

ROYAL RANGER RALPH.

The Waif of the Western Prairies.

BY WELDON J. COBB.

CHAPTER X.

THE MODOC CAMP.

The spot by the river to which the two scouts had come was, indeed, as they supposed, the general camping place of the Modoc and Sioux savages. Within an hour after their arrival the banks of the stream were lined with campfires and wigwags, and the war-paint of the Indians and the general bustle and activity that some movement of importance was meditated by the blood-thirsty hordes.

It was destined that Ranger Ralph should soon learn all the plans of the Indians and their renegade allies, and that he should be plunged into active contest within a very short time.

When he so summarily sprang into the tree where Darrel had been compelled to leave him, he lost sight of his companion amid the excitement of the hour.

He saw the Indians scour the vicinity, secure the horses, and lead them away; and then all became still in his immediate neighborhood.

"There's a good nest of them around here," he muttered, grimly. "It's going to be no easy task to escape. I wonder what has become of young Grey? He isn't any too familiar with this kind of work. The Indians seem to be starting out on some kind of an expedition, and while I'm in the corral of their camps I intend to find out what it is."

Ranger Ralph was an expert scout, and was thoroughly familiar with frontier tactics of craft and warfare. He descended from the tree and began to reconnoiter his position.

He made out that the main camp of the Indians was directly across and down the stream a little distance. Making sure that he was unobserved, the scout found the river, and then gradually and stealthily began approaching the camp of the Modocs.

He at last gained a point of espionage most favorable to his plans, a small island of bushes that projected from the river, enabling him to completely survey the camp and its inmates.

"Shadow Snake's band," he muttered, "concerned, as his eyes swept the scene; and in war-paint, too. It means trouble for the settlement here. Ha! it is as I thought! Despard has come to his old friends. Then the girl too must be here also."

The scout's face darkened and he frowned ominously as he recognized, as Darrel had done, the form of Dyke Despard in the throng about the campfire. As he discerned the number of his enemies and realized the hazards of approaching them any nearer, he reflected deeply.

He was plunged deep in his meditations, when the sound of a familiar voice near at hand startled him and enchaind his attention.

"Despard," he murmured excitedly; "and Danton is with him."

It was indeed the outlaw leader and his chief associate. They passed in a careless stroll from the camp and sat down on a log near the very spot where the scout was secreted.

The latter thrilled with the keenest satisfaction at this opportunity of overhearing the plans of his enemies.

"You wanted to see me alone?" were Danton's first words.

"Yes."

"What about?"

"Our own affairs; we've got among friends, but I ain't satisfied."

"Why not?"

"I'm uneasy. The old chief Shadow Snake is reckless and revengeful; and if he should suspect us—"

"About the girl?" asked Towner.

"White Fawn," yes."

"How can he?"

"Should he meet any of the Nes Perces reservation Indians; he would learn of our treachery."

"How?"

"They would tell him that the girl never reached them."

"That's true."

"So, whatever we do, we must act quickly."

"But we agreed to accompany Shadow Snake on the raid on the emigrant train."

"No; I gave him the information of its whereabouts—that is all."

"But he expects us to go with him."

"We will have to disappoint him. Here we are safe from pursuit from the vigilantes. That is why I came here."

"What do you propose to do?"

"To remove the girl down the valley to-night."

"Alone?"

"No. You and one of the others will take her away from here about midnight. I will remain with Vance and guide the Modocs across the country to the train, and rejoin you later."

"And the rest of our band?"

"Are at Damon's Bend. I will send them forward to meet you. Go to the old rendezvous and wait for me. You see, the Snake agrees to divide liberally for my share in the present venture. Once I have the girl, I will leave the camp, for he will soon find out about White Fawn."

He fell heavily. The next moment a score of dusky warriors were upon him. Ranger Ralph was a prisoner in the hands of his most merciless enemies.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ESCAPE.

Ranger Ralph made a desperate resistance against his savage captors, but struggled vainly in their iron grasp as they bore him towards their camp-fires with bells of triumph.

The demonstration soon drew a large throng to the spot, and the scout, securely bound, was tied against a tree, the cynosure of many murderous eyes and the object of the jeers and insults of his captors.

