FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WITHOUT A TICKET

EXCITING EXPERIENCES AS A HOBO

BY JOHN PEELE

PRICE FIFTY CENTS

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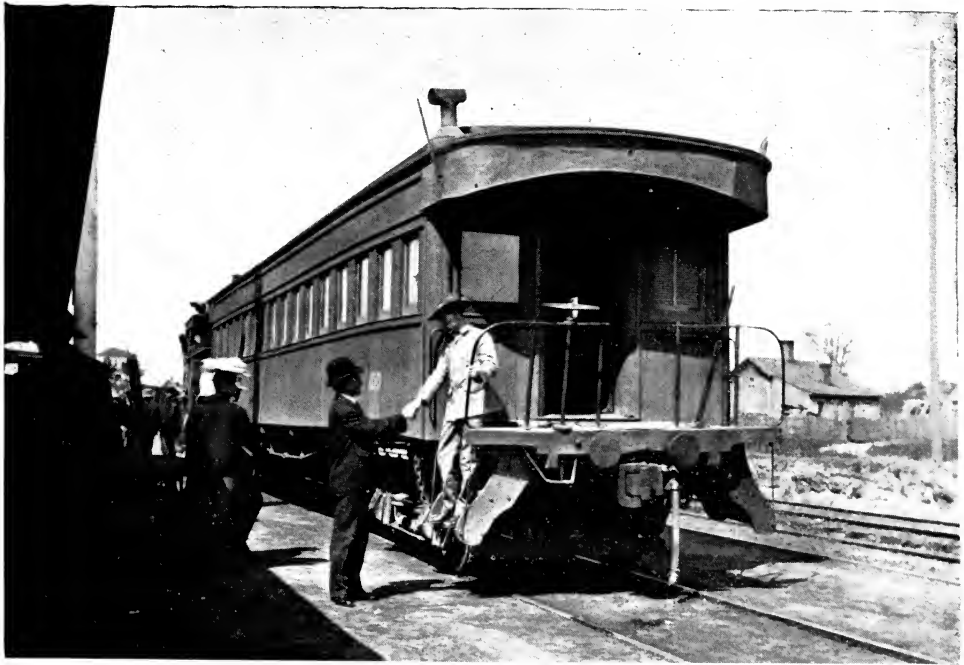

"Good-bye, brother. If I never return again, be good to mother."

FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

WITHOUT A TICKET AND HOW I DID IT

GIVING MY EXCITING EXPERIENCES AS A "HOBO"

BY JOHN PEELE

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Put cut of bale of cotton in one corner and and cluster of oranges in other.

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PREFACE.

After a good deal of persuasion upon the part of my relatives and immediate circle of friends, I have decided to write an account of a few of the many adventures and dangers that befell me while making my way, practically without a penny, from Tarboro, North Carolina, to Tucson, Arizona; and thence to the stricken city of San Francisco, Cal., and other points of interest throughout the West, including New Orleans, Dallas, Texas, Fort Worth, El Paso, Dalhart, Texas, Alamagorda, New Mexico, Juarez, Old Mexico, Bisbee, Arizona, Los Angeles, California, San Pedro, California, Searchlight, Nevada, Denver, Colorado, and more than a hundred other points of interest, coming back home on a telegraphed ticket, via Chicago, Cincinnati, and Richmond, Virginia.

The book bears no relation to fiction, as the reader will discover before reading many of its pages. The writer, believing it will be more interesting, will unreservedly show up all his faults and mistakes along the trip, as well as his good qualities. There is nothing in the book pertaining to the supernatural, nor is it of a highly sensational character, but the writer believes it will prove more than interesting to the intelligent mind. It is a true story from real life that every boy in America can read and profit thereby. The book is a record of facts and incidents, which were written down in shorthand, and transcribed

at different stages of the journey by the author. The story is backed by the indisputable evidence of testimonials and correct addresses of the most prominent people with whom the writer came in contact. This book demonstrates the value of physical culture and education to the American youth as the author believes no other work upon the market has yet done. The writer graduated at the Massey Business College, Richmond, Va., in bookkeeping, etc.

Feeling the need of rest and recreation after several years of hard study at school, and being a great sufferer from asthma, the author, hearing of the dry and beneficial climate of Arizona and New Mexico to those who have weak lungs, decided almost immediately after leaving school at Richmond, Va., to go to Tucson, Ariz., and personally verify these reports, and probably settle there permanently himself.

The author, John Peele, of Tarboro, N. C., is just nineteen years of age, and though he had knocked about the world considerably prior to the opening of this story, he had heretofore always held a ticket to his destination. And now, dear readers, follow him patiently and he will attempt to show you how he turned the trick of getting West without a ticket. Trusting the book may be of value to mothers in restraining their wayward sons to stay at home, however humble it may be, I beg to subscribe myself, sincerely, the author,

JOHN PEELE.

$50.00 REWARD. $50.00

I am a poor man, but if the darkey, who twice saved my life by catching me while standing up on the end of a loaded flat-car fast asleep, and preventing my falling between the wheels of a rapidly moving freight train about ten or fifteen miles from the town of Woodbine, Fla., on a certain night in May in the year 1906, and who afterwards accompanied me forty-nine miles on a hand-car to Jacksonville, can prove his identity, by telling me what happened when we parted on the railroad in the suburbs of that city, and will communicate his intelligence to John Peele, Tarboro, N. C., he will receive the sum of fifty dollars ($50.00).

JOHN PEELE.

San Pedro, Cal.

Yes: John Peele was employed by us as clerk in the Angelus Hotel ~~a short time~~ Jennings & White

TESTIMONIALS.

SEARCHLIGHT, NEV.

John Peele was in my employ here for some time, first as porter, then as bar tender in the Searchlight Hotel.

I hereby give Mr. Peele the privilege of printing this testimonial, both in his book and in the newspaper columns, advertising the book.

FRED. ULLMAN.

JOHN:—Whenever you come out West again, you can get another job. You are all right.

U.

CHIPLEY, FLA.

This is to certify that John Peele, being pulled down in this town from under the boiler of a morning passenger train bound for Pensacola, Fla., was employed by me at my brick yard.

I hereby give Mr. Peele the privilege of printing this testimonial, both in his book and in the newspaper columns advertising the book.

J. D. HALL.

Cut out this paragraph.

JOHN R. PEELE.

Put here a diagram of the trip or list the principal points Aude visited.

Revise 1 st Chapt.
And cut out detail

From North Carolina to Southern California Without a Ticket.

CHAPTER I.

Off For California—My Troubles Begin in Wilmington—Taken for a Deserter—A Drummer Comes to My Rescue.

The details of my former life will not be given here, but as I stood waiting on the depot platform at Tarboro, N. C., with my brother Joe, who had come to bid me good-bye, one fine day in early May, in the year 1906, I could, at least, say that no other chap of my acquaintance could name any more varied occupations in which he had been engaged than I could.

I had been grocery clerk for my people at Tarboro; water boy at the age of 14 at the Buffalo Lithia Springs in Virginia, where I made scores of friends from all parts of the country; dry-goods salesman for Chas. Broadway Rouss, New York City; waiter in a Coney Island restaurant; bell-boy in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York City; waiter in Buffalo, N. Y., where I had gone to be treated by the famous Dr. R. V. Pierce for asthma; traveling agent through the South for Jas. M. Davis, New York, with stereoscopic views,

at which I cleared over $400.00 in one summer's canvass, nearly ruining my vocal organs; Bible agent through the country for J. S. Peele & Co.; stenographer, bookkeeper, and scores of other things I engaged in, too numerous to mention.

The train, which was to mark the beginning of more adventures, hardships and trials than I, at that time, could possibly imagine, pulled into the station at Tarboro, N. C., and bidding my brother good-bye, I got aboard.

I had four dollars in money, several letters of recommendation, and a ticket. Among the letters was a note of commendation, kindly given me by Mr. John F. Shackelford, of the Bank of Tarboro, and another one, equally as highly appreciated, from Mr. Frank Powell, the editor of the *Tarboro Southerner*. The ticket was labeled Wilmington, N. C., and had been purchased merely as a blind to my parents, who were unaware of the fact that I had come home from school "flat-broke," and as a consequence, of course, unable to purchase my fare to the West.

Parting with my mother affected me no little, for it was my intention not to return home for several years.

Tarboro was soon left behind, however, and now other and graver thoughts began to take possession of me. What was I to do in Wilmington with only four dollars? And how was I to get out of the town anyway, unless I purchased another ticket?

During all of my travels, I had never yet beaten the railroad company out of a penny, and just how I was going to board a train without being caught and locked up was the question.

Little did I think at that time how expert and bold I was to become at this kind of thing before reaching far off Tucson, Arizona.

The train pulled under the shed at Wilmington just after dark. It was with great reluctance I got out of my seat; in fact, all the other passengers had alighted when I got my bundles together.

I would have sworn that there was a big, blue-coated officer waiting to put handcuffs on me the moment I stepped from the car platform, but no such thing happened. Instead the whole train was deserted and the porter informed me that I had better hurry, if I wanted to get through the exit before it closed.

Regaining courage, I hurried along in the direction the other passengers had taken, and a few moments later emerged on Front street, Wilmington's busiest thoroughfare.

I was by no means a stranger to Wilmington, and, therefore, had little trouble in finding a good place at which to put up, without going to an expensive hotel.

Leaving my few belongings behind, I started out afterwards to retrace my steps back to the depot and railroad yards for the purpose of obtaining any information I could regarding the schedule of the trains.

About midway the bridge, which connects the depot with Front street, I noticed two colored men engaged in watching the trains shift in and out of the yards. I at once decided that here was an opportunity to start the ball rolling, and accordingly approached them and told them where I wanted to go. In return they informed me that they were not trainmen, as I had supposed, but were employed on the steamboat *Perdy.*

The name of their Captain was Archie Marine, they said, and added that he was a good, free-hearted sort of a man, and might be able to help me get down the coast on a boat. One of them offered to conduct me to the *Perdy's* wharf, and a short time later we were on board.

The engineer of the boat was the only man on board when we arrived, and he informed me that the Captain hadn't shown up since late in the afternoon.

A significant twinkle of the eye accompanied this remark, and not being altogether blind, I concluded that the *Perdy's* captain was in some respects the same as all other sea-faring men.

"Do you know where he generally holds forth when on shore?" I asked.

"No, but probably some of the crew on shore can tell you, if you can find them," he replied.

Disappointed, I made my way up town again.

Entering a drug store, and calling for a directory, I soon found Marine's residence address, and a half hour later I had reached his home.

Several children met me at the door, and in response to my query, summoned their mother, a very pleasant-faced woman, as I recall her, who at once seemed to know that I was in trouble.

She gave me explicit directions how to find her husband.

"Please tell him to come home at once, if you find him," she said. It was after 11 o'clock when I bade the lady good-night.

After losing all this time, I was determined to find Marine now, if I had to traverse every street in Wilmington.

Having canvassed views in the town, I had no trouble in finding the section the lady had directed me to.

The place I entered was a kind of half grocery store and half saloon—the saloon, of course, being in the rear.

On entering, my attention was directed to a party of four men, evidently seamen, judging from their language, who were in the front part of the store engaged in a conversation that could easily have been heard a block away.

At last I felt sure I had cornered my man.

It has always been my belief that I was especially blessed with the knack of making friends with a stranger, and this talent, which is the only one I think I ever possessed, had certainly had ample opportunity in my varied life to develop into an art.

"Hello, mates!" I sang out, approaching the quartet with a smile—what wonders a smile will work when used right—"I'm looking for Archie Marine, fellows. Do you know where he is to-night?"

Immediately one of the men stepped forward.

"My name is Marine," he said, "What's up?"

He had a pleasant way of speaking, and it was soon apparent that he embodied all the good qualities which the two darkies on Front street bridge had invested him with.

"It's something important, Marine; come with me and I'll tell you."

Without a word the man turned his back upon the jolly companions with whom he had been lately carousing, and together we left the place.

We went two blocks up the street, and here, under the shelter of a drug store, I told him I wanted to get as far down the coast as Jacksonville, Fla.

He said he thought he could help me do so.

"The boats no longer run from here to Georgetown, S. C.," he said, "but there's a boat from Wilmington to Southport, N. C., daily for seventy-five cents, and you can easily walk across the sands from Southport to Georgetown in a day and a half. You'll not be lonesome," he added, "for there are houses every few miles, and I'll write you a note to a friend of mine in Georgetown, who'll take you to Charleston, S. C., and

another note to the engineer who runs between Charleston and Jacksonville."

This was great! I was to get nearly a thousand miles on my journey without incurring the risk of beating a train. The mere contemplation of beating a train seemed to stir up all the animosity in my nature towards all train officials.

What! I, John R. Peele, the boy who had always been so careful at home about washing his face and keeping his clothes brushed, attempt to hide on a train, and beat his fare?

No, I was to preserve my dignity and travel like a gentleman on a large steamboat to Jacksonville, and then other means would surely present themselves, as probably another boat ran from Jacksonville to Galveston, Texas.

Splendid idea! Why the trip was going to prove easy—a regular "cinch," and I could afford to laugh at the train people now, and that for a good long time, too, but alas! my joy was short-lived, for I was soon to learn the truth of the old adage: "The best laid plans ofttimes go astray."

We entered the drug store, and Marine, after much effort, composed the notes, which he wrote down in my memorandum book.

The following is a reproduction of one of them, verbatim, taken from the same little book, which I yet own:

down

"ENGINEER,

Mr. J. Dunn wil you bee kind enough to help my yung friend over to J. and let me hear from you oblige" ARCHIE MARINE.

I was also given a letter of introduction to his brother, William Marine, who is a very popular Jacksonville citizen, and who is superintendent of the Clyde Line Docks in that city.

The author desires to publicly thank Mr. Marine through this book for that service, and feels confident, had he ever reached Georgetown, the notes would undoubtedly have been of much assistance.

At 2 p. m. the following day I boarded the boat for Southport, and knowing how I was to travel on leaving home, I had only brought along one suit of clothes, which I had on.

It was a nice fitting khaki suit, with prominent brass buttons, and seemed to be the very thing for the wear and tear of a long journey. It was a homeguard suit, though I was no homeguard, and had never been one, but purchased the suit just before leaving home.

Now, as the reader may not be aware, Southport is a favorite camping resort of North Carolina's home guards, and as luck would have it, there was a company encamped there at this particular time.

Up to this time I had paid no heed to what I was wearing, but it was soon obvious that I was attracting unusual attention.

There were three or four men in blue uniforms on the boat, who seemed to give me their whole attention, for everywhere I went on the boat they would follow me and begin their whisperings, and it was fast becoming a nuisance, when, finally, one of them stepped up to me and asked:

"Are you a home guard?"

"I am not," I replied civilly, realizing my clothes warranted the question.

"The reason I asked," he said, "there has been a desertion in one of the companies lately, and the description of the deserter fits you. If you were to land there now and suddenly make off across the sands towards Georgetown—I had informed him of my intention—you would quite likely be overtaken and held three or four days for identification," he said.

Having never been a home guard, I did not know whether the man was playing a practical joke on me or was telling the truth, but I did not want to be detained there for several days, and I was inclined to believe what he said was the truth. However, I did not betray this fact.

Instead, I laughed and remarked that I was not afaid; but all three of the men stoutly maintained that they had tried to do me a favor, and seeing that I appeared to take it as a joke, one of

the men finally got angry and wished me all sorts of bad things, and said he hoped I would be arrested as soon as the boat landed.

The cabin was filled with passengers, and soon it was the topic of conversation, and some thought I would be held, while others took the opposite side.

Sitting almost in front of me was a well dressed man, whom, I noticed, had taken no part in the conversation, and he, catching my eye for a moment, winked at me and arose and left the cabin.

Soon after I followed him to a deserted part of the boat.

"I am a Philadelphia drummer," he said, "and don't know which side to stand on, but if you will go to the engine room, I will follow soon with a sample grip of cheap clothing, and you may pick out a cheap suit free of charge, if you will cut the buttons off your khaki coat and give them to me, and I readily agreed and the change was soon effected.

Whether I was the victim of a practical joke or not, I have never learned, but if so, I was ahead of the game in the clothing by a long sight, for I had selected a good, warm suit.

And now the strangest part of all, I had decided not to land in Southport.

It was seventy-two miles to Georgetown, and bad walking in the sand, I was told.

The more I thought of it, the sicker I became, and now what was I to do? Turn tramp?

Never!

Beating the trains would be infinitely preferable, and I would go back to Wilmington and do so.

The boat landed and discharged the passengers, when, to everyone's surprise, I remained on board, and just what they thought I am unable to say.

Quite likely the Philadelphia dummer thought the joke was on him, for I had told him I was so eager to get to Georgetown.

