be a great boon to fruit-growers in Kansas and other draughty parts of the country. Lately I've been wondering that more progress is not made by inventors in the line of submarine war-boats. If the fish idea won't work, why not take the duck as the living prototype of a vessel, and produce something which can dive, at least."

"Your notion is of a boat which can dive to escape the enemy, and then peek a hole in his hull with its beak, eh?" remarked Jones.

"Well—yes," assented Jackson Peters.

"Would you have it web-footed, and construct it so it could get out and waddle on the beach in connection with land forces?"

"You are not taking this thing seriously, Jones."

"But I am. And wings, Jackson—give your duck war-ship wings. Then if it gets caught in shallow water by a superior force, it can rise up and fly away, giving vent to loud and defiant quacks on a steam-quacker."

"Perhaps you're right," said Jackson, wearily. "No doubt about it, in fact."

"I have been detected in the neighborhood of right ideas," admitted Jones. "Possibly you could get some marine hints from an account of my experience with the New York and Boston Leviathan Towing and Transportation Line, which I operated in the late sixties. You remember the line, Robinson?"

Robinson answered "Yes," without a blush.

"One night after I went to bed," continued Jones, "it occurred to me that though hundreds of land animals are of use to man

while living, not one of the sea animals had ever been put to any practical use till dead. It seemed probable that the most useful purpose to which living land animals was put by man was as draught animals, of which we may take the horse and the ox as examples. Why were not the animals of the sea used for draught purposes? I became so excited that I lay awake all night thinking about it. The result was the New York and Boston Leviathan Towing and Transportation Line.

“During all of my life to think has been to act, therefore you need not be surprised to know that in a month I had left New Bedford on a chartered whaling steamer looking for whales. I had decided that the whale was the animal most suited to my purpose. Off the coast of Labrador we sighted a large school of whales. Fortunately it was a graded school, so to say, consisting of true whales, Greenland whales, humpbacked whales, fin-backed whales, spermaceti whales, and so forth. We had considerable trouble in driving them at first, but I rigged up a fog-horn with a reed so it would say ‘shoo,’ and they soon learned what it meant, and we worked them along down the coast by easy stages. A good many of the more skittish ran back,

and I thought at one time that I might have to send a tug ahead with a herring on the end of a stick to coax them; but we finally got them down to Gardiner's Bay, Long Island, and grounded them in the shallow water.

"Of course it has always been self-evident that the whale would make a splendid driving animal if he could be controlled. The most important and hardest thing was clearly to keep him from diving. A careful study showed me that the whale could not dive without putting his head down; therefore all that was needed was a check-rein sufficiently strong to restrain him in that respect. I selected a right whale about seventy-five feet long, which I had noticed was a good traveller, and proceeded to harness him. I put a bit about four inches in diameter in his mouth, with ten-foot cheek-rings on each end. From this bit I ran a hawser along his back and around the part of his tail where the flukes are joined to the body. I then put on a large collar, attached a sand-barge by four-inch wire cables, and turned him towards deep water for a trial spin.

"Naturally, of course, that whale did not readily take to harness. He reared up, rolled over, charged ahead, struck out fiercely with

his flukes, blew a stream of water like an artesian well, and otherwise misbehaved. His efforts to dive were something startling, but the check-rein held, and he finally gave it up.

"I had wire-cable reins connected with the wheel in the pilot-house, and stood there and guided him, occasionally touching him up with a bamboo fishing-pole. In two hours he drove fairly well, and in a week was fully broken, though he always remained hard-mouthed, and was never what you might call a lady's whale.

"I then went ahead and broke the others of the school to harness. I found the Greenlands made the best draught animals, and I used them in towing lighters, canal-boats, barges, and so forth, either driving them single or two abreast. The fin-backs, I soon discovered, were the best driving beasts, being light, rangey, and stylish. I took a young and quick-stroke fin-back for my own private use, and used him on my yacht. He was a free driver, a little inclined to shy at light-houses and promontories, but gentle as a kitten. He could throw spray in the face of any other whale along the coast. He was better on a smooth track like the Sound, but did not make a bad showing outside

where the track was heavy. He was always rather nervous about being hitched up, and it usually took two men to get him into the shafts."

Jones paused as if there was no more to tell.

"But," said Jackson Peters, "I fail to find any notice of the New York and Boston Leviathan Towing and Transportation Line in the classified newspaper advertisements, either under the head of 'Shipping' or 'Transportation.'"