A grim look came over the old ranger's face as he saw the Modoc chieftain, Shadow Snake, approach the spot.

With him were his renegade allies, Dyke Despard and Jim Danton.

The outlaw leader started, and then stared in mute wonderment at the man he had endeavored to kill at Ten Spot two nights previous.

"Ranger Ralph!" ejaculated Danton, with a savage scowl. "He bears a charmed life."

The eyes of the Modoc chief kindled with satisfied hate as he recognized an enemy who had more than once crossed his trail to his serious disadvantage.

"The Ranger is a spy," he hissed. "What brings him here?"

"The scout was silent."

"Yes; he has been trying to incite the pale faces to attack the tribes," said Danton. "He is a dangerous enemy."

"Let him die before we leave here at another raid," ordered the Snake briefly to the Indians about him.

The old scout did not speak. Into his mind came a memory of what he had overheard Despard and Danton say about the daughter of the old chief.

He resolved to bring this intelligence to the knowledge of Shadow Snake, but the opportunity was not yet presented.

He formed a plan to see the chief alone, when Despard and Danton would not be near to deny his statements or silence him.

For over an hour he remained secured to the tree watching the savages, who paid no further attention to him for the present.

In some way they had secured a keg of liquor, and were intently engaged in disposing of it as rapidly as possible.

As soon as the Indians were fighting drunk they would pay attention to him.

He recalled his many battles with the tribe, and knew that they were full of animosity and hatred toward him.

To his surprise, however, when they had finished the liquor the majority of them staggered from the camp, entirely ignoring his presence.

Only a few sleeping inebriates now guarded the prisoner.

Despard, Danton, and free himself, but was not able to break the bonds that secured him.

In a few minutes the Indians returned with a second keg of whisky, from the direction of the main camp.

They were all, or nearly all of them, very much intoxicated, and straggling along with them were several other savages from a different camp. One of these attracted the ranger's attention by his helpless and reeling condition.

The savages played the keg on the ground and began to drink from it, this Indian stretched himself out on the green sward as if to sleep.

His hand almost touched the form of the captive scout, and the latter looked somewhat startled as he observed that, unperceived by his companions he had drawn a knife which he held half concealed in his hand.

The Indian appeared to be drawing nearer and nearer to the scout, and finally stealthily drew the keen blade of the knife over the wrist which secured Ranger Ralph to the tree.

The next moment the larist that held the ranger's form captive was also cut.

Ranger Ralph was relieved of his bonds.

"Don't move yet!"

The scout started as his strange friend uttered the words in a low, cautious tone of voice.

"Darrel Grey!" he muttered, in amazement. "How did you come here?"

"Never mind now, but act quickly. These Indians are so drunk they will not notice you. Make no suspicious move while I talk with you, and warn me of any of them seem to notice us or come this way."

Darrel lay with his back turned to the Indians, who were perhaps ten feet distant.

The old scout kept his eye upon them and listened intently as Darrel resumed the conversation in cautious tones.

"There is one way to escape safely," he said. "You must follow that."

"Where?"

"To the east. Once across the river, strike to the north and you are safe from ambush, for the savages are intent to move south and are camped in that direction."

"How did you come here—this disguise—were you not afraid?"

"I risked it, and luck has favored me."

"You cannot long continue it," remarked the scout.

"Why not?"

"You cannot speak a word of the Modoc language."

"That is why I pretended to be intoxicated."

"You cannot keep up that pretense all night."

"I don't expect to."

"What then?"

"To find the girl and escape with her."

"Night?"

"Yes."

Ranger Ralph looked serious.

The inexperience of his young friend, he feared, would lead him into trouble.

So far, however, Darrel had outwitted him in his tactics of dealing with the Indians.

"I have marked out a course of action," said Darrel, confidently, "and I expect to carry it out successfully. You know what these red fiends meditate?"

"The attack on the emigrant train?"

"Yes. From what I have heard, they intend moving at once. The train should be warned. You can do that."

"How? I cannot reach them in time?"

"You can with a horse. In a few minutes I will stagger to the corral and have a horse ready for you. Then you must ride as fast as possible to the trail and give the warning of the proposed attack."