Passengers returning to the city now filed on, and in a short time the boat cast off and headed for Wilmington.

On the return trip I noticed I was charged twenty-five cents more than when coming down, and I supposed the home guards were allowed this discount. We landed in Wilmington just after dark.

My lodging, breakfast and dinner had deprived me of seventy-five cents, and the trip to Southport had cost $1.25, which left me the sum of $2.00, but I had no occasion to regret my trip down the river, for as a result I was now wearing an early spring suit.

All of my fond hopes of reaching Jacksonville easily were now cast to the ground.

Gathering up my bundles and the khaki suit, I made my way on shore.

CHAPTER II.

Run Out of Town by the Chadbourn Police—Cash Running Low—Getting Schedules Mixed—The First Blush of Shame.

It would be hard to describe my feelings as I started up town. I was hungry and ate a good supper, though I felt like crying as the cashier took my twenty-five cents, for I had never been penniless in a strange town in my life, and now my stock of nerve was weighed exactly by just what money I had left; but the worst thing that hindered my progress, I was heartily ashamed of what I was going to attempt to do.

Arriving at Market Square, I experienced no difficulty shortly afterwards in striking an acquaintance with a rather shabbily dressed young man, who seemed to know all about the trains.

Finding that I was eager to leave at once, he remarked:

"You have just about fifteen minutes to leave Wilmington on a freight train to-night. The last freight train pulls out at 8:15 to-night, and it is now 8 o'clock."

Luckily what little baggage I owned was with me, and in another moment I was rapidly walking to the place named. I quickly saw this wouldn't do, though, for it was nearly a mile to the depot, and turning into a residence street, I broke into a run.

Panting for breath I reached the railroad yards.

There was no sign of a train pulling out, nor was there one making up, and so far as I could see there was not the slightest evidence of life about the yards, and it began to look like another practical joke had been played on me.

Just across the tracks at this point are a good many small tenement houses, for the most part occupied by colored people, who are employed by the railroad company.

Calling out one of the occupants of these houses, I asked him if the 8:15 freight had gone.

"The schedule's been changed, and there ain't no 8:15 freight," said the darkey. "The last night freight for Florence left about an hour ago."

To reach Jacksonville, I would have to go through Florence, S. C., and Savannah, Ga.

"If you'll go to Hilton Bridge to-morrow evening," said the darkey, "you might be able to catch a passenger train that passes about 3 p. m. on Sundays."

Hilton Bridge spans the Cape Fear River near this point, and all trains are required by the law to slow up before crossing.

For this information the man received a buttonless khaki suit.

The next morning was Sunday, and after paying my lodging I had but $1.35.

Hardship was certainly beginning to stare me in the face at an early stage of the trip.

Oh! how I wished now I had stayed at home, where my every wish had been gratified by tender, loving hands, but it was too late! My pride was up in arms, and I would see the game through to the bitter end.

On this day I ate neither breakfast nor dinner, and early in the afternoon I repaired to the bridge to wait.

The man who runs a small "pop shop" on the Wilmington side of the bridge amused me with stories of the many young men he had seen beat their way from this point, and I got him to tell me just how the others had done, and was becoming quite brave, till he began describing how he had seen one man miss his footing, and showed me the spot where the cars had run over both legs.

The train was coming! And the supreme test of the trip was at hand.

I took up a position at the curve, which is about two hundred yards from the bridge.

The engineer bestowed a quick glance at me as he passed, then his gaze wandered ahead.

Grabbing up the two bundles, which were hidden behind a telegraph pole, I made a quick dash forward and succeeded in boarding the first coach from the engine, commonly known as the "blind baggage."

I didn't stop on the car platform, as is usually

done, but crawled to the top of the tender, which was well loaded with coal.

As near as possible I made things comfortable by placing the largest lumps of coal out of reach, thus enabling me to partly conceal myself by lying down.

Exultation was now mingled with excitement.

I had just begun to congratulate myself when, to my dismay, I noted that the train was slackening speed. A moment later it stopped.

Footsteps now sounded, hurriedly approaching the engine.

I lay quite still, almost afraid to breathe, as the conductor and porter came up.

"Come down from there! Come down!" cried the conductor.

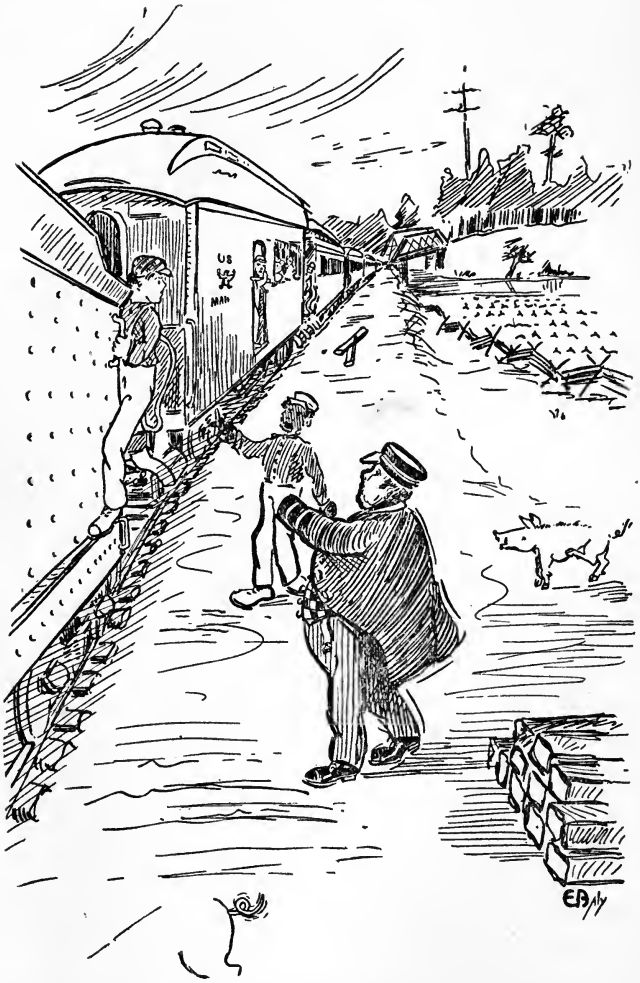
I raised up intending to ask him to let me go.

"Come down, quick!" he cried. "Tramps and hobos are not allowed on this train."

This was quite enough for John Reginald Peele, and without any more ado he crawled down.

My first impulse was to knock out my insulter with a lump of hard coal, but better judgment prevailed, and I soon reached the ground by his side.

After all, I reasoned, he was only performing his duty in putting me down, and he was fully justified in calling me a tramp and a hobo, for I was not only acting both these parts very well, but was now looking the part.



"Come down quick!" he cried. "Tramps and hobos are not allowed on this train."

Before boarding the train I had been spotlessly clean. Now my hands were black, my white collar soiled, and my new clothes nearly ruined.

This was the picture I presented to a score or more of curious passengers, who had poked their heads out of the car windows to ascertain the cause of the delay.

In deep shame I hung my head, and it seemed that everyone of those passengers had recognized me. This was mere fancy, of course, for I was then over a hundred miles from home. At any rate, there was one thing certain. I had been left and the train was now belching forth black smoke far up the road.

Those who had witnessed my defeat from the "pop shop" on the other side were now eagerly awaiting me as I recrossed the bridge, and they were ready with sympathy as I told them how I had been put down.

"That train goes to Charlotte, anyway," said the storekeeper. "I think the next one, which is due in about twenty minutes, is the Florence train."

A good many men will live half their life in a place and yet never know the exact time a certain train is due, nor where it is bound, and I would have to rely on my own luck, for it was quickly apparent that he was one of the class who are never profoundly sure of anything.

Had I gone to Charlotte I would have been

taken completely out of my way, at the very outset, causing all kinds of trouble, and this served a good deal to show me the exact size of the job I had undertaken.

Most of my fear had now vanished. No real harm had resulted in my first attempt at beating a train, and the tinge of excitement had proven quite fascinating.

Of course the local authorities of the hundreds of towns I must pass through had to be considered, and indeed this was now my greatest fear, for, in a good many towns, as the reader is perhaps aware, a man caught beating a train suffers the penalty of from one to twelve months hard labor on the county roads.

A second train was coming; and now was the time for me to make good!

This time I boarded the train without exciting suspicion. A repetition of my former antics quickly followed, and I was soon lying flat upon the coal, gripping the top of the tender now, though, for my uncomfortable bed of coal had suddenly assumed the motion of a cradle, as the result of the train's sudden increase of speed.

Wilmington rapidly receded from view, and with a feeling of joy, savored with suppressed excitement, I closed my eyes for a moment.

Where I was going and what I would do when I got there were thoughts that chased through my brain.

I tried to picture far off Arizona, with its mountains and barren deserts, and wondered if it would cure or benefit my asthma—I would go direct to Solomonsville, Arizona, where our State Treasurer, Lacy, had been cured.

Suddenly I sat up.

"What a fool I am," I muttered. "Sitting here in plain view, to be arrested at the first station we stop."

In a few moments I had dug out a large hole in the coal and crawled into it, placing the largest lumps around the edge of the opening to help shield me from view.

Every thing went well until about dark, when we reached the small town of Chadbourn, N. C., fifty-seven miles from Wilmington.

Here the man at the pump house, which is located close to the depot, had seen an uncovered foot, and called the conductor's attention to it.

The conductor, who was a good sort of a man, had discovered my presence on the train long before reaching Chadbourn, and so had others of the train's crew. The man in the baggage car was even taking care of my bundles, which he had allowed me to deposit in a corner of the car.

Unaware of the fact that I had been discovered, I lay perfectly still, afraid to move hand or foot, and it seemed to me the train would never start.

Several people approached the engine, including a policeman of the town and the conductor.

"Come down off that coal pile," cried the conductor.

There was no mistaking the command, and I crawled down.

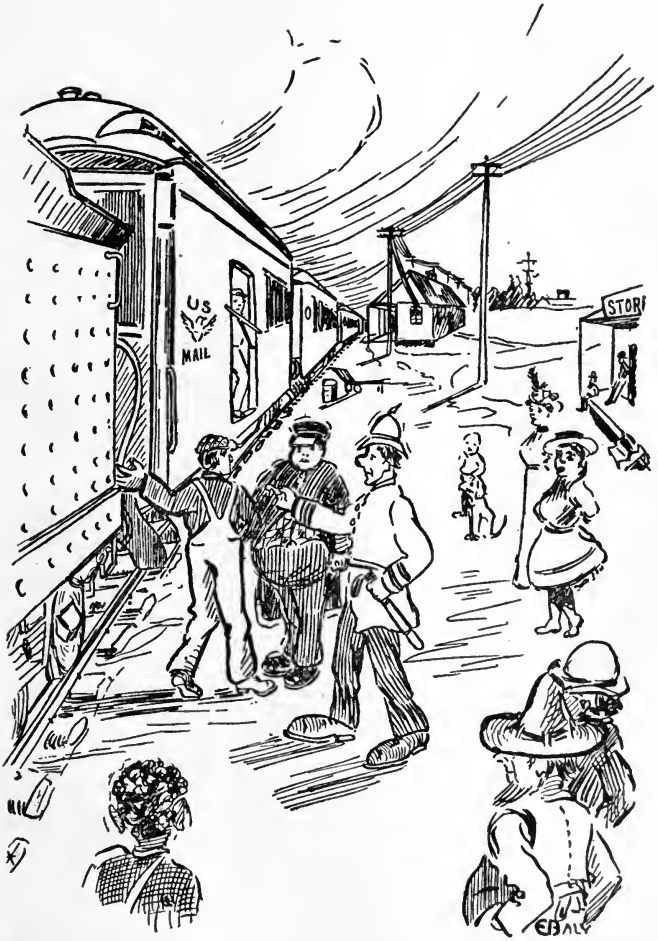
If I was a sight before, I was a whole show now, for I was smutty from head to foot.

"I didn't know he was up there," said the conductor.

Inwardly I thanked the conductor, whom I knew had been trying to help me along.

"I'll take charge of this young man," said the policeman.

"Please get my things," I said. "I hid them in the baggage car."



"I'll take charge of this young man," said the policeman.

CHAPTER III.

Snatched From Death—Forty-nine Miles on a Hand-car—Finding a Partner.

Two-score people had seen me pulled down from the tender, and were now watching the result of my sudden discomfiture with interest, and with a look of deep humiliation and embarrassment—for the most part assumed—for my vanity had materially suffered in that fifty-seven mile ride, I now stood in the presence of the policeman.

Apparently I could not even look up at the cruel, cold-staring crowd of country folks that thickly gathered around me.

Evidently the policeman was touched, and unaware of the fact that I was playing on his sympathy, he questioned me as to where I lived, where I was going, etc., all of which I answered in a straightforward manner, adding that I was going West to cure the asthma, and that I had letters of recommendation.

I had several other letters of this kind in my pocket, but remembering that home reference is said to be the best, I selected only two from the bunch—those of Mr. John Shackelford and Mr. Frank Powell, and here I must beg their pardon, most humbly, for using their kind notes of praise like this, and am sure they'll forgive me, for I was in a tight box.

After reading the two papers over carefully, he slowly remarked, with a puzzled look on his face:

"Look here! it's against my rule, but I'm going to let you go this time. Just scoot down that track, now, and remember," he added, as I started through the increasing throng, "if you return I shall run you in."

There was nothing to do but walk, and I started down the tracks, walking—I knew not where.

My scheme had worked and I was free, but far from being in a happy frame of mind.

A small hand-mirror showed me a face that frightened me with its blackness, and my hands were in even a worse condition.

"Oh, if my people could only see me now!" I mused.

A sudden recollection quickened my pace—in the terms of the law I was a vagrant, and what, if the Chadbourn official should change his mind about letting me go. This was a phase of the case I had not considered before, being a vagrant, and darkness had settled down, and I had been silently walking along the pathway of the track for some time, when my melancholy musings were suddenly put to flight. A quarter of a mile ahead a light was shining. "Some farm-house built near the railroad," I speculated; "wonder if they'll give me shelter." Drawing nearer, I discovered my mistake. The light was issuing from the windows of a small store.

A large railroad board in front of the place told me I had reached the town of Grice—containing three or four small dwellings, one store and a town pump; the place is hardly on the map, though it was a boon to me just now.

On entering the store I was surprised to find a good number of people trading, notwithstanding the fact it was Sunday.

Several darkies were in the place, and calling one of them outside, we headed for the pump.

"Been hoboing?" asked the darkey, beginning to pump water for me to wash.

"Yes," I replied, not relishing his familiarity, "I'm going down to Florida."

Now its a fact, though not generally known, that between South Carolina and Florida, both being warm sections, a good many of the colored gentry are continually traveling back and forth the year round, but very little, if any, of this migration reaches up to North Carolina or Virginia.

"I'm going South myself to-night," said the darkey. "Can't I go along with you?"

My ablutions ceased.

"Say that over again, my man. Did you want to go with me, you say?"

He was a large, powerfully built fellow, with a face calculated to give a timid man chills, and that the suggestion frightened me, I must admit, for suppose he attacked me during the night,

thinking I had money with me. Creepy sensations began to steal over me, and yet it will be better than being alone, I thought.

"I know the ropes pretty well, young feller," he added.

This settled it, for I did not know the "ropes," as he expressed it.

"You may go with me," I said.

I was dying for some kind of companionship, and being the possessor of unusually good strength myself, as a result of years of physical culture, I saw no serious cause for fearing my formidable looking companion, providing I could keep awake during the night, so, purchasing a bite to eat at the store and some smoking tobacco for my colored friend, we began to discuss a plan of action.

"We'll have to go back to Chadbourn and lay for a late freight to-night," said he, "for the trains seldom stop in Grice."

I was afraid the authorities of the town would nab me, but he only laughed at my timidity.

We left Grice about 8 p. m. and set out for Chadbourn, some three miles off. We had gone perhaps a mile on the return journey when I observed another darkey leading up a close rear. I didn't like this for a cent, however I kept quiet, and our dusky follower soon came up quite close.

My grandfather, Dr. Hicks, of Rocky Mount,

N. C., famous for his writings and adventures of Civil War life, has many a time illustrated to me where strategem is better than strength.

On one occasion, when he was a young man, he was proceeding along a lonely country road. It was nearly dark and several miles to the nearest house, and in those days houses were scarce and the people were more lawless, and, suddenly, a thick set, fierce looking man, holding a stout cudgel in his hand, emerged from the dense woods, which were on either side of the road, and began quickly to overtake him. That my grandfather was pretty well scared can well be imagined, but being a ventriloquist and full of tricks, he soon dispatched his enemy. Glancing into the woods nearby, he shouted: "Come on Jim!" then using his powers of ventriloquism, a hoarse voice close at hand seemed to say, "All right, be there in a minute."