"You should look under the heading of 'Whales—coastwise.' However, you wouldn't find it there, either, now. I gave up the business on account of the continued opposition of the steamship people. They made various ridiculous charges, and got the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals excited. The absurd cry was set up that my check-reins were cruel, and that I was docking the flukes of my driving animals. They also got a law enacted requiring me to stop every fifty miles and feed my whales out of a nose-bag made from a balloon—something utterly uncalled for. The charge of fast driving was likewise made against me, and a law passed prohibiting a speed of above forty-five



JONES EXERCISES THE FIN-BACK

miles an hour. Finally I gave the whole scheme up, and turned my whales loose. I am essentially a man of peace, esteeming quietude above all things. Strife is as distasteful to me as untruth. The whales lapsed into barbarism, but did not utterly forget their cunning. Two years later, when the bark *Curlew's Cull* tried to take my fin-back, off the coast of Greenland, he dodged the harpoon, took it in his mouth like a toothpick, and punched the boats so full of holes with it that they looked like nutmeg-graters."

XIX

TIGERS

"I've just been reading," said Jackson Peters, "of an unfortunate family in Tennessee. Two escaped circus tigers have got into the cellar of their house, and are roaring and fighting and bumping their heads up against the floor. None of the family dare go down cellar, and they are wondering what they are going to do about it."

"Still," remarked Jones, "the tiger is a comparatively tractable animal. As is so often the case, it is the mild power which triumphs, and a tiger becomes a mere plaything when you know how to go at him. You remember my telling you of when I lived in Australia and got the government reward of ten thousand pounds for the best rabbit-destroyer by simply painting a black spot on the end of a number of logs and allowing the intelligent animals to dash their brains out in

trying to rush into the apparently hollow tree trunks."

"But the difference, Jones, between the cotton-tail rabbit and the man-eating tiger is fairly perceptible to the eye of the trained observer," returned Jackson Peters.

"To the man who is at home with animals, neither amounts to any more than one of those cotton-flannel dogs with shoe-button eyes which you see in toy-stores. I met your man-eating tiger when I lived in India, and found him an amiable beast. His purr is loud and disagreeable, and he is too big to make a successful mouser, but otherwise I liked him.

"While in India I lived in the Bugaboohoo country, which was badly infested by tigers, all of them, seemingly, with the man-eating habit. My bungalow was not far from the Muddi River, which was bordered by dense and in many places impassable jungles. I was conducting a coffee plantation, and the tigers had a habit of carrying off my workmen to such an extent that it was like having a Deb's strike on my hands all the while. I endured it for some time, and then decided to calmly yet firmly rid the district of tigers.

"I had made a close study of the tiger and knew his habits thoroughly. As you may re-

member, a tiger comes out of his lair at about sundown and prepares to make a night of it, much as the domestic cat too often does. The first thing he does is to tune up his voice by a series of raspings on his vocal cords. Then he scratches off a few square yards of bark from a convenient tree, lashes his sides with his tail, and goes down to the river and takes a drink, after which the real sport of the night opens, and he begins to look for likely men. For several evenings I watched a dozen large and ferocious man-eaters come down to the river for their preliminary drink. Though in no way banded together, they all came at about the same time and drank at the same spot. I knew that each of them had killed a score of my workmen, besides many other people, and I determined that I would take them into camp and hang their rugs on my fence.

“For several days I hit on no satisfactory plan for accomplishing this, but one afternoon while sitting on my veranda watching the family cat and her kittens disporting themselves amid a bed of catnip which grew in my garden, the seed for which I had taken from this country, the whole thing flashed upon me. Cutting an armful of the plant,



JONES ENGAGED IN DECORATING THE TIGER

and taking a ball of twine, I proceeded immediately to the drinking-place of the tigers, and concealed myself in the tall grass.

“I had not been there above ten minutes when a large and apparently old tiger came down the path. He paused in front of me and began lapping up the water with his tongue, while his tail stretched on the ground behind him. I reached out, and with a bit of string securely tied a good-sized bunch of the catnip to the end of his tail. He finished drinking and turned, licking his chops and glaring about for members of the Coffee-hoers’ Federated Union. As he did so he caught sight of the bouquet on the end of his tail. He drew it around and sniffed at it. Then he took a nip of it, and an expression which was almost a smile spread over his face. He sat down, took the whole bunch in his mouth, and began chewing it, all the time roaring harsh but pleased purrs out of the corners of his mouth.