The next moment the man who had been following him plunged deep into the forest and grandfather was left to proceed alone.

That these two men were in collusion and had designs on robbing me I now felt convinced.

Our late addition had drawn up dangerously close.

It was pitch dark, and evidently he was unaware I had discovered his presence in the party, and the other fellow was exerting himself about this time to keep me entertained with stories of "hobo" life.

It was up to me to use strategem, and use it quick!

"Confound the luck!" I exclaimed, "I forgot those pistol balls back at the store, but it is all right, Bill"—Bill was the name he had called himself at the pump—"my little Iver Johnson is full loaded, and good for at least five brakemen. Ha! ha! ha! they had better let us go through to Florence, I guess."

Most darkies are afraid of a gun in a white man's hand, and these were no exceptions.

The third man was not long in speaking out, and as if he had just joined us.

"Howdy, gentlemen," was the expressive salutation, "going over to Chadbourn?"

"Yes," I retorted.

"We's gwyne down to Florida," supplemented Bill.

"Dat's strange, I'se gwyne dat way myself," muttered the darkey, "let me go too."

"We don't own de roads," shrewdly observed the man named Bill.

"Well, I'll go den," declared the newcomer, and thus they arranged it to suit themselves, and I said nothing, though I mentally concluded to shift them both at the first opportunity.

One at a time we filed across the main street of Chadbourn an hour later, and, undiscovered, made our way to a large pile of railroad ties some two hundred yards from the depot.

The darkies, unconcerned, stretched out full length upon the timber, and their heavy snoring soon denoted that they had passed into the land of dreams, but their lively trombone music quickly became disgusting, forcing me to seek another pile of the timber for rest.

My thoughts drifted back several years to the scores of positions and hundreds of places I had been in, but none ranked so low as this; and again, thoughts of the warm, comfortable home I had left stole over me.

About midnight my reveries were disturbed by the labored puffing of a heavy laden freight train, which had just begun to ascend the long grade outside of Chadbourn.

My companions were awakened and had silently joined me in the darkness. The train had pulled up the grade now and the cars had attained a dangerous speed.

As the engine dashed by, my companions came near knocking me down in their greedy endeavor to secure the handles of the first two cars from the engine.

With the throttle open a car's length is a serious matter to the man on the ground, but I caught the third car safely and climbed aboard.

Chadbourn was left like a flash, and a few moments later we went hurling through Grice like a shot out of a gun.

The train was a through freight, and we were bound for Florence.

Crawling back on my hands and knees through the darkness several car lengths, I found an empty coal car. In this car I would be shielded from most of the cold wind, which was blowing at a terrific rate over the top of the train.

Carefully descending to the car and peering over the edge I was surprised to find another passenger, a mild looking mulatto, who, upon finding that I was not a brakeman, as he at first had supposed, became quite sociable.

"I'm also bound for Jacksonville," said he, "and we'll go along together."

The proposal suited me to a T, as he added that he was an expert at the business, having been over the same road several times before, and knew every move to make to avoid being "nabbed."

The other two men now got into the car, at which the mulatto immediately drew off to the opposite end.

"Two together is safer," he said, as I joined him.

A drizzling rain set in and we were left to ourselves.

"What have you got there?" he asked, some hours later, stumbling against my paper bundles.

"Medicine and clothes," I retorted. He laughed.

"You'll never get to Jacksonville with all that truck," he said. "You'd better get clear of it."

So far my baggage had been a source of constant annoyance, and I, therefore, readily agreed to part with it.

It had ceased raining now, and the dim light in the east told of the near approach of day.

The lights of Florence could be seen faintly gleaming in the distance as we rapidly drew near, and there was no time to lose, so throwing off coat, shoes and hat, I quickly tore open both bundles, and out in a heap rolled shirts, collars, socks, photographs, cough syrup, quick asthma cures—but space forbids naming all the things.

The bundles had been carefully packed by a loving mother, who had thoughtfully placed in one of them a small Bible. I felt better as I placed the little book in an inside pocket, and I would read it and daily pray to God to take me safely through the long journey before me.

My next move was to astonish the negro at the number of shirts and socks I got into.

"Put on all you can and be quick," I exclaimed, in answer to his questioning gaze.

He needed no second invitation, and I now began to stuff my pockets with the smaller things, again inviting him to follow suit. About the first thing he grabbed up was a $1.50 razor, which I politely deprived him of.

Within a few minutes the train slackened speed and pulled into the yards.

Quickly alighting and bidding me to follow, the negro made off from the tracks at full speed.

At first I thought he was running away with my things, but the wisdom of the move was soon apparent, for at a safe distance, he pointed out to me two slow moving lights going up and down both sides of the train we had just deserted.

"Spotters," he whispered, breathing heavily.

I realized then just how green I was at the profession of hoboing. Undoubtedly I would have again been picked up, and this time it might not have gone so easily with me as at Chadbourn.

For nearly an hour we walked about the streets of Florence looking for a restaurant, but it was yet too early for them to open, and, disappointed, we returned to the railroad yards.

Two or three trains were beginning to pull out when we arrived.

Plunging between two long freights, and walking rapidly, my companion began to scan the car doors.

"In here," he presently whispered, drawing up before an empty car. "This is the Junction train, and will leave in a few minutes."

Afraid of going wrong and being pretty well frightened, I hesitated.

"What Junction? Are you sure this is the right train?" I questioned, fearing the cars might be made up for Atlanta or Columbia.

His reply was to furtively glance up and down

the tracks, and the next instant he had vanished through the half open door. Greatly frightened, I followed.

Quickly and silently we closed the door, leaving us in impenetrable darkness.

It was not long before an engine bumped against the cars, and shortly after we pulled out.

The day dawned beautiful and clear, and being warm, we opened the car door to enjoy the sunshine.

We had gone some fifty or sixty miles down the road, perhaps, when the mulatto declared his intention of getting out to buy something to eat.

"You had better stay in here," I called, but the next moment he was gone.

To my dismay a few minutes later the train slowly began to move off, then faster and faster.

Downhearted, I sat down in the end of the car alone. The wheels began to roar and sing with increasing speed. Once more I cast a last despairing glance at the door. Suddenly a hand was thrust into the opening! In a flash it had disappeared.

Rushing to the door and looking out I was horrified to see the man who had lately left me lying helpless, stretched upon the ground.

No doubt, in jumping he had miscalculated the position of the rod under the door, and as a result of the misstep, had been thrown from the car with considerable force.

Being unusually intelligent, and of a quiet kind of disposition, I had taken quite a fancy to the fellow by this time, and it was with a sigh of genuine relief I noted he had not been run over.

Struggling to his feet with one hand pressed against his head, he waved to me for a moment and then slowly staggered off the pathway of the track.

The man who had claimed to be an "expert" was left, and I was soon miles away, but such is life.

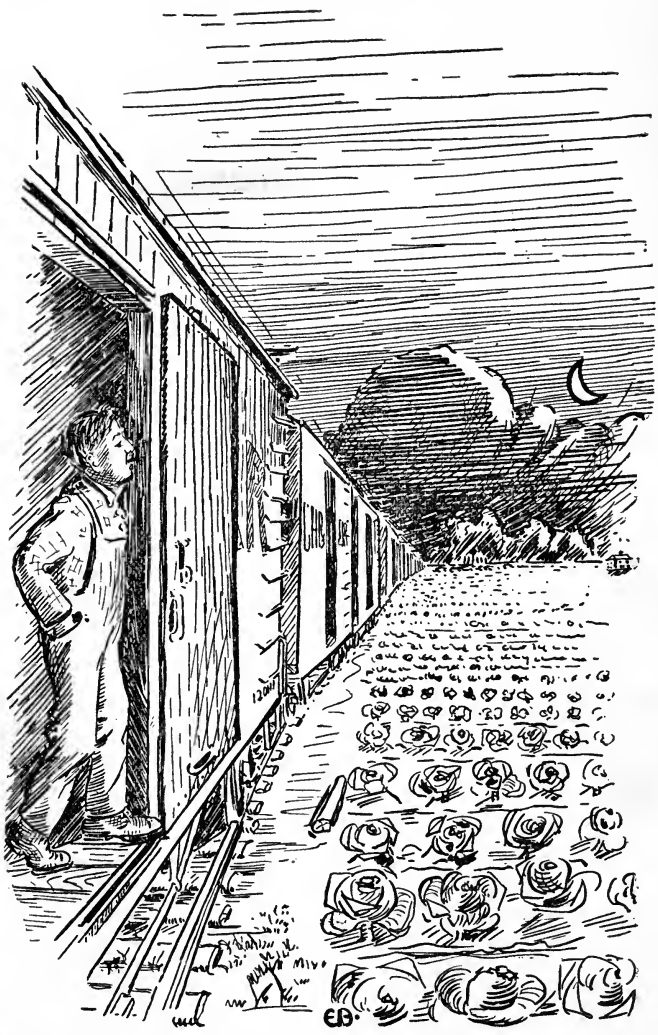
Going back into the car, and being exhausted from hunger, I soon fell asleep.

My last conscious thought was a desire to wake up in Savannah, Ga.

Two hours later it would be time to change trains at Charleston Junction for Savannah, but being blissfully ignorant of this fact, my slumbers were undisturbed.

I slept long and sound—then with a start awoke.

The car was no longer moving. I listened intently for a brakeman, but the grave-like silence was unbroken. Darkness had long since settled down. Now fully awake and being of a logical turn of mind, I began to speculate. Evidently, we had run into Savannah late at night and were now in the train yards. Noiselessly I tiptoed to the door—imitating my late companion—and with great caution poked my head out.



"Surely my hunger must be causing some horrible nightmare—"

The moon was just rising from behind a distant cloud-bank.

Surely my hunger must be causing some horrible nightmare, and directly in front of me was a large cabbage patch—the largest I had ever seen, in fact.

Countless thousands of cabbage were growing on every hand, and as far as the eye could reach large nice ones they were, too, some of them growing so close to the railroad track as to be almost under my feet.

I had eaten but once since my arrival in Wilmington Saturday night from Southport, and it was now Monday night.

I ceased to remember I was trying to reach Savannah, nor did I speculate long as to the reality of the vision before me.

Springing from the car door into the patch, I sat down before one of the largest of the vegetables and had eaten nearly half of it when I heard some one approaching.

With a guilty start I sprang to the railroad track.

Now would be a good time to locate my position.

The man soon came up.

"Hello! my friend, how far is it to Savannah?" I asked.

"About 150 miles, sir," said the man looking at me curiously.

The truth dawned upon me instantly, while sleeping I had been switched off on the wrong road.

The man started down the track.

"Say, hold on there a minute!" I cried. "How far is it to Charleston Junction?"

"Forty-seven miles," replied the man.

"Well, how far is it to the next town, then?"

The fellow's short answers were exasperating in the extreme.

"Three miles," he hollered, fast getting out of ear shot.

I must confess I completely lost temper.

Making a trumpet of my hands, I shouted:

"I say, you escaped lunatic, what is the name of the town?"

"Meggetts," came back the faint reply, and the man passed out of range.

The solution of the problem was now easy. Not knowing I must change trains at Charleston Junction, I had been carried forty-seven miles out of my way down a branch road.

Twenty-four empty box-cars had been side-tracked to be loaded with cabbage, and I had been in one of the cars.

After an hour's walk I arrived at Meggetts. It was near 11 p. m., though all the stores, five, I think, were open.

Appeasing my hunger at a small restaurant in the place, I had just $1.05 of the original $4.00 I had left home with.

Upon inquiry, I found that a freight would leave Meggetts at 2 a. m. that night bound for the North.

The train was loaded with early vegetables, and I was told would make a short stay at the Junction.

Eighteen colored men, whose homes were in Charleston, boarded the train that night when I did. The men had been sent down from Charleston to help load the train.

The brakemen, whose instructions were to let the men ride free kept to themselves on the train, and without stop we ran back to the Junction. The men clamored down and were soon walking the remaining few miles to their homes.

There are several tracks at Charleston Junction, but before departing the men showed me the track leading to Savannah.

About daylight a freight pulled upon this track and came to a short standstill.

Once more I was fortunate in finding an empty car, and getting into it unobserved.

I was not absolutely sure the darkies had not deceived me, but then a man beating the roads has got to take all kinds of chances, and I was fast learning the fact.

At noon that day I arrived safely in Savannah, that is to say, I arrived within a mile of the town proper, where I ran the risk of breaking my neck by jumping off, but that was much better than

being pulled into the yards in broad open daylight to be arrested.

There is one thing peculiar about Savannah, which can't fail to impress a stranger on his first visit. For the size of the town, I think it contains three times as many colored people as any other city in the United States.

That afternoon I found the time to read a chapter in the little Bible my mother had given me. I shall always believe it was the work of a kind Providence that sent me upon the streets of Savannah that night in quest of some one to go with me to Jacksonville. Luckily for me this time too, as subsequent events will prove.

It was past midnight. Again my conveyance was a freight train; this time bound for Jacksonville, Fla., and again I had a darkey for a traveling companion.

We boarded the freight one mile from the city limits at a slow-down crossing. There was no empty car to get into and the only other place was on the end of a loaded flat-car, where we were shielded somewhat from the cold winds blowing over the train.

The rain was coming down in a steady downpour, and had been for two hours or more.

We were still standing close together on the end of the car, and had entered Northern Florida, and lying or sitting down in the rain would have been courting death of cold. There was nothing

to do but stand up and take our medicine quietly. The cold winds had chilled us to the very marrow.

Weak and faint from the loss of food and sleep, and from the high nervous strain I had been subjected to, I was fast becoming insensible.

I forgot that I was standing on the end of a wildly rocking flat-car rushing through inky darkness at the rate of forty miles an hour. The danger seemed fading away now, and I imagined I was home again resting in my own comfortable bed. The limit of human endurance had been reached, and poor, exhausted nature gave up the battle.

Slowly my eyes closed. "It will be for just one sweet moment, just one," I promised, and the next instant I was fast asleep.

Two rough hands reached out and encircled me about the waist just as I was toppling between the swift running cars, and drew me back to safety.

"Good God! young feller, don't trifle wid your life like dat," exclaimed the frightened darkey.

In a vague way I realized my danger and promised to do better, but I was too sleepy to be much frightened, and inside of a half an hour I had again closed my eyes, promising not to go to sleep, but the promise was broken, and once more I was indebted to the faithful colored man for saving my life.

"Good God! young feller, don't trifle wid your life like dat," exclaimed the frightened darky.

It was now breaking day and the train was slackening speed. The next stop was Woodbine, Fla.

Here the conductor discovered us and we were put off.

It was not long before the stores opened up. There are but two or three stores in Woodbine, though one of them is a very large one. It was in this store we got something to eat.

A young lady waited on us, who informed me that Jacksonville was forty-nine miles away.

Guessing our intention, she remarked: "You can't walk it, for twelve miles from here is a long trestle, which is patrolled by a man with a Winchester rifle. He is in the employ of the government and it's his duty to see that no one crosses over on foot. Every twelve hours he is relieved by a man who watches the bridge at night."

"When is the next freight due?" I asked.

"To-morrow morning," was the reply, "it's the same one you just got off."

Things were beginning to assume a gloomy aspect.

"Is there a ferry?" I asked, brightening up.

"There was so little travel the ferry was abandoned over a year ago," replied the young lady.

"Well, good-bye; if there is no other way, we'll have it to swim."

We had gone probably a mile down the track

and had begun to look out for a place to put in a few hours sleep, when looking back, I was overjoyed to discover a hand-car rapidly overtaking us.

Stepping into the middle of the track I signalled the car to stop.

"Hello, captain! we want to help you peddle that car across the bridge. Do you go that far?"

"Yes, I'm the track inspector, and go as far as Jacksonville," was the reply.

"Let us go?" I questioned.

"I don't know; I need two more men, but white men, as a rule, are no good peddling these cars on a long run," was the retort.

"I'm as strong as either of the two men now propelling you, sir," and, to prove the assertion, I rolled up my sleeve.

The man's eyes opened wide in astonishment, for notwithstanding I'm an asthma sufferer, his gaze rested on an arm that had undergone five years of hard physical culture training.

"You may go," he said, "and I'm glad to get you."

We passed the man with the Winchester rifle safely, and at 3 p. m. I got off in the suburbs of Jacksonville, parting with the darkey, who is the right owner of the reward offered in the front pages of this book, and whom the track inspector had engaged for railroad work at $1.00 per day.

It was nearly two miles down town, and being

fatigued from my recent exertions, I invested five cents in a street car ride.

The car was full of gaily dressed people, white being the prominent color, all of whom seemed bent upon some kind of pleasure, judging from their happy faces.

Race prejudice is strong here. Half the car was devoted to the white passengers and the other half to the colored, and is rigidly enforced.

The gay costumes on the streets, and the brisk, business-like air of the people, next attracted my attention. Nearly all of the streets are broad and well paved, and some of the business blocks remind one of Baltimore, Md. The whole scene was an entire surprise to me. But what impressed me more than all else was the long line of beautiful palms, extending quite close on either side of the street car line.

CHAPTER IV.

"Look Out for Hoodlums"—Retribution for Deception—Stranded in New Orleans—Meet with Kind Hearts.

I left the car at a point near the Clyde Line docks, and shortly after succeeded in finding William Marine—Archie Marine's brother—who informed me that the boats were no longer running between Jacksonville and Gulf points.

"There's but one way I could help you, young fellow. If you desire, I'll get you on a boat, as a cook's assistant, that will take you to New York City, from which point you might be able to work your way to San Francisco on an ocean liner."

"I thank you, but will risk working my way overland," I replied, and left the wharf.

Sometime during the afternoon I smeared nearly a whole bottle of vaseline upon my face and neck, which had begun to burn like fire, as a result of my exposure to the sun while peddling the hand-car.

At 9 p. m. that night I made my way to the Union Depot. Some five or six passenger trains were under the shed. A man in the crowd pointed out to me the train he thought was bound for New Orleans.

Five minutes later I was in the express car.

A pleasant looking young man, I should say

about twenty-two years of age, was checking off the express, assisted by an older gentleman.

"Does this train go to New Orleans?" I asked, lowering my voice to a whisper.

"No, it goes to Móntgomery," replied the young man, eyeing me closely for a moment, and then turning to his work.

"May I go with you to Montgomery?" I whispered.

The young man again glanced at me, but vouchsafed no reply.

Though not well known, it's no less a fact that most roads of the United States to-day employ numerous detectives—known as 'spotters'—who travel over the road in various disguises, and whose business it is to discover any employee of the road assisting some poor chap to beat the train.

Sometimes the detective thus employed dresses himself like a tramp or hobo and appeals to the engineer, baggageman or conductor to help him get to a certain point.

Woe be unto the kindhearted employee who does help him, for a few days later he is discharged almost without notice.

Later on he finds that his goodness of heart was bestowed upon a railroad detective. Those who understand this can more easily appreciate my present difficulty.

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies;

and I hereby admit that I told the express messenger a falsehood.

There was little time to lose. Every moment the express packages were being hurled through the door, and the train would soon be ready to depart on its long four hundred mile journey.

"I can show positive proof, in the way of letters, etc., that I'm no 'spotter,'" I whispered. "For Heaven's sake don't refuse, old man. My parents formerly lived in North Carolina, as the heading of this reference shows, but years ago they moved to Texas, and I went to New York. My parents are poor and I'm their only support. Having been robbed in New York and learning by letter that my mother is near death's door, I've decided to work my way to her. Pardon me saying it; you look to be a pretty square sort of fellow. Please don't refuse the chap who stands before you down and out this time."

The work of checking up had been finished, and the elderly man, after whispering something in the young express messenger's ear, crawled out of the car door to the ground.

A moment later the door shut with a bang.

I had succeeded, and five minutes later was again traveling up the road without a ticket.

I've confessed to telling a lie, and I must now confess to having acted the part of a fool.

I had been sleeping on some express packages in the forward end of the car, and upon awakening glanced at my watch. It was 4 a. m.

Throughout the night the train had been running at a high rate of speed and I figured we ought to be somewhere near Montgomery.

It'll be a great joke to tell him where my home really is, and to let him know how I fooled him, for being near Montgomery, he'll hardly trouble to put me down anyway now, I reasoned, and without thinking, I gave him the whole story of just how neatly I had deceived him.

Instantly the young man's manner changed.

"So you fooled me, eh! Well, the next stop is Valdosta, Ga. You'll have to get off there," was the sharp retort.

A half hour later I was walking the streets of Valdosta, a much wiser man.

How true is the old saying: "A wise man keeps his tongue in his heart, but a fool keeps it in his mouth."

It was near daylight and bitter cold. A night cop directed me to a lodging house. After I had rung the bell several times the landlady appeared. She had hastily dressed and, with a frown on her face, stood shivering in the cold.

"Madam, have you any vacant rooms?"

"You might share a room with my son," she replied hurriedly.

"Thank you ever so much. What will it cost?" I asked.

"Twenty-five cents," was the pistol-like retort. "Do you want the room?"

"I now got to the point.

"Madam, the night is most over, and my money is low; would you accept 15 cents for the rest of the night?"

"I suppose I shall have to let you in," she said.

Five minutes later I had waked up her son, who began saying uncomfortable things about some people coming in at all times of the night; but the remainder of his remarks fell on deaf ears, for I was fast asleep.

It was the first bed I had been in since leaving home.

About 10 a. m. I awoke much refreshed.

The depot was close by, and the ticket agent informed me that the train bound for Madison, Fla., would pull out in a few minutes.

The fare from Valdosta to Madison is eighty-five cents, and I only had sixty cents.

Acting upon the impulse I boarded the train without purchasing a ticket.

Madison is on the main line between Jacksonville and Pensacola, and would, therefore, afford a better opportunity to catch a west-bound train than if I went to Montgomery.

In due time I was confronted by the conductor.

"How much to Madison?" I asked, feeling in my pockets.

"Eighty-five cents," said the conductor.

"I haven't but 60 cents, conductor; carry me as far as you can for that, and I'll walk the rest of the distance."

A well-dressed young man looked up.

"If you'll pardon me, I'll loan you 50 cents," said he.

"If you'll provide me with an address to which I can return the amount, I'll accept with thanks," I replied.

Taking my book he wrote down, J. M. Turner, Jr., Gainesville, Fla. "I'm cigar salesman for a Gainesville house," he said.

About this time another passenger spoke out.

"I'll loan you twenty-five cents myself," said he, "if you need it."

Without loss of time I handed over my book, and he wrote down R. T. Davis, Hopewell, Fla., and handed me twenty-five cents. (As yet I have been unable to locate one of these gentlemen since returning home.)

Madison is the Southern terminal of the road, and at this point I left the train in company with the conductor, who invited me to lunch.

The freight bound for Tallahassee pulled into Madison at 4 p. m.

I had no trouble in enlisting the sympathy of the conductor, a very genial sort of fellow, who told me to go back to the caboose and keep out of sight until we reached Tallahassee.

We reached the capital city sometime after dark.

Here are a few points about Tallahassee which are in great contrast to Jacksonville.

There are no paved streets in Tallahassee; if so, I didn't see them. They are all ill-lighted—one greasy street lamp post about every six blocks.

Little business. In fact, one store out of every three was vacant—those that were open were not selling anything. All the stores are on one big Main street.

A street car line was started, but the town couldn't support it, and it went to smash.

The leaves and other rubbish had collected upon the sidewalks in great drifts.

The fine dust floating in the air came near giving me the asthma, and with a feeling of relief I wended my way back to the railroad yards.

To keep warm that night I helped the darkey fire the engine at the ice factory, which is located near the depot, until 10 p. m., when I boarded a freight train bound for Grand River Junction, ninety-nine miles away, at which place I landed about 3 a. m.

The next division was a stretch of a hundred miles or more from the Junction to Pensacola. This was the L. & N. road.

I have since learned that it is about the hardest road in the United States to beat. No long freights pass over the road—most of the trains are "mixed," that is to say, a few box-cars and a few passenger cars.

On this night the train for Pensacola had

already made up. It consisted of two or three box-cars and the same number of passenger coaches.

The conductor was in the depot working on some freight bills, when I approached him, requesting permission to ride on the "blind baggage" to Pensacola.

"The same old story," said he, looking up. "Sorry, young man, but we can't carry you on this road."

I next went to the engineer, and there met with the same refusal.

Then to the express car I hurried, for the train would soon start; but again, I was met with a rebuff.

There were no stores in sight, and few houses. Surely Grand River Junction would be a most dismal place to get left in, especially in my condition—only fifty cents, and that borrowed money.

In desperation I ran to the front part of the engine.

In the intense darkness, both fireman and engineer failed to observe a silent form spring upon the cow-catcher.

The wheels began to revolve, and barring all accidents, I was due to reach Pensacola in time for dinner.

Being thinly dressed and facing the damp night winds at a fifty-mile an hour rate is certainly not an enviable position.

In a short time my body was so benumbed with cold I could scarcely move. Another thing, it would soon break day, and unless I could hide myself better, a discovery would follow and I would be put off.

There's an old saying, which I afterwards learned:

"To hobo the roads successfully, one has to give up all thought of life or death."

That continued hardship lessens a man's fears of death, I have certainly learned by personal experience.

With slow deliberation, I worked my way under the boiler of the engine, and among the machinery. At last I was stretched out full length under the boiler, with only one foot sticking out, which I must risk being seen. The boiler was rather warm, of course, and every moment I stayed under it it was becoming warmer. Perspiration started out in huge drops. In running from the extreme of cold I had met the extreme of heat. Only a few moments sufficed to thaw me out and then a warm, hot time began in earnest. My clothes, pressed almost against the boiler, would become so hot every few minutes I was forced to turn over upon my side and ride for a while; only to revert to the original position and torture again.

Things were getting unbearable.

I had heard of hobos riding under the cowcatcher.

Yes, I would risk it! The train came to a standstill. The delay would hardly be a long one, for it was only a cross-roads station. I would have to work with lightning-like rapidity. About midway the boiler was an opening in the machinery, barely large enough to admit the passage of a man. Squeezing through this opening, I dropped upon the cross-ties under the engine. On all-fours I made my way along the track to the front axle of the engine, which I passed under. I had now reached the cow-catcher, but my trouble had been for naught. For some unexplainable reason the space under the cow-catcher had been nailed full of cross-beams, thus effectually barring further progress.

Now, fully realizing the danger of my position, a sudden fear assailed me, and I began trembling from head to foot.

It had required scarcely thirty seconds to make the discovery, and within the same minute I had turned and was again squeezing under the terrible looking axle.

Clang! clang! sounded the engine bell.

Considerably bruised about the hands and knees, I reached the opening just as the engine pushed off.

Securing a firm grip upon a piece of machinery above the opening, and taking a step forward with the slowly moving engine, I drew myself up to safety.

About 8 a. m. we reached Chipley, Fla.

Here the station agent saw me, and I was pulled down. I was greasy and black, and my clothes were torn, but no limbs were missing.

The conductor, agent and others came hurrying to the engine to see the man who had dared hobo under the boiler.

Chipley is a fine little town of about 1,200 inhabitants, and a more sociable lot of people I've never met.

It was soon mouthed about the streets how I reached the town, and for a time I was the cynosure of all eyes, though no one offered to arrest me.

There are some five or six saw-mills around Chipley. About two miles from the town is a large saw-mill and brick kiln owned by J. D. Hall.

A young merchant of the town informed me that Mr. Hall was badly in need of labor and was paying good prices.

Even to hobo the roads, a man needs money, and I decided to stake up a bit before continuing my way.

Sometime before noon I arrived at the mill.

Mr. Hall looked me over quite critically.

"Did you ever do any hard labor?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," I untruthfully replied, for, to be candid, I had never done a day's hard work in my life.

"Well, you don't look it," was the compliment. "However, I'll give you a trial at $1.50 per day. You can board with Mr. ..... for thirty cents a day."

"That's unusually cheap for board," I said. "A man doing hard labor needs plenty to eat and I'm perfectly willing to pay at least $3.50 per week."

Evidently he misconstrued my meaning.

"My men furnish plenty to eat for any man," said he, but you won't get any pie or cake," he retorted," eyeing me with undisguised disapproval.

"O, that's all right! I can eat anything," I hastened to say.

"Very well, Mr. Peele, you may come to work this afternoon. It's not far to your boarding place. Just keep the straight path through the woods there, and its the first house you get to."

I'll not expose my landlord's name, but for the sake of convenience we'll call him Mr. Black.

In due time I reached the Black household. The scene which met my gaze was altogether uninviting and unappetizing. I can't describe the house. There was one living room, a kitchen, and a shed room.

The day was warm and several Black children were in the yard playing as I reached the gate.

Upon seeing a stranger approach there was a

general stampede for the back yard, some of the smaller children taking refuge behind Mrs. Black, who at that moment appeared in the open doorway.

If appearances count for anything, Mrs. Black had certainly not combed her hair within several weeks, and the grime on her face and clothes was a sickening sight to contemplate.

"Good morning, madam; my name is Peele; I'm to work at the saw-mill, and Mr. Hall says you'll furnish me board."

"All right, just make yourself at home," she invited bashfully, and the next moment she disappeared into the dark recess of the only living room.

Strictly on time, Mr. Black arrived for the noonday meal, and forthwith we proceeded to the dining-room.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Black began making apologies, but, with a few jokes, I set them at ease, assuring them that I wouldn't be hard to please.

To see the hard side of life would make a better man of me anyway, I reflected.

There was no attempt to have clean dishes, for two sets or more of children had already eaten, and others were yet coming in.

The meal consisted of rice, honey and bread. So far as I could see there was nothing else. I now saw how a man could be boarded for thirty cents a day.

They'll have something more substantial for supper, I thought, beginning to crust the top of a black-looking, half-done biscuit. The biscuits were unusually large ones, weighing nearly two pounds each.

A little rice and honey and the huge top of the biscuit formed my meal.

There was no denying the fact, I was hungry and was enjoying my portion quite well, when Mr. Black took a sudden notion to either become funny, or spoil my appetite, I don't know which. He had been kicking up a great fuss drinking his coffee, when all at once the noise ceased. He had caught a fly in his cup. Holding up the fly by the hind leg high into the air, he smilingly announced:

"I've caught a sucker!"

To my astonishment Mrs. Black took it as a great joke, and began laughing heartily.

Thoroughly disgusted I kept silent.

It was not long before Mr. Black caught another fly.

Holding up the unfortunate fly between his thumb and forefinger, and with true Florida slowness, he drawled:

"Well, darlin', I've caught another sucker."

I'll not dwell upon all the funny things that happened during my short stay with the Blacks.

I slept in the little shed room, and every night went to bed at dark, for there was no way of obtaining anything to read.

Rice and honey continued in evidence on the table throughout.

Only twice was the menu changed. On these two occasions Mrs. Black's ten-year-old son varied the diet by visiting the lakes, which were near the house, and fairly teeming with fish.

Wild honey and fresh fish are both good, but at the end of a hard week's work at the saw-mill, I was ready for other fields of adventure, and settling my board bill, bade Mr. and Mrs. Black good-bye.

As a result of my week's labor I now had the sum of seven dollars.

Mr. Hall seemed sorry at my leaving.

"You'd better be careful if you intend to beat to Pensacola," said he, "for I hear there are twenty-two white men working the county roads there for hoboing."

"Well, I can only wish for better luck, sir, and I must now bid you good-bye."

It was late Saturday afternoon when I reached Chipley.

Straightway I proceeded to the only restaurant in the little town, and my next half hour was indeed a busy one.

The bill was sixty cents, but I had no regrets.

The passenger train bound for Pensacola was due in Chipley just before dark.

Someone told me that I could catch the train at a long trestle about four miles from the town.

I set out on foot at a rapid gait for the trestle and reached it slightly in advance of the train.

Having but three or four coaches and running at full speed, the engineer was unable to check the train's flight before running almost midway of the bridge.

Just in the nick of time I reached the brass handles, and swung upon the lower steps of the rear car, as the train once more resumed its journey.

The top part of the rear door had been let down—I suppose for ventilation.

Every moment, fearing discovery, my eyes were fastened in a steady stare upon the door.

I had been crouching upon the steps scarcely five minutes ere a lady passenger peered out into the fast gathering darkness.

For the space of a second the head was framed in the open doorway, when, with a quick jerk, it disappeared into the brilliantly lighted car.

There was no doubt she had seen me and was very much frightened.

"Hey! what the ——— are you doing there?" shouted the conductor a moment later.

"Going to Pensacola, if you'll allow me, sir. I'll always appreciate it, Captain, if ——"

"I'll wire to Caryville and allow you to be arrested if you don't either get down off this train or pay your fare," shouted the conductor.

As will be remembered, I was still on the L. &

N. Road, and remembering Mr. Hall's caution, decided to pay my fare.

Ten minutes later I was riding on a first-class ticket to Pensacola. Out of the $5.00 bill I handed the conductor I received only twenty cents. He had taken out the full fare from Chipley, charging me for the four miles I had walked.

At 10 p. m. the train pulled into the station at Pensacola.

"Is there a night freight from here to Mobile?"