“Gentlemen, I will not weary you, but in a half-hour I had fourteen royal Bengal man-eating tigers sitting about, with the ends of their tails in their mouths, chewing catnip and purring at the top of their voices. It was a new experience for the beasts, the plant not

being indigenous to India, and for the time being it brought on a state of ecstasy which completely deprived them of their self-control. I picked up a short stick and drove them before me to my bungalow as if they had been sheep, each animal keeping his tail in his mouth. I guided them into an enclosure back of my house, where, you may be sure, my men took great pleasure in despatching them. The fourteen rugs I sent to friends in this country."

"Why did you leave India?" asked Robinson.

"A year later the Coffee-hoers' Federated Union set up the cry that killing the tigers had allowed the ranks of the working-men to increase to such an extent that it was impossible longer to make a living, so they boycotted me. They called me a plutocrat who was sucking the life-blood of the country, and I had to leave in the night."

XX

IN HIGH LATITUDES

THE conversation, gently but imperceptibly moulded by the crafty Jones, had drifted around to the subject of fear, and no sooner was it well grounded than he announced boldly that he felt impelled to confess that he was once genuinely and unmistakably scared.

“On that occasion,” he went on, “I knew what it was to be frightened, to feel an unutterable sense of terror, and to give way to it. Of course, in my life, which, as you know, has been an active one, and not without its stirring and even exciting incidents, I have often known what it is to be embarrassed, or even alarmed, but I never gave way to the blind animal instinct of fright but once; and the consequences might have been so disastrous that I have never allowed it to happen again. It is not flattering to one’s self-esteem to feel that one was saved by chance.”

"It seems to me," said Jackson Peters, "that you have been saved by chance a great many times, according to your own story. How about the time in Africa when you woke up and found the elephant preparing to lie down on you for the night?"

"I rolled out of the way and went back to sleep," answered Jones. "No luck about it. He took up more than his share of the bed for the rest of the night, but I didn't make any objections. Being saved by mere chance is well illustrated by your own experience that night you saw a strange moon with a beard attack the regular moon, and whirl about it with frightful rapidity. It was simply good-luck that a policeman came along and told the strange and bellicose moon to go 'way, and took you home out of the danger. Or the night you—"

"But, Jones," said Robinson, soothingly, "you started to tell us of your scare."

"True; and I will. It was a number of years ago. I was following the sea at the time, and was first-mate of the whaling bark *Flying Cloud*. We entered the Arctic Ocean through Bering Strait, and cruised about for several months. Our luck was poor, and in our anxiety to fill our oil-tanks we stayed a

day too long, and got nipped in the ice. The floe drifted for several days in a northeasterly direction, and we finally went aground somewhere above Sabine Land. We saw that we were in for a winter there, and settled down to make the best of it.

"Darkness, of course, soon closed around us, and the cold became intense. It was a hard winter even for that extreme latitude. None of the crew had ever experienced anything like it. I may illustrate it, in a measure, by this incident, which, though trifling in itself, remains fixed in my mind: I went to my room one night with a candle as usual. Got ready for bed and tried to blow out the candle. Couldn't do it. Looked closely, and saw that the flame was frozen solid. Broke it off with my thumb and finger, jumped into bed, and slept soundly till morning.

"My naturally adventurous spirit took me out much, and I had soon explored the neighborhood. Being a good shot, I frequently brought in fresh meat, which was greatly relished by the crew. The captain warned me, however, that I would come to some danger if I persisted in wandering away from the ship; but, with the recklessness of youth, I did not heed him. I had my dog Bones with

me, and together we would go out every day on a hunting trip. You will remember that Bones was not a hunting-dog, being, in fact, a corresponding member of the Philadelphia Canine Universal Peace Society; but he was much company for me, nevertheless. Poor dog, he finally choked to death on the wish-bone of a Thanksgiving turkey!

“On the 10th of January I left the ship, as usual, at about nine o'clock in the morning with my rifle and Bones. The stars were shining brightly, and a beautiful aurora lit up the landscape. I hoped to kill one or more polar-bears, not only for the meat they would afford, but because they were becoming very troublesome, having badly gnawed our rudder and broken off our foretop-gallant-mast. Though apparently awkward creatures, they can, as you know, run as fast as a horse, and are quick and active as a cat. I knew my danger in hunting them, but relied on my skill with the rifle.

“I was about two miles from the ship, and was clambering up a small ridge of ice, when suddenly from the other side an immense white paw uprose, and with one blow my gun was knocked from my hands. It disappeared in a crevice of the ice, and as I jumped

back, four large polar-bears leaped into view and began scrambling down the ridge. They were evidently made desperate by hunger, and I saw that there would not be the least delay in their attacking me.