The question was directed to a young man about my own age, who had just come out of a barber shop.

"No, but there's a midnight freight to Flomaton, Ala., which is about half way, I believe. Going to hobo it?"

"Yes, I may do so."

"Then I'd advise you to be careful in this town, my friend. You're likely to get a job making "little rocks out of big ones." There are twenty-two of 'em at it now, and a night cop at the depot waiting to catch others. Now, the best thing you can do," he continued, "would be to walk from this town to Flomaton, and if you're going on to New Orleans, you'd better walk through all of Southern Mississippi to the State line of Louisiana, for if you're caught 'hoboing' in Mississippi, you'll get eleven months and twenty-nine days in prison. Upon being released you're allowed one day to get out of the town, and upon failing to do

so, you're again arrested and thrown into jail for a like term for vagrancy.

Upon hearing this I admit that I was considerably frightened; but it would never do to give up in this manner, for the trip was hardly begun yet, and if I had heeded all the advice of this nature I had received since leaving Wilmington, the probabilities are I would not yet have reached Jacksonville.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained," and I decided to either leave Pensacola on the next train or get thrown into jail for the attempt.

Accordingly I started for the depot at which I had recently been landed as a first-class passenger, and reached it just as the Flomaton freight was pulling out.

There was no cop in sight, for which I was deeply thankful.

The train was an extremely short one and was rapidly getting under headway when I arrived.

A quick glance up and down the train sufficed to show that there were no empty or flat cars along. My ride must be either in the cold winds on top or between the cars. I chose the latter place.

In this position a man has to stick close to the end of only one of the two cars he is riding between, for there is always danger of the cars breaking loose and dashing him to instant death upon the tracks beneath. He can hold on to the

break rod with his hands and the car bumper affords him a narrow standing room.

It was six long, weary hours later—just sunrise—when, more dead than alive, I stepped from the train in Flomaton, or rather I fell off the train in Flomaton.

My limbs had become cramped and stiff from standing in one position during the night's long ride, and in trying to jump off the train in the suburbs of the town, I was thrown violently to the ground, sustaining a badly bruised hand and several smaller hurts.

A negro who lived near by furnished me with soap and water, though I was minus a handkerchief and was compelled to dry my face with old newspapers.

Flomaton is a small town, not more than a mile from the Florida State line, and derives most of its importance from being a railroad center.

I started down town in search of a restaurant, but had not proceeded far when I was overtaken by a man who inquired:

"Have you heard the news?"

"What news?" I asked.

"Why, a railroad man was shot and instantly killed near the depot this morning, just before light."

"Who shot him?" I asked.

"As yet they have no clew," replied the man, looking at me keenly, but it is thought he was shot by a stranger."

We were now near the depot. A passenger train was steamed up.

"Where does that train go," I asked.

"It leaves in a few minutes for Mobile," he replied, parting with me at a nearby street corner.

No sooner was he out of sight than I started on a 2:40 pace for the engine.

All thoughts of breakfast fled. A man had been shot dead in the town, and as yet there was no clue as to the identity of the murderer. The citizens of the place would soon be up and astir on the streets, and I stood a fine chance of being arrested on suspicion.

With a single bound I was in the engine cab, and the next moment I was pleading with the engineer to take me to Mobile.

That my pleading was earnest need not be said, for I won the case.

"Wait until we get a good start and then swing the 'blind baggage.' "I won't see you," he grinned, but its rather risky going into Mobile on a passenger train in broad open day, for there's generally two or three cops hanging 'round the depot, and the yard is full of detectives.

The word "detective" as used here is what is termed in North Carolina a town constable.

In making arrests of this kind the constable is not required by the State to show a warrant.

Southern Alabama and Mississippi are full of these detectives; and seldom it is that a man gets through without a scratch.

Sometime between 11 and 12 o'clock that day we ran into the suburbs of Mobile.

Darting from the closed doorway, in which I had been standing, to the car platform, I cautiously peeped out.

Several men standing on the sidewalk near a large factory saw me, and motioned violently with their hands for me to jump off, but the train was running too fast for that, and with a feeling of indescribable fear, I quickly sprang back and jammed myself tightly against the closed door—careful even to turn my feet sideways, with my face pressed flat against the door. All hopes of safely alighting in the suburbs was given out. The houses were fast getting thicker and stores began to flash by.

Presently, to my surprise, the train turned into one of the principal business streets of Mobile. Large mercantile houses towered above me on every side.

The train ran several blocks down this street before stopping at the depot.

A man stepped in front of me to uncouple the engine.

Not daring to move, I whispered:

"Which side is the depot on?"

"Get off on your right, quick!" he whispered, without glancing up.

In an instant I was upon the ground and walking towards the boat wharves, but a few blocks distant.

Only by prompt action in getting off the train, and knowing which side to alight on, had I been able to escape the wide-awake officials at Mobile.

I felt like laughing as I reached the wharves and noted that no one had pursued me.

Evidently, I was getting to be an expert "hobo" —but my joy was of short duration, for now I was as anxious to reach New Orleans as I had been to reach Mobile—and what if I was thrown in jail for a long term in Southern Mississippi? Well, my people should never hear of it, I resolved.

Going on a small vessel I asked for soap and water.

I was given a big cake of dirty looking soap, half as large as my head, and told to draw my own water. Seizing a water bucket to which a long rope was attached, I cast overboard and soon drew into view a big bucketful of slimy looking water, that at home my own dog would have sniffed at contemptuously. But a chap buffeting against the world, as I was now doing, soon learns not to be too choice. After awhile he forgets the luxuries that were once his, and in most respects life assumes a different aspect.

Having washed up, I thanked the boatman and left the wharves.

A good dinner made me feel better, and I decided to stay in town over night and rest up.

I noticed but few automobiles in Mobile.

After dinner I found a nice room and paid for a night's lodging in advance.

About one o'clock in the afternoon I retired to sleep, determined to get as much rest as possible for my money before next morning.

I slept probably two hours, and then awoke with an uncomfortable feeling. I had been dreaming of beating trains and of several narrow escapes from death.

A cop chasing me dangerously close had awakened me.

The bed seemed moving and the whole room whirling around. As soon as my eyes became accustomed to objects in the room and I saw that I was really safe from harm, I again tried to go to sleep, but it was no use, for the bed now seemed literally flying through space, and though lying in the middle, it seemed all I could do to maintain my position.

In disgust I arose and dressed.

The train for New Orleans would leave at 4:30, and I yet had over an hour to reach the depot.

The man who uncoupled the engine of the Flomaton passenger that morning showed up just before train time.

I told him I intended trying to beat the train to New Orleans.

He promised he would fix it up with the engineer for me, but that I must look out myself for the conductor, as he didn't know him.

"You'd better look out going through Mississippi, though," he said. "The train makes but three regular stops—Scranton, Biloxi and Gulf Port. If you are not sharp you'll get run in at one of those places."

"Don't turn your head! he suddenly whispered, "there's a detective under the depot looking at you now. We'd better not be seen talking together."

"Good-bye, young fellow, and I hope you may get through safe."

The 4:30 passenger arrived in Mobile on time, and a few moments later pulled out bound on its long journey to New Orleans.

Hidden between two box-cars farther up the road, I waited for the engine to pass.

The train was going at a rapid clip when I sprang out and made a headlong dash for the "blind baggage," which I caught safely.

Either the conductor had not seen me or was waiting for me to get picked up down the road.

The train's speed was increasing every moment, and Mobile was soon left miles behind.

Sunday evening just before dark we pulled into Scranton, Miss.

A great throng of people, including a good many beautiful young girls, had turned out to

see the train. Their voices told me which side the depot was on.

No sooner had the train stopped than I was upon the ground on the opposite side.

I heard someone running towards the engine on the other side of the track.

Trembling with fear for a moment I stood still.

Another train filled to overflowing with passengers and headed towards Mobile had side-tracked for the New Orleans train. Jumping aboard the Mobile train, I mingled with the passengers.

In a few moments, by looking through the car window, I noted with satisfaction that the New Orleans train was again on the move.

One, two, three car lengths passed.

With a single bound I sprang from the Mobile train, and a never-to-be-forgotten race for the "blind baggage" ensued.

I soon passed from between the two trains, and now it was an open track race.

As I passed the last coach of the Mobile train two forms loomed up on the side-track.

"There he is! He is the fellow!" cried one of the men.

"Yes, I'm the fellow," and stiffening my forearm, I delivered the sheriff, who stepped out to intercept me, a right swing under the chin——— crack!

The man received the full benefit of the motion of my body and went to the ground like a ten pin.

It was a blow I had been taught at the Ardell Club while taking boxing lessons under Cy Flinn, a pugilist of considerable local fame in Buffalo.

The engineer, sitting backwards in his cab, had witnessed the trouble, and as I vanished between two mail cars, the whole train jumped with a sudden burst of speed.

Evidently the kindhearted engineer was keeping up his part of the contract to take me through.

It was dark when we reached Biloxi and Gulf Port, and by careful dodging I escaped the men who had searched the train at these points.

The biggest part of the journey was now over the Gulf waters, and at an extremely slow rate of speed.

At nine o'clock that night we crossed the Mississippi, and the train came to a standstill at the depot on Canal street, New Orleans.

I stayed in New Orleans one week.

I arrived in the Crescent City with less than a dollar, and on the second night my money was gone and I was forced to sleep upon one of the wharves near the foot of Canal street.

The next day I got a job unloading bananas off the boats at the I. C. wharves at two bits an hour.

I found a room now at No. 1006 Iberville street, in a lodging house run by a Mrs. M. P. Westmoreland. Mrs. Westmoreland is a well-to-do widow, and also a very kind-hearted lady. She refused to accept anything for my lodging, saying she

would be amply repaid if I would write her a letter when I got to Tucson.

"I shall always think you were accidentally killed if I never hear from you," she said.

I was always a poor writer, and have never sent her the letter, but if this little pamphlet is ever published, I shall take pleasure in sending her a copy, together with my best greetings.

Only three banana steamers arrived while I was in the city. The fruit is loaded in the West Indies. I made $4.50 at this job.

New Orleans is a fascinating town and the easiest place in the world to spend your money.

A few days later, when I made preparations to leave for Texas, my $4.50 had dwindled to $0.

There are more beautiful yellow girls to be seen on the streets of New Orleans in one day than one would see in most cities in a lifetime. They are called Creoles, or something of the kind, and can be seen walking around, all over the town, in every direction. Even down at the wharves every afternoon about boat time you'll see them lined up in great numbers.

There was a lot of talk about the "Hoodlums" while I was in New Orleans. All the city newspapers, as well as some of the State papers, had long articles concerning the doings of this remarkable organization. Nearly every section of the city had been visited at one time or another and terrorized by them.

I recalled the words of the engine coupler at Mobile. When I parted with him, his last remark was, "Look out for the Hoodlums."

They are a set of young city bloods and toughs of the worst stripe, banded together to rob, murder and steal.

I met a well dressed young man in a large park there one night, who told me confidentially that he was a "Hoodlum"; said he thought he and I would make good friends, and that he might be able to get me in as a member, but I declined the invitation with thanks.

Yes, New Orleans is a great place in many ways. On the day I left, while standing on the street corner taking a last view of the place, a man bearing a large basket, carefully covered over, approached me and said:

"Crawfish? Crawfish?"

"What about crawfish?" I asked.

He looked at me in surprise.

"Good to eat," he said; "only five cents a pint."

I told him they were used down home for fish bait, whereupon he got mad and went strutting up the street.

I had caught a glimpse of the crawfish, though. There was no mistaking it; they were real crawfish all right, and were what we term "little teenie" ones. The man said they had been cooked very carefully and were well done. Of course the head is thrown away, and it is only the tail part that is eaten.

CHAPTER V.

A Hungry Ride of 308 Miles—"Hello, Hello in the Pipe There!"—To Work Again—Nabbed by a Cop.

Late one afternoon I crossed the river on a freight ferry to the Texas Pacific railroad yards.

That night I beat a freight train 208 miles to Boyce, La., reaching Boyce about 11 o'clock next morning. Another freight on the same day bore me to Marshall, Tex., 100 miles from Boyce.

All day long I had had nothing to eat and it was 9 o'clock at night when we reached the city of Marshall.

I had just one hour to get something to eat and get back to the depot, for the Dallas freight would pull out at 10 p. m.

I went four or five blocks up a side street and knocked on a cottage door. The occupants had retired, but a second knock brought the madam to the door.

I told the lady a sad story of how hungry I was, and ended up by asking for a pan of water to wash my face and hands, if it would not cause her too much trouble.

She called to her husband, who came hurrying into the hall in his stocking feet.

After I had told my story again a pan of water was brought into the hall and I was invited in.

They told me, while I was washing, they had nothing in the house to eat.

I took out my note book.

"If you will loan me five cents," I said, "I'll take your address and return it. I'm very hungry, sir, and will appreciate it more than I can tell you."

The man loaned me a dime, but would furnish no address; and hastily thanking them, I hurried out the gate and started on a run for the railroad restaurant.

A big, fat fellow runs the railroad restaurant at Marshall—a Dutchman or Irishman, I couldn't decide which, but he is as good natured as he is large.

There was nobody in but the proprietor when I entered.

"My friend, I am very hungry, and am broke—I have just ten cents, and am thousands of miles from home. Give me ten cents worth of supper, and please understand I want quantity and not quality."

The meal that good-hearted fellow spread out on the table caused me to blush with shame, but I was hungry, and shame was set in the background.

It was chicken fricassee, sausage, beef, etc., and more of each than I could eat, hungry as I was.

In a short time I left the restaurant.

It was already time for the Dallas freight to

leave, and I went hurrying down the track through the darkness to where the train was making up.

I came upon two brakemen struggling in a vain endeavor to close a tight car door. (From this point throughout the West the brakemen are white men.) The men were cursing and swearing at a great rate at their failure to close the door, but with the united effort of all three of us, it was finally pushed to and sealed.

"I want to go to Dallas. You fellows care if I get on?"

"We'll take you for $1.00" said the brakemen.

I told them I didn't have the money. (In this part of the country a brakeman makes almost as much carrying hobos as his wages amount to. A dollar is the usual charge for a division, which is anywhere from one hundred to two hundred miles, but when a hobo attempts to go without paying, he is generally treated pretty rough, if not thrown from the train and killed.)

"Four bits, and we'll carry you," said one of the brakemen.

"I give you my honest word, I haven't got a cent, fellows."

"Then don't get on this train. Do, you'll get kicked off," said the men.

I left them and went hurrying through the darkness down the long line of cars.

I found a car half full of cross-ties.

The door had not been sealed, and crawling into the back end of the car I pulled off my coat—for the night was very hot—and folding it up into a nice pillow, I lay down to sleep.

I never knew when the train started, but about forty miles down the road the brakemen found me, and shining their lanterns within a foot of my face, woke me up.

Instead of "kicking" me off, as threatened, they talked fairly sociable.

"We'll not put you down in this storm, here on the prairie, for there's nothing here but a side-track, but the next stop is Longview, and you'll have to get off," they said.

I went to the door and looked out. The rain was coming down in great sheets, and the heavens were lit up by an almost constant glare of lightning. It was the worst storm I had ever seen.

As far as I could see in every direction was a vast expanse of rolling prairie. It was the first time I had ever seen the prairies, and I felt deeply impressed. I noted that the air seemed purer and fresher too than any I had ever breathed before.

At Longview the men came to the car to put me down, but I had already gotten down, and not finding me, they left.

The train started, and rising up from the ground, where I had been hiding, I crawled into the car of ties again.

I was run out of the same car three times that night. The last time I was put off; the brakemen told me if I got back on the train again they would shoot me.

I had reached the town of Big Sandy, Tex., and decided I had better wait for another train.

It lacked but a few minutes of 12 o'clock as I made my way over to a small drug store, not far from the depot.

A sharp featured man was talking to the druggist as I entered.

He slightly bowed at me, and presently said:

"You're a stranger here, are you not?"

Something told me he was a detective.

I told him yes, I was a stranger and trying to reach Dallas, and a good many other things I told him I don't remember.

He finally admitted he had just searched the train I had left, but as he hadn't caught me in the act, he would let me go, comforting me with the assurance that I would get caught anyway at Mineola.

"Why, they are so bad after hobos in Mineola they break open the car door seals, searching for them," he said.

Two hours later I was standing on the "blind baggage" platform, behind the coal tender of a passenger train bound for Dallas.

It was raining pretty hard when we got to Mineola, and no one came to bother me.

Shortly after daylight we steamed into Dallas.

I jumped from the train as it began to slow up at the State Fair Grounds in the edge of the city.

I had at last gotten to Dallas, but I was certainly in a bad fix—penniless, wet to the skin, cold, sick, and deathly sleepy.

I went over to a small grocery store, near the fair grounds, run by a Mrs. Sprague.

A beautiful young girl about fifteen years old, who was clerking in the store, brought me a pan of water to wash.

"Didn't you beat that passenger train in town?" asked the elderly lady, as I began washing.

"I did, madam, and I am sorry that circumstances necessitated my doing so," I replied.

"I thought I saw you jump off," she said, whispering something to the young girl, who vanished into the back part of the store.

It took nearly twenty minutes of hard scrubbing for me to get the cinders and grease out of my hair and eyes.

As I finished, the young lady re-entered the store and approached me:

"Come and have some breakfast," she said in a low voice, "its all ready and the coffee's hot."

For a moment I felt worse than at any time since leaving home. I tried to refuse, but they allowed me no chance.

"I've got a dear son myself wandering somewhere over this big world," said the good woman, putting a handkerchief to her eyes.

"Come and have some breakfast," she said in a low voice, "it's all ready and the coffee's hot."

There was no help for it, and I humbly assented to take a cup of coffee. The hot, steaming coffee was of the best quality, and four times did my beautiful young waitress see that my cup was filled.

Sometimes I think that coffee saved my life.

Upon leaving Mrs. Sprague's I walked down town from the fair grounds, a distance of about three miles.

The first man I asked for a job was F. P. Holland, the rich editor of the *Texas Farm and Ranch.*

He said he had no work at present.

Before leaving, I told him I was sick, cold and hungry, and had nowhere to sleep that night.

I asked him to loan me $1.00 until I could get on my feet and pay him back. He loaned me 25 cents, which I was glad to be able to pay back in a few days.

Leaving the rich man and his luxury, I took a long tramp back to the fair grounds, where someone said I could get a job.

Secretary Sidney Smith was in charge of the work, and after hearing my story, kindly furnished me a place to sleep and eat, and gave me a job helping to repair the fair grounds.

"I don't really need any more labor," he said, "but I believe in helping a man when he's down."

He secured me a place to board at No. 270 South Carroll Ave., with one of the foremen, Mr. R. A. Downey.

That night I was surprised to learn that the young lady, who had waited on me so nicely at the store, was Mr. Downey's daughter.

While at Mrs. Downey's I was taken down with a high fever, and for the first time since leaving home I had a hard spell of asthma. This only increased my desire to get to Arizona or New Mexico.

Good cotton choppers around Dallas are paid $1.75 per day and board.

About two weeks later I left the city.

After paying for my board and buying a few articles of clothing, I had but $3.00.

I left Dallas one Sunday evening on a street car for Fort Worth. The distance is about 22 miles.

That same afternoon an employment bureau run by Glenn & Co. shipped me for $1.00 from Fort Worth over the Fort Worth and Denver Road to Iowa Park, Tex., to do railroad construction work.

I was trying to reach El Paso, which is only 600 miles over the Texas Pacific Road from Fort Worth, but while in Fort Worth I was told it was almost as much as a man's life was worth to try to beat the T. P. road between these points, on account of the extreme cruelty of the brakemen, so I decided to go around the longest way, which would take me through New Mexico.

On the way to Iowa Park, I fell in with a young man from Chicago, who had also shipped out.

That night we deserted the train at a small station just before reaching Iowa Park.

We were now nearly two hundred miles from Fort Worth and had ridden the entire distance for $1.00.

I have forgotten the young man's name, but will call him White. He said he had left his home in Chicago to settle somewhere in the West and make his fortune.

We decided to travel along together awhile.

About daylight we caught a freight train.

A long smokestack of some kind was loaded on a flat-car.

Into the smutty stack we crawled, he entering one end and I the other, and crawled until our heads met in the middle.

When we came together White was trembling all over.

I've done everything since leaving home but hobo," said he.

He reminded me of my own experience through South Carolina and Georgia.

We made a lot of noise getting into the stack, and had not more than become comfortable when a brakeman's lantern was thrust into one end.

"Hello! Hello! in the pipe there," he shouted.

We crawled out and asked him to let us go, but it was "no go."

"Give me a dollar apiece, or off you go at the next stop," said the brakeman, and he kept his

word. We were put down at a little town sixteen miles from Vernon, Texas.

We immediately set out to walk to Vernon, and had proceeded along the track about ten miles when a large farm wagon containing seven or eight farmers overtook us.

They were going to Vernon and offered us a ride.

At this time of the year the farmers are walking up and down the streets of Vernon offering as high as $2.00 per day and board for men to work in the harvest fields. In fact, at no time of the year a farm laborer in this part of Texas is not paid less than $30.00 per month and board.

I had never heard of farm hands getting such high wages, and suggested to White that we work in Vernon long enough to pay our way to Arizona or New Mexico, but like all young fellows who stay in the West awhile, he had caught the fever of roving and rambling from one green pasture to another—content no where—and put up a strong kick.

He wanted to work in Vernon but a few days only.

"You're from the East, and you know nothing about good wages," he said. "Why this is nothing to what we can make in Roswell, New Mexico, gathering apples."

I had heard of the wonderful apple orchards around Roswell, and then, too, the climate would

be better for me. I decided White was right, and that we would not stay long in Vernon.

Late that afternoon a ranchman took us out in his buggy to a ranch about five miles from town.

He had offered us $2.00 per day and board to shock wheat.

Neither of us had ever shocked any wheat, but he said we could soon learn.

Judging from my companion's conversation since I had met him, I had a suspicion he was a better pool player than he was wheat shocker, but the wealthy ranch owners of Texas at this season of the year, when their thousands of acres of land are lying in unshocked wheat, are glad enough to get a man, even if he is a slow worker and from the city.

Some time after dark we came upon a small, one-room hut. Near the hut was a large, covered wagon.

"Here's where you sleep," said the ranchman. Just go right in and make your bed out of wheat."

Everything was very still in the hut, considering the fact that the one room contained some ten or a dozen men; but the men who had labored long and hard under the hot Texas sun that day were now scattered here and there about the hut floor, wrapped in a deep, sweet sleep. (Each of these men was from a different city or State, as I afterwards learned.)

There was plenty of wheat strewn about the

floor for us to lie upon, and soon two other weary, footsore travelers, lulled by the soft breeze blowing in the window, had fallen easy victims to the soothing caresses of Morpheus.

It was about 4 a. m. that we were roused out of bed by a man announcing that breakfast was ready.

~~For once I didn't care to eat.~~

"Come and get it, or I'll throw it out—Come and get it or I'll throw it out," yelled a loud voice from the vicinity of the wagon.

"What's he going to throw out?" I asked the fellow who had disturbed my sleep.

"It's the cook calling the men to breakfast," said he, "and you'd better hurry if you want any."

"Where is a place to wash?" I asked.

"Over there at the end of the wagon," said the man.

I reached the spot and found some seven or eight men washing from one small tin vessel about half full of soapy water.

"Water is a scarce article on the prairies and but little of the precious fluid is used for washing purposes.

I washed the corners of my eyes, but there was no towel, comb nor brush to be had, and I made my way to the breakfast table.

The table was one long plank, supported at either end by a barrel.

The plates, saucers and knives were all made of tin.

The grub was well cooked and of good variety. The table was soon cleared and it was now to the wheat fields.

On the third day at noon both White and myself had gotten enough of the harvest fields and, receiving our pay, set out on foot for Vernon.

That night we caught a passenger train and beat it one hundred miles to Childress, Tex., where we were put off.

But not to stay long. An emigrant, who was moving his household effects to the Indian Territory, allowed us to get in the car where his furniture was and carried us over two hundred miles to Dalhart, Tex., landing there late the next day.

I parted with White at Dalhart. He had changed his mind about going to Roswell, and now wanted to go to Denver, Colo.

Two hours after he had caught the Denver train I was safely hid in a coke car on an El Paso freight train.

I had no trouble in catching the train at Dalhart, for just as it pulled out a rough fight took place on the depot platform, both parties using firearms, which served momentarily to take attention from me. It's doubtful though whether I'd have been bothered in Dalhart anyway, for it is one of those rough little Western towns 'way up in the Texas Panhandle, in which "everything goes."

And, say, that was a funny fight, too. A big, rough-looking fellow, presumably a miner, had been cutting up too much fuss on the depot platform. The agent came out and asked him to be quiet, but instead of quieting him, he made matters worse. The big fellow began cursing everybody on the platform. A cop was called and in a moment there was a mix up. The cop pecked the fellow all over the head with his pistol, but the miner gamely came back at him with his own pistol, neither of them uttering a word. In a few minutes blood was streaming from both. The big fellow finally gave in and put up his gun.

"Come on now," said the cop, grabbing the man by the arm, and starting up the street.

I was wondering where the jail was, when to my surprise the cop released the man before they had gone a block.

The cop now came back to the depot, smiling.

"I got rid o' him," he said, but he was mistaken, for the other fellow, by this time, had also reached the depot.

Walking up close to the cop, he leered:

"Do you think I'm afraid of you?" and then another fight, even rougher than the other, began.

It was at this juncture, unobserved, I slipped into the coke car.

Within a short time after leaving Dalhart we crossed the State line into New Mexico.

CHAPTER VI.

Across the Line into New Mexico—Barren Sand Hills—Jack Rabbits—Prairie Dogs—A Glorious Sunset, etc.

The train had now entered a country that is simply indescribable for its bleak barrenness.

On every hand, as far as I could see, was nothing but barren sand hills, broken here and there by high mountain ridges.

In some places we would go forty or fifty miles without seeing a sign of human habitation, then suddenly we would come upon a small collection of adobe huts, that is, huts built of sun-dried, mud bricks.

These little houses have a flat roof, and some of them are no taller than a man's head. They are occupied by Mexicans and Indians.

A big rain would destroy all these dwellings; but rain is almost as scarce in this desolate, sun-baked region as snow is in the Torrid Zone.

When it does rain there and a man's clothes are wet, it takes but ten minutes for the air to dry him off again.

From where I was sitting in the door of the coke car thousands upon thousands of jack rabbits, cotton tails and prairie dogs could be seen dodging in and out among the rocks and cactus trees.

Once, just before dark came on, a solitary cowboy, wearing high boots and a big sombrero, mounted on a spirited young pony, dashed across the tracks ahead of the train and disappeared behind the low mountain ridges toward the sunset—and such a grand, beautiful sunset that was!—the sun slowly sinking behind the distant mountain peaks, and the whole heavens lit up with a perfect flood of golden beauty, was a scene, though I live to be a hundred years old, I shall never forget.

Nowhere else in all the world, I believe, are the sunsets so gloriously beautiful as in Arizona or New Mexico.

Lost in spell-bound admiration and silent reflection, I sat in the car door until long after dark.

The night air at home had always given me the asthma, but there was no asthma feeling about me now; instead I felt that it would be an impossibility to wheeze.

I inhaled great draughts of the dry, pure air, which seemed to penetrate to my very toes, and open every air cell in my body.

Surely for those whose lungs are affected this is God's country, I thought.

Then and there I registered a solemn vow that when my parents were no more, I should return to this country and pass the remainder of my days.

All of this part of New Meixco is devoted to

sheep raising. White men are in demand as sheep herders, and are usually paid $30.00 per month and board.

That night I slept in the coke car, and at sun-up next morning we reached the first large town in all the 200-mile stretch from Dalhart—Santa Rosa—a town of 700 population.

No one discovered the poor, thirsty hobo in the coke car. (In this country three hours is a long time for a man to do without water.) Inside of an hour the train had changed crews, another engine had been coupled on, and the long 175-mile ride across the dreary waste to Alamogordo (the next division point) was begun.

During this long ride there was no change of scenery. I never went to the door without seeing thousands of jack rabbits and an occasional coyote. Once in a while a large tarantula (spider) as large as a man's hand could be seen scampering among the rocks for shelter.

Extreme thirst is caused by the alkali dust which floats in the air. Before the day was over my lips had become a fiery red and cracked open, and my tongue had swollen nearly twice its normal size.

Many a poor hobo has been put down in this country by a heartless brakeman, and left to die on the desert, of thirst, but, as yet no one on the train had seen me.

Once, as darkness was closing down, I heard a

brakeman coming, and quickly crawled into the back end of the car, where it was very dark.

Slabs had been nailed across the open door within two feet of the top to prevent the coke from rolling out.

The brakeman climbed upon these slabs, and taking up a piece of coke, threw it into the dark end of the car, where I was hiding, with considerable force.

Though he could not see me, his aim was true, and the coke struck me a glancing blow upon the cheek, cutting a long gash, and starting the blood.

The pain was intense, and it was all I could do to keep from crying out, but the brakeman, unconscious of my hurt, hurled a piece of coke into the other end of the car, and upon hearing no one, sprang from the car door, and soon his footsteps could be heard going to some other part of the train.

Late that night we reached Alamogordo.

While here I wrote home to my folks.

Alamogordo is 4,000 feet above the sea level, and has one of the finest natural parks in the United States.

The town is also noted for the luscious fruit raised by the Mexican ranchers nearby.

My night's lodging was on a large pile of telegraph poles piled near the railroad.

No dew falls in that country and a good many of the people who live there would rather sleep

on the ground during the summer months than on a good feather bed. A man can sleep on the ground there nine months in the year without taking a cold.

I left Alamogordo the next day on a passenger train as a "coal passenger," that is, I had to help the fireman shovel coal for my fare to El Paso.

About half of this trip lay in the foothills of the mountains, and then we reached the mountains proper.

Gradually the train rose foot by foot (the train was going very slowly now) until we had attained a height of over 5,000 feet above the level of the track.

The journey was now through the clouds, and in some places the fog was so thick I could not see the cars that were following behind us, but in a few moments the spiral winding tracks would carry us on the other side of the mountains, where the sun was shining brightly, and I could see far down the beautiful valleys to some distant mountain peak over seventy-five miles away.

It was the first time I had ever seen the mountains, and enraptured with their beauty, I forgot to throw coal down for the fireman.

The engineer, noticing my abstraction, called:

"Hey, come down here a minute."

I crawled into the cab.

"Where are you from?" he asked, good naturedly.

"I'm from North Carolina working my way to Tucson."

"I thought you were from the East," he said. "How far do you think it is to that mountain peak over there?"

"It looks to be about five miles," I answered.

"That's where this clear air fools you. Why that peak is over forty miles away," he laughed.

The rest of this trip I was treated exceptionally good. Both the fireman and engineer seemed to take a delight in pointing out to me things of interest.

Presently a very high mountain caught my eye.

"That's Mt. Shasta," said the fireman. It's over two miles high, and snow lies up there about nine months in the year. There's a railroad built up there now," he continued, "and its an ideal summer resort."

About 8 or 9 p. m. we reached El Paso, Tex.

At one time, years ago, El Paso was one of the roughest border towns in the West, but the modern El Paso is altogether a different town.

The population now numbers over 50,000, of which 15 or 20 per cent are Mexicans.

Just across the Rio Grande River is the Mexican city, Ciudad Juarez. I spent nearly a day in this quaint looking city. In the center of the town is a large park. Seated on one of the beautiful rustic benches, placed close together along the shaded avenues of the park, you are quite

free from the hot, scorching sun beating down overhead. Just above your head a large frame work, extending over the entire park, has been constructed, and upon it a thick growth of vines and beautiful flowers are entwined in endless profusion.

Wherever I spent a small American coin, I was sure to receive nearly a handful of Mexican coins in change.

A toll bridge spans the river and connects the two cities.

An American collects the toll on the El Paso side and a Mexican on the Juarez side. It cost me two cents to cross each way.

While in El Paso I heard a great deal of talk about the high wages paid laborers in Bisbee, Ariz., and as it was only a few miles out of my way going to Tucson, I decided to stop over there a few days.

I shoveled coal on an El Paso and Southwestern freight train from El Paso to Douglas, a distance of 200 miles.

Douglas, Ariz., is a small place of about two thousand population, and is twenty-seven miles from Bisbee.

When we reached Douglas the engineer and the fireman invited me to take dinner with them.

The engineer offered to get me a place in the large railroad shops located there as apprentice boy at $2.50 per day, but I told him I would go on to Bisbee and try that town for a job first.

In this country a man willing to work can always find dozens of jobs waiting for him. Nearly everything is white labor, and its very seldom you are offered less than $3.50 to $4.50 per day for eight hours work.

The largest smelter plant in the world is located at Douglas. (Its the old plant removed from Bisbee.)

The ore train (heaviest tonnage train in the world) hauls the crude ore from the mines in Bisbee to the Douglas smelters.

I stayed over one night in Douglas, and the next morning at daylight caught the ore train with its long line of empty, iron-bound cars, bound for Bisbee.

At Osborne Junction a miner got into the car I was in. He was also going to Bisbee.