“It is at this point, gentlemen, that I have to confess my fright. Not that I haven’t on many other occasions run from danger ; when discretion is the better part of valor I choose the better part ; it is no disgrace to retreat in the face of an overwhelming force ; but in my other retreats I have kept my head and known precisely what I was doing. But on this occasion—it may have come from the darkness, the weirdness of the scene, the suddenness of the attack, the utter desperation of the situation, the hollow cries of the ravenous beasts, the wailing of poor Bones—I know not what it was—but I felt a sense of hopeless, abject terror. Seizing my valuable dog by the nape of the neck, I turned and fled blindly, ignominiously, and as one bereft of all reason.

“ Naturally, in my insane condition—for it amounted to little less—I could not judge how long those terrible animals followed me, but it seemed that for hours they were close behind, uttering their starving, hideous roar,

and gnashing their famished, savage teeth. My speed must have been something terrific, and far beyond that ordinarily possible for a man, since the bears did not overtake me. I carried Bones under my arm, with his tail waving behind, and whether it was torn at by the bears, or worn out by the frightful wind born of my flight, I know not, but I do know that it became a sorry and bedraggled appendage.

“As I said, I do not know how long the bears pursued me ; I only know that at last I became conscious that they were no longer behind, partly from my own senses, now in a measure returned, and partly from the fact that Bones no longer kept up a prolonged and cowardly wail. Now, gentlemen, comes what is perhaps the most extraordinary fact connected with my whole career. I do not pretend to account for it—I simply give it to you as it happened. When I realized that I was no longer followed, I of course decided to stop, but, gentlemen, when I attempted it, I found I had no more control over my legs than I had over the movements of the planets. I willed to stop, but my legs rushed on with the same rapidity. I looked down upon them curiously, as they flew like the spokes



JONES SURPRISED BY FOUR LARGE POLAR BEARS

of an engine-wheel, and with precisely the same feeling that I might look at such a wheel. I felt as one might feel on a hand-car which was running away down a steep grade. My fright had, in fact, produced some sort of aggravated chorea, or St. Vitus's dance, and the muscles of my legs were as completely out of my control as those of my heart. I rushed on across the frozen plain involuntarily and automatically.

"When at last I had fully taken in the strange situation, I looked at the stars, and found that I was moving a little north of east, directly away from the ship. I discovered that I could guide myself, if I could not stop, and my first thought was to turn and allow myself to run towards the vessel. It then occurred to me that I was going at the rate of at least twenty miles an hour, and that I must have been running for three or four hours, so the hopelessness of finding the ship was apparent. For another hour I rushed on, and considered the situation. Suddenly a thought which almost dazed me rose up in my mind. I would turn due north, and perhaps reach the very pole itself before I ran down !

"Gentlemen, this is already a long, and, I

fear, an unprofitable tale ; I will hurry to my conclusion. For hours I swept on at the same appalling rate. I felt no weariness, only the exhilarating sense of being carried along as if on the wings of the wind. Hunger I felt occasionally, which I satisfied with strips of pemmican, which I took from my pocket, not forgetting to give faithful Bones his share. On the morning of the third day, January 12th, I saw by the stars that I was in the immediate neighborhood of the pole. At eleven o'clock I was sure that I was almost or exactly crossing it. Patriotic instincts rose in my bosom. Pulling out a small American flag, I attached it to a strip of pemmican, frozen like a rod of iron, and, as I tore over the spot like a terrified ghost, I stuck the odd staff in the snow, and took possession of the region in the name of Congress and President Buchanan. It was a scene to remember : the calm unvexed pole-star in the very zenith looking down upon a scene it had never witnessed before ; the awful limitless plain of eternal snow ; the brilliant aurora hanging like convoluted curtains of a hundred colors about the mighty vault of heaven ; the glorious Stars and Stripes fluttering proudly in the breeze ; Bones wav-

ing his dismantled tail and rolling out a glad patriotic howl, and my own legs rushing on with their long gallop like the everlasting beating of the unwearied wings of the Eagles of the Sun. I turned neither to the right nor to the left. But my face, before to the mysterious north, was now set towards the hopeful south. Three days later, on January 15th, I reached a settlement on the Yenisei River, in Siberia, where I stayed till spring, when I came home by the way of Moscow and St. Petersburg, bringing Bones with me."

"But," said Jackson Peters, earnestly, "how did you stop at the settlement?"

"I threw myself on my back, while the governor of the province and three soldiers sat on my legs till they became calm. Gentlemen, I hope never to be frightened like that again."

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