We left the cars on a side-track at Don Luis and started out to walk the remaining two miles to Bisbee, "The Greatest Mining Camp on Earth."

My first impression of Bisbee was certainly not a very favorable one.

The town is surrounded by high mountain ranges, making a sewerage system next to impossible. The waste matter of Bisbee is hauled away in wooden boxes with teams.

On account of this poor sewerage Bisbee suffers every summer with an epidemic of typhoid fever and smallpox. There is always the presence of a fearful stench upon the streets. All of the streets are very narrow, winding and short.

Most of the dwelling houses are built one above the other up the mountain sides, and are reached by narrow, winding paths.

Main street and Brewery Gulch are the two principal business streets.

On either of these streets, day or night, one always finds a large crowd of miners and gamblers—speaking of gambling, Bisbee is a typical Western town in this respect. There are over twenty public gambling halls there. Every saloon has its gambling hall, and in the rear a band of musicians. The doors are thrown wide open and the window shades are never drawn.

Strolling into one of these brilliantly lighted dens of iniquity, you'll find every known gambling device under the sun. "Dice throwing," "21," "Faro," "Roulette," "Poker"—they are all there, and many others.

The Indian, Chinaman, Mexican and American all play at the same table, and unless you are a good poker player you had better stay out of the game.

In these games the ante is seldom less than $1.00.

The people in the Far West talk but little while the game is going on. There is no wrangling or misunderstanding. The cards are dealt quickly and deftly, and without a word the betting begins. Sometimes the pot swells to a thousand dollars or more, but even then the same quiet among the players prevails.

The winner hardly smiles as he pockets his money, and the loser, if he goes broke, quietly gives up his seat and some other gentleman takes a hand.

On the 10th and 12th of every month the mines around Bisbee pay out to the employees the sum of $70,000, so it is no wonder the gambling halls do a good business.

There are no one cent pieces used in Bisbee, (not even in the post-office); nothing less than five cents.

Bartenders in Bisbee receive $6.00 for an eight-hour shift serving drinks.

There are no colored people in Bisbee.

Board and room can be obtained for $30.00 per month and up. Clothing cost but little more than in the East.

CHAPTER VII.

Get a Job in a Law Office—Dirty, Ragged Clothes Put Off—Smallpox Starts Me Off Again.

It was an afternoon in July that I strolled into Bennett & Williams' law office on Brewery Gulch and asked for a job.

A sign in the window read:

"Stenographer Wanted."

It was in response to this ad I had entered.

Right here a description of me might not be out of place.

My spring suit had been ruined, and long since discarded for a suit of overalls that I had purchased in Dallas. Hard knocks had rent them in several places, and they were full of train grease. My shoes were worn completely out. For a hat I was wearing a wide-brimmed sombrero, purchased from a Mexican merchant at Alamogordo. I was strapped again, but that was a thing I was getting used to.

Taken all in all, I'm sure I looked anything but a stenographer.

Williams was typewriting when I entered and asked for the job.

He refused to look at the various references I produced, saying they would have no weight with him, but glancing up at me, broke out into a broad smile.

"So you are a shorthand writer, eh! Well, come back to-morrow morning and I'll give you a trial," was the promise, but it was quite easy to see he thought I was more of a tramp than a shorthand writer.

Needless to say, though, I went back at the appointed time, and though I failed miserably in getting down the first letters he dictated, I was given the job.

"You'll soon get back in practice," he said, "and when you do, your salary will be $125.00 per month."

Three days later, as I began to improve, Williams bought me $17.00 worth of clothes and a nice dress suit case. I was also given a $5.00 meal ticket on the English Kitchen, and room rent was paid for me one month in advance at the LeGrand Hotel. Both my employers provided me with spending money from time to time, but the most of this money I saved.

I had been in Bisbee nearly three weeks when several cases of smallpox and typhoid fever broke out.

Two cases of smallpox broke out in the Le Grand Hotel.

Several people deserted the town post-haste, and among the number was myself.

I resigned my position as stenographer, and bidding my kindhearted employers and other friends good-bye, I purchased a ticket to Tucson.

It took nearly all my money to buy this ticket, but I didn't like the idea of hoboing to the town I was to make my future home in.

I would, at least, have plenty of nice clothes when I got there, and if it came to a pinch about getting something to eat, I could sell some of my clothing.

The first thing that met me when I stepped from the train in Tucson was a sandstorm, filling my eyes, ears and nose full of fine dust and covering my clothes. (Sandstorms are of common occurrence in this section.)

It is a good deal warmer in Tucson at all times than at Bisbee, for Tucson is 2,000 feet lower. Tucson is on the Southern Pacific Railroad, and is but a few miles from the line of Old Mexico.

Climatic conditions render it a most desirable place to live, but owing to Mexican labor competition wages are not as good as at Bisbee. In Tucson the laboring man receives but $2.50 per day for eight hours. (This is just twice what is paid a laborer in North Carolina, South Carolina, or Virginia, however.)

Board is cheap in Tucson, $5.00 per week and up.

In the West Tucson is called the "lunger" town. The name comes from the large number of people who visit Tucson, every winter from all parts of the United States for lung troubles.

It is never cold enough in Tucson to wear an overcoat.

There are more hotels and boarding-houses there than in any other city of its size on the globe.

One hotel has a large sign up which reads:

"Any Day that the Sun Fails to Shine Upon this Hotel, we will Give Our Guests Free Board."

It's very seldom they have to give away any of their free board.

CHAPTER VIII.

"For God's Sake, Give Me a Drop of Water."

I stayed in Tucson one night, and while knocking about the streets the next day I met a young man down at the depot who introduced himself as J. C. Allen, from some town in the East, which I have forgotten.

Allen had landed in Tucson but a few days before with about the same intentions I had, but for some reason had taken a violent dislike to the town, and now wanted to go to Los Angeles.

I had caught the fever of traveling pretty hard myself now, and as Allen was a sociable sort of chap as well as a good talker, it didn't take him long to convince me that Tucson was a poor town for us to remain in. Then, as two young fellows will, we soon came to an understanding that we would stick by each other through thick and thin and work our way to Los Angeles, Cal.

Like most fellows who stay in the West long, Allen was a great bull-con man (hot air man).

He told me they were already picking oranges around Los Angeles, and paying pickers the highest kind of prices.

My own common sense ought to have told me that this wasn't true, and that Allen merely wanted me to go with him for company, but I hadn't been in the West long, and the poorest kind of bull-con dealer found in me an easy mark.

I readily became as anxious to reach Los Angeles as Allen himself.

"How do you propose going?" I asked.

"A Mexican railroad foreman is going to ship me to Gila City, Ariz., to-night to do construction work, and I'll try to get him to ship you too," he promised.

Late in the afternoon the Mexican in question showed up at the depot.

Allen took him aside and had a long talk with him, during which time the Mexican glanced at me several times. Finally he got up and went into the depot.

Allen now hurried over to me.

"——— the luck," he exclaimed, "what are you wearing that white collar for?" The Mexican has gone after me a pass, but he says you look too sporty.

"Hurry to your stopping place, quick! and get off them togs and I'll try him again."

I had put up within a block of the depot, and in a short time I had made the change and returned, bringing my dress suit case.

Allen had already received his pass and was anxiously waiting for me.

"Hide your dress suit case!" he whispered.

I had barely done so when the Mexican came out of the depot.

It was nearly dark now and there was a surging crowd of ladies and men on the depot yards waiting to meet the incoming train.

Allen pushed his way through the crowd and once more directed the Mexican's attention towards me.

The Mexican had no sooner glanced at me than he took out a pencil and wrote something on Allen's pass. A few moments later he left the depot and went hurrying up the street; and Allen approached me with a smile.

Upon his pass had been scrawled the two words, "And friend."

Shortly after, we were comfortably seated in a Southern Pacific passenger coach and bound far out upon the desert to Gila City, 180 miles away.

Allen had but thirty-five cents, while I was again stranded without a penny.

Just as day was breaking we were roused by the conductor and put down at Gila City.

Its an unusual thing for a passenger to get on or off at Gila City.

Some of the passengers straightened up in their seats and watched us with interest, as we slowly got our things together and left the car at this desolate spot, located almost in the very middle of the desert.

We were yet 300 miles from Los Angeles, though Yuma, the next town, was but twenty miles away.

Gila City contains one small store, about the size of a man's hand; two small dwellings, and a miniature depot. The population numbers but four or five people.

One thing is plentiful there, though—long-eared jack rabbits and cotton tails by the thousand. This section abounds with thousands of quail, too, and on warm days not a few rattlesnakes can be seen sunning in the desert.

The shanty cars of the construction company stood on the side-track, and as there was nothing else to do we went over to them.

The men were already up and the section foreman's wife was preparing breakfast.

We told the foreman that the Mexican had sent us down from Tucson, and were engaged by him at $1.50 per day and board.

Presently we were invited into one of the cars for breakfast.

The men seated around that table presented a picture seldom seen. Besides Allen and myself, there were three dark-skinned Mexicans, a half-breed Indian, the foreman, who was a Texan, and two ex-cowpunchers, besides an Irishman and a Chinaman.

As for the breakfast itself, I have never eaten better grub anywhere, and the cooking was splendid. Notwithstanding the motley crew around us, both Allen and myself made a hearty meal.

The teams were soon hitched, and after proceeding down the track about a mile the day's work commenced.

I was given a scraper team to drive, and Allen was put at pick and shovel work.

As soon as the sun rose it quickly got hot, and by 8 o'clock it began to sting through our clothes. At 10 o'clock the heat was so intense that all hands quit work and went back to the shade of the shanty cars.

Neither Allen nor myself had ever worked under such a hot sun before. Both of us came near fainting, and even when we reached the shanties, perspiration was still running from every pore.

All work was suspended until 4 p. m. (In this part of the world, owing to the intense heat, a day's work commences at 5 a. m. and lasts until 10 a. m. In the middle of the day you take a six hours' rest. Commencing work again at 4 o'clock in the afternoon you work until 7 p. m., making an eight-hour day.)

On the morning of the second day, Allen got pretty badly hurt. A big bowlder, becoming dislodged from above his head, rolled down the cliff where he was at work, and struck him a painful blow upon the back of his hand. Already overheated from exertion in the hot sun, his injured hand threw him into a hard chill, and he was forced to quit work.

Some of the Mexicans and others standing around began laughing as if they thought it a great joke.

The foreman, instead of sympathizing with him, joined in the laugh. (The entire gang had put us down as tenderfeet.)

There was no use getting mad, for these tough-looking chaps were too many for us, and we did the next best thing.

We gave up our job and walked back to the shanties.

At 10 o'clock the men came in for dinner, when we informed the foreman that we had thrown up our job and that he could settle with us.

"Settle nothing," said the big fellow, laughing. "You've not worked enough to pay your fare from Tucson yet. You can get your dinner here, and after that, meals are fifty cents apiece, if you dine in these cars."

We walked over to the little store with the intention of investing Allen's thirty-five cents in groceries for our dinner, but there was nothing doing.

The man's stock consisted mostly of pop and cigars, which articles he probably got from Los Angeles.

"How much for pop?" I asked.

"Fifteen cents a bottle," was the reply.

A barrel of ginger snaps stood in one corner of the store.

"How much a pound?" I asked, giving the cakes a wistful look.

"Twenty-five cents a pound," said the grocer.

We left the store without purchasing anything and made our way back to the cars, forced to accept the ill-given hospitality of the section foreman.

That afternoon a lucky thought came to me. We yet had plenty of clothing, and why not auction it off?

In my grip was a mouth harp that I had bought in Bisbee.

Allen, who was a good harmonica player, struck up several lively airs, and in a few minutes every man in the camp had gathered around us, including the foreman.

Some were popping and slapping their hands in applause, and others were dancing jigs in time to the music.

I gave Allen the signal to stop and, opening up both our grips, began auctioneering off small pieces of goods.

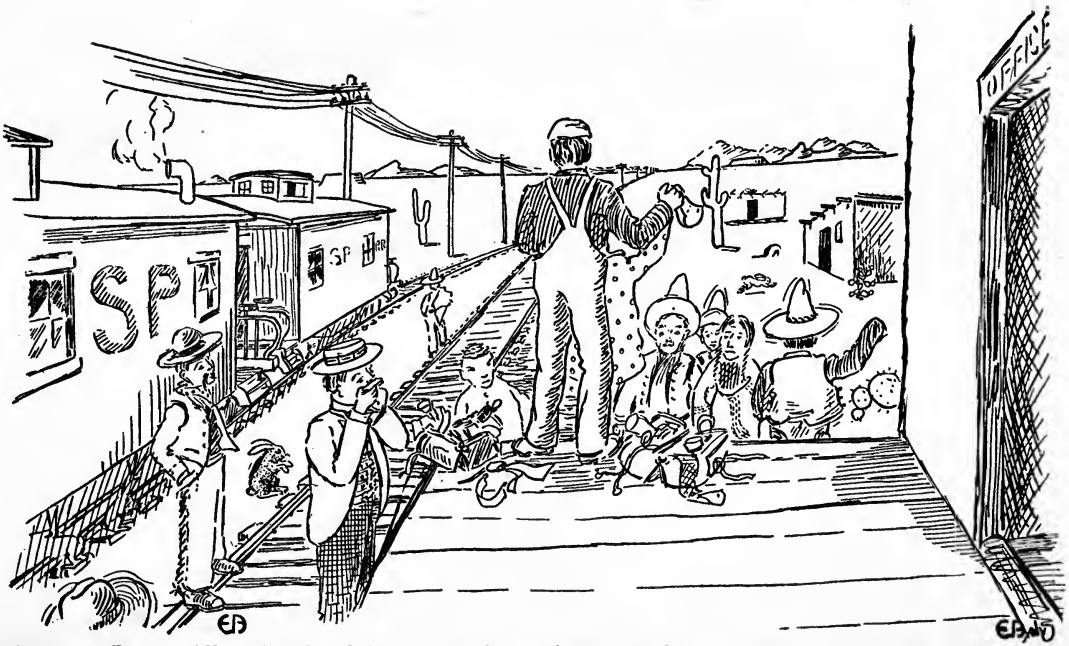
Every thing put up was sold to advantage, though the smaller articles brought the best prices.

The harmonica, which had cost me twenty-five cents, caused the liveliest bidding, and was finally knocked down to a cowboy for eighty cents.

The foreman secured a nice comb and brush at a bargain, and was so well pleased with the music he invited us to take supper with him, and to play the harmonica again for him and his wife.

About nine o'clock that night a freight train stopped in Gila City, which we boarded with our grips and easily beat to Yuma.

Yuma has a population of 7,000 Indians, Mexicans and Americans, and like Bisbee, gambling forms a part of the revenue of the saloons.



I gave Allen the signal to stop, and opening up both our grips, began auctioneering off small articles of clothing.

Most of the houses in Yuma are built of wood or brick, though there are a good many adobe houses occupied by the poorer classes.

Some claim Yuma is fifty feet above the sea level; others say it is one hundred and fifty below the sea level. I don't know which of these statements is correct, but I do know that Yuma is by far the hottest town I was ever in. As early as half-past seven o'clock next morning the sun began to get uncomfortably hot, and by nine o'clock both Allen and myself were suffering from the heat.

We spent the biggest part of the day in the shade of the large Reservoir building opposite the depot, and but a few feet from the Colorado River.

That night a Mexican living in one of the adobe houses near the railroad yards supplied each of us with a large bottle of water for the long two hundred and eighty mile journey across the desert, but in dodging the brakemen while attempting to board a Los Angeles freight train, we became separated and it was the last I ever saw of my friend Allen.

I managed to hide in a car loaded with scrap iron.

Only once did I leave this car. We reached the first division point, Indio, Cal., about 3 o'clock in the morning.

My bottle of water had long since run dry, and I was once more beginning to suffer the acute pangs of desert thirst. With as little noise as

possible, I slipped from the car and into the pump house (which is about the only building of any kind that Indio contains). In fact, between Yuma and Indio, for a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, there isn't a single town—nothing but desert and cactus trees.

The man in the pump house filled my bottle from a hydrant, and taking a big drink from a large tin cup, which I also filled from the hydrant, I hurried through the darkness to the scrap iron car nearly a half mile down the track.

I was about crawling in, when a low groan from under the car attracted my attention.

Peering under the car, I was amazed to see a man on the rods.

"For God's sake give me a drop of water," he begged piteously.

I passed him the bottle of water, and invited

The poor fellow eagerly took a long pull at it, him to drink half of it.

passing it back scarcely half full, with a grateful "Thank you."

"I could drink five bottles like that," he said, smacking his lips.

The train now started, preventing further conversation, and I quickly crawled back into the scrap iron car.

The next day about 11 a. m. we pulled into the yards at Los Angeles.

As soon as the train stopped in the yards I jumped out of the car and looked for the man on the rods, but he was gone.

CHAPTER IX.

Thrown Into Jail at Los Angeles.

Upon seeing no one near, I lifted my grip from the car door and started down town in search of a lodging place. I found a nice place at No. 128 E. First street, and the following day I got a job with the S. P. Railroad Company, trucking freight at 20 cents per hour.

Los Angeles is probably the greatest fruit market in the world. Oranges, grapes, peaches and apricots are among the principal fruits raised.

During the orange season you can buy oranges for ten cents per dozen. A careful estimate places the number of oranges grown in California every year at 900,000,000. All fruit is cheap. The finest kind of malaga grapes can be purchased on the streets of Los Angeles for 2½ cents per pound. You can live on fruit there over six months in the year.

The winters there are no ways as cold as in North Carolina.

The rainfall is scarcely ten inches a year, making it possible for the laboring man to work out doors every working day in the year.

Laborers get $1.75 to $2.50 per day, and are always in demand.

There are numerous restaurants in Los Angeles that set out a good, substantial meal for ten cents.

San Pedro is the port of entry for Los Angeles.

With the exception of Chicago, Los Angeles contains more employment bureaus than any other city in the United States.

While standing in one of these labor bureaus a few days later, I learned that a certain hotel in San Pedro wanted a hotel clerk. I gave up my job trucking freight and took the street car for San Pedro.

After having a short talk and showing my references to Jennings and White, proprietors of the Angelus Hotel, I was offered the place as clerk at $15.00 per month, board and room.

I accepted the position.

The little town of San Pedro bears the distinction of being one of the nine corners of the world.

The Pacific Ocean is in full view from the front entrance of the Angelus Hotel.

From this point it is only a two-hours run on the steamboat Cabrillo to the famous fishing grounds of Santa Catalina Island.

If you are a good fisherman with hook and line, two hours in these waters will supply you with from seventy-five to one hundred and fifty pounds of fish.

I had been clerking for Jennings & White about six weeks, when one day a man registered in the hotel from Searchlight, Nevada.

The man praised up Searchlight in glowing terms.

"Everything in Searchlight is on a boom," said he. "Wages are good, and it's the very place for a young man to make money."

I was not making anything and had already grown tired of the little, sleepy town of San Pedro.

The fever of travel was once more infused within me.

I would go to Searchlight, and if I found it like the man had said, I promised myself I would settle down there and stop traveling about.

To hold my position as clerk in the hotel I had been compelled to invest all of my small salary in clothing.

When I resigned the job I had saved just $2.00.

Mr. Jennings said I was doing a bad thing starting to Searchlight broke, and that he would give me a letter of reference to a Los Angeles street car Superintendent. I reproduce his letter in this book, though I never used it, for I was bent now upon going to Searchlight, and that afternoon took the car for Los Angeles.

I knocked about the streets of Los Angeles three or four days trying to get up courage to begin beating trains again.

During my six weeks of ease and contentment at the hotel I had grown almost as timid as when I first left home.

Hardly before I knew it I was stranded in Los Angeles without a penny.

My grip had been left in charge of Jennings & White, to be forwarded to me in case I reached Searchlight safely.

I told some kind-hearted gentleman on the street of my trouble, and he kindly advised me to apply to the Los Angeles Chief of Police.

"He'll get you a place to sleep to-night," said the man, giving me the street and number of the Chief's office.

I lost sight of the fact that I was again dressed for hoboing the railroad, and that the chief might be unfavorably impressed with my appearance.

I reached his office, which was located in a large stone building, just after nightfall.

He listened to my story a moment or so, but instead of furnishing me with an address and the wherewithal to obtain a night's sleep at some lodging house, he tapped a bell on the desk.

The next moment a blue coat entered the office.

I now began to grow suspicious, but it was too late.

"Take that man around for a night's lodging," said the Chief, and before I could gather my wits I was whisked from the Chief's presence into another department.

"Search the prisoner," commanded the pompous looking individual presiding in this office.

The cop searched my pockets and all my things were put in a large envelope, sealed and locked in a large iron safe.

I now found my tongue and began using it

pretty loud. The disgrace of spending a night in jail seemed more than I could bear.

"Turn me loose, I don't want lodging. Please let me go," I cried.

But it was no go.

"Dry up there! came the command. "If the Chief hears you, you may get thrown in a year for vagrancy."

I could have 'phoned to Jennings & White, and no doubt they could have gotten me out of the scrape, but I was ashamed for them to know of my predicament, and kept quiet.

A large book was thrust at me.

"Sign your name!" came the command.

Anyone looking over the Los Angeles records for 1906 will find the name "Robert Smith," signed for a night's lodging.

The city prison was in the back of the building, and a short time later I was locked behind the bars in an iron-bound cell containing twenty or more prisoners.

Within ten minutes every man of them had asked me what I had been "run in" for.

"You're liable to be kept in here several months for vagrancy," said the prisoners.

I'll not dwell upon the horrors of that night. I didn't sleep a wink throughout the long night, and was wideawake next morning at six o'clock when the prison warden approached the cage door and shouted:

"Robert Smith"—

"Robert Smith—is Robert Smith in there?" shouted the prison warden.

"Robert Smith in there?" he called to some of the prisoners a moment later.

I sprang up. I had forgotten that I had signed Robert Smith on the books.

"I'm the man!" I cried, and five minutes later I was a free man, again breathing the pure, fresh air of the outside world.

With rapid footsteps I hurried from this unpleasant locality and made my way down town.

At the time I write the railroad hadn't yet reached Searchlight.

The nearest point of construction was Manvel, Cal., twenty-three miles away.

By mere good fortune I learned that morning that the railroad company was shipping men through the Red Cross Employment Bureau to Manvel for construction work.

I lost no time in visiting the Red Cross Agency, and was given a pass over the Sante Fe Railroad to Manvel.

There were thirty-odd men in the crew I shipped with, mostly foreigners.

We rode all night, and about 12 o'clock next day we reached Manvel.

By keeping my eyes and ears open along the trip I easily spotted the men who had shipped out of Los Angeles as a means of reaching Searchlight.

At midnight when the rest of the camp was wrapped in deep slumber six men silently stole

from the tents and struck out across the desert for Searchlight.

The lights of the town could be plainly seen from the railroad camps, and it hardly seemed possible that those bright looking lights were twenty-three miles across the desert.

Footsore, thirsty and tired we reached Searchlight next morning.

Searchlight contains fifteen business houses, and eleven of them are saloons, though its a very quiet and well-governed little town, and about the only excitement is when some lucky prospector arrives with rich specimens of gold ore, discovered somewhere nearby in the surrounding desert—and this happens quite often. While I was there Mike Walsh, a very poor man, discovered a rich gold claim three miles north of Searchlight and sold it for $10,000.

Any one can prospect if he's able to buy a grub stake. Eighty dollars will buy two burros and a three-months' grub stake for two men, and but little trouble is experienced in finding some veteran prospector who'll accompany you in search for gold on halves.

There are several good paying gold mines within a half mile of the town.

One gold mine there is in full operation within thirty feet of Main street. It is worked by only three young men, who are the owners, and it is supposed they are making a small fortune.

I got a job with Cook & Co. assisting to survey town lots, for which I was paid $3.50 per day.

Later on I got a job with Mr. Fred. Ullman, proprietor of the Searchlight Hotel. I was taken on as porter in the bar-room and hotel, but upon learning to mix drinks, I was engaged as bartender, which job I held until Mr. Ullman sold out a few weeks later to a firm in Los Angeles.

This threw me out of a job, but out of my salary I had placed $50.00 in the Searchlight Bank.

I now took a job at Doc's Kitchen washing dishes at two dollars and seventy-five cents per day.

While engaged in this work my brother wrote me a long letter from home, saying they were all very anxious to see me and that mother had been taken seriously ill, worrying about me.

For the first time since leaving home I began to feel homesick, so much so I had to give up my job.

I decided to make a short visit to San Francisco and then start home.

I bought a stage ticket to Nipton, Cal., and from that point purchased a ticket to Los Angeles. Next day I shipped from Los Angeles to Weed, Cal. Weed is in the Siskiyou Mountains, six hundred miles from Los Angeles. I deserted the train at Stockton, Cal., with another young fellow, and we took the boat from this point to 'Frisco.

By this manoeuvering I saved nearly half the fare from Searchlight to San Francisco.

I had a hard time finding a lodging house in 'Frisco, for over four-fifths of the hotels had gone up in the big fire. After several hours of weary tramping about the streets, I found the St. George Hotel, a large frame building, erected temporarily on Mission street.

Lodging in 'Frisco was high and board brought fabulous prices.

Two weeks later I awoke to the realization that my $50.00 had dwindled to $5.00.

Part of this money had gone for a new suit of clothes, but the other had been spent for living expenses.

I couldn't start for home with but $5.00, and only one other course was left—I must go to work. I didn't care to work in 'Frisco, though, for it was only skilled labor that was commanding high prices.

I met a young man in the hotel, P. A. Franck, from No. 3851 Juniata street, St. Louis, Mo., who had left his St. Louis home to make a fortune in San Francisco, but disappointed with the poor wages paid for labor in 'Frisco compared with the high cost of living expenses, he readily agreed to leave with me.

Murray & Ready's Employment Bureau, on Tenth and Market streets, shipped us three hundred miles to the Sugar Pine Mountains, in central California to work at a saw-mill.

We left the train at Madera, Cal., at which town was located the Sugar Pine Company's office.

From Madera we took a sixty-mile stage ride through the Sugar Pine Mountains to the saw-mill, arriving there late one afternoon.

That night we learned that the mill owners had decided to close down the mill until the following spring, and that, if we went to work, in all probability the job would give out by the time we had worked out our fare from San Francisco.

That night we slept on the bare floor of a little log hut up the mountain side, the man in the company store saying all his bed covering had been sold out.

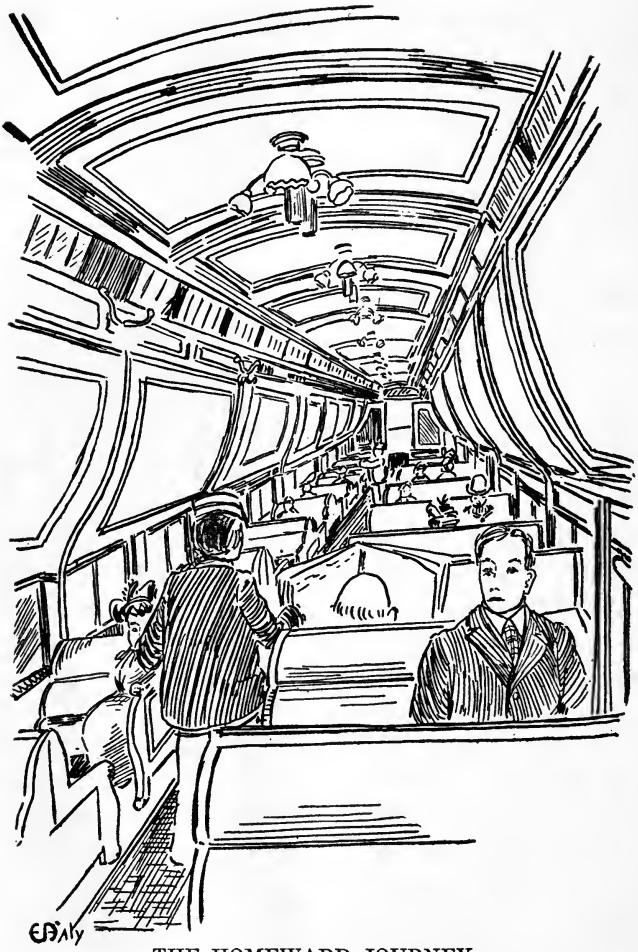
The next morning we were both frozen nearly stiff; we awoke before light and struck the trail back to Madera.

I had a thirty-pound grip of clothing and Franck was weighted down with a still heavier grip and an overcoat.

All day long we tramped over the mountains, and all the following night.

By morning of the second day we were making scarcely a mile an hour, and were so near played out we were forced to rest every ten or fifteen minutes. Once Franck's shoe became untied, and in stooping to tie it he pitched heavily forward upon his hands and knees.

Only once did we get anything to eat, the half-



THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY.

Gooy-by, dear old Arizona.
Good-by, sunny California.
(Pro tem) to you both.

way house sold us a scanty meal for 50 cents each.

At last, scarcely able to stand up, we reached Madera.

Afraid that the Sugar Pine Company would indict us for deserting, we spent our last penny for a ticket to Fresno, Cal.

We got a job at Madera's planing mill in Fresno and found a lodging house at No. 846 I street, run by a Mrs. Dora Harrell, a widow.

Two days later we were discharged, Mr. Madera saying that we were the slowest two young men that had ever worked for him.

The fact is, the two days he paid us for was like finding money, for after that long tramp in the Sugar Pine Mountains we were too weak to work. It was about all we could do to stand around the mill and watch the others work.

Franck now placed his grip in the express office and bade me good-bye, saying he was going to hobo it to Los Angeles.

I refused to accompany him, relating my "Robert Smith" experience, but he was bent upon going, and with tears in our eyes we parted.

Not long after I was taken ill, and for two weeks I was unable to leave my room.

My money was all gone and I was in debt to my landlady for board.

About this time I received another long letter from my brother, offering me a half interest in

his grocery store, and advising me to come at once if I expected to find mother alive.

I lost no time in telegraphing the following reply:

"Will come immediately if you send ticket; otherwise I can't."

Late the next day I received a telegraph order for ninety dollars.

The telegraph company wrote out a check, which I got the Principal of the Fresno Business College to endorse.

I purchased a ticket via Denver and Chicago, and after a long and tedious journey, I arrived in Tarboro.

My mother was sleeping and dreaming of her boy in far off sun-bathed California, when, with a light kiss, I awoke her. I will never forget the glad cry that escaped her lips when she saw me home once again, safe and sound.

It was Horace Greeley, the great American author, who said: "Young men go West."

From what little I saw of this great, grand country beyond the Mississippi, I think it is good advice. There are more opportunities to make money and more money to be made, and the climate is better; but unless father and mother are dead, take the well-meant advice of a young man who has recently been West; only to learn that there was but one place on earth—"HOME."

THE END.

San Pedro, Cal., Aug. 8th, 1906.

M. F. Vanranker, Esq., Supt.

Dear Sir:—This will introduce Mr. John Peele, who would like to make application with you for work. I know him personally, and can recommend him to be an honest, sober, and energetic young man, and will make you an A.1. conductor, for he is very bright and quick. If you can use him you will make no mistake.

Very respectfully yours,

J. W. JENNINGS.

St. Louis, Mo., Jan. 29, 1907.

My Dear Friend Jack:

I received your letter of the 11th inst. I have also been very busy—have been working steady since I got back home. I am very glad to hear that you appreciate my poor efforts at letter-writing.

Too bad about your girl getting married. You are right about the girls all wanting to marry a man with money. I guess that's the reason I'm not married. Never mind, old chap, you will find another girl—there are others, don't you know.

You state in your letter that since returning home you have been troubled with the asthma, and on account of the moist air and the land being so low and full of malaria you feared an attack of pneumonia. I hope you are well again and are rid of the cold.

I see you are in the grocery business. That proposition is all right, if you stay at home for a few years. Stick to it, old chap, for awhile, anyway.

I intend to stay at home for awhile, and any time I do go away I will let you know about it. Perhaps we may meet again out in the tall and uncut wild and wooly.

Say, Jack, do you remember in San Francisco "Murry & Ready," the "St. George" where we stopped, "Madera," the "Sugar Pine Co.," the sixty-mile "stage ride," the run-away, the comfortable little cabin on the side of the hill where we

slept that night, the long tramp next day out of the Sugar Pine Mountains, and the boss we had in Fresno at the Madera Planing Mill? Them were some great old times.

My folks are all well, thank you. Trusting the same of yours, I will close, with kindest regards and best wishes,

Your old side partner in California,

PHIL.

P. A. Franck, 3851 Juniata St., St. Louis, Mo.

I was never in Paris or London, and have never crossed the pond anywhere. My only experience on the deep blue was a trip from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

I agree with you we did a foolish stunt when we parted at Fresno, Cal.

I am getting along real nice, working hard, staying at home, and saving my money.

Am still an advocate of Physical Culture, and take my daily exercises, and perhaps this week will join the Central Y. M. C. A. here.

I have not been able to find anything that weighs 35 lbs., so do not know if I can muscle it out, but will let you know as soon as I do. Pretty good work, old man, muscling out 35 lbs. Keep up the good work.