"Fear that I leave you in danger?"

"No! Am safe for the present, and I believe I shall succeed in rescuing Inez," replied Darrel.

The young scout arose to his feet and reeled toward the thicket where the horses were kept, a minute later.

The savages gathered around the camp fire were too much occupied in drinking to notice his absence.

Ranger Ralph waited for some time, and then allowed the cut ropes to fall to the ground.

Then he stooped quietly to the thicket.

"Quick! Here is the horse and there is a rifle and small arms strapped to the saddle."

"Then it's one of Despard's horses?"

"Probably. Lose no time. Cross the stream and keep to the north of the camp."

The old scout sprang into the saddle and a minute later the horse was crossing the river.

No one seemed to have noticed his escape, and he made a wide detour of the camp and then directed the steed toward the distant emigrant trail.

He chose a lonely road, avoiding

what he believed would be the course pursued by the Modocs.

Twice he nearly ran into a party of horsemen, and the discovery made him very anxious.

It cannot be possible that the Indians had started on the war trail already?

Suddenly, an hour later, the sound of shooting some distance ahead alarmed him. He hastened toward the spot. As he emerged from the woods a sight met his vision that thrilled him to the heart's exponent.

Ranger Ralph was too late with his warning.

The emigrant train had already been attacked by the allied Modocs and Sioux, and the wagons were now the scene of an animated contest.

The red demons were pillaging and burning and killing while the shrieks of the unfortunate emigrants echoed on every side.

"Too late to warn and save them!" ejaculated Ranger Ralph, grimly; "but not too late to help them against their merciless foes."

He directed the horse into the thick of the conflict as he spoke and, rifle in hand, determined to sell his life dearly in protecting the lives and property of the imperiled emigrants.

It was a brief and sanguinary battle. The Modocs and Sioux and their renegade allies were superior in numbers to the emigrants, who were surrounded, driven back, and butchered mercilessly.

The brave old scout saw the horse he rode shot down and himself wounded; he dragged his form to a covered wagon, and crept into it for safety and concealment. Then, as the blood oozed from a terrible wound in the breast, Ranger Ralph sank into a blank lethargy of insensibility.

When he awoke it was broad daylight. The wagon was moving, and he peered cautiously forth from a pile of hay in the bottom of the vehicle.

He was weak and in pain, and almost helpless, but he made out his situation at a glance.

Behind the wagon on horseback were half a dozen men, doubtless another portion of Des and his band.

Driving the vehicle was Jim Danton, and the scout doubted not but that they were proceeding to the outlaw rendezvous at Lone Canyon.

So far, evidently, his presence in the wagon had not been discovered; he knew that he was in a position of great peril, and that the affairs were fast assuming a shape most unfavorable to the plans of Dyke Despard.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

From Cradley Heath.

Recently a deputation of women went from Cradley Heath, in England—a place where women are employed at piece work in forging chains—to London, to protest against the passage of Parliament of an act which proposed to prohibit the use by women of a heavy forging implement known as the "glover."

They objected to the passage of the bill on the ground that it would deprive them of employment.

At London they were questioned at length upon the manner of their employment by the Home Secretary—an officer whose position in the British Government is much the same as the Secretary of the Interior in this country.

Between Mr. Matthews, the Secretary, and the chain-woman the following dialogue took place:

Mr. Matthews—And what is the precise nature of the employment in which you are engaged?

Chain-woman (breaking in)—I don't want my work taken away from me!

Mr. Matthews (blandly)—Pardon me, that is not quite the point on which I desire information. If you will please explain to me the nature of the operation in which—

Chain-woman (firm though flustered, and determined to get out what she had come all the way to London to say)—It never does me any harm, sir!

Mr. Matthews—By a good road woman, if you will suspend your observations long enough to communicate some idea—

Chain-woman—I like the 'eavy work, sir; an' I says, Let each one do what they can!

The interview proceeded in this unsatisfactory way until a questioner was found who could talk to the chain-women in their own language.

Evolution of the Knife.

"This case full of instruments which we have newly placed on exhibition is designed to show the development of the tool which we call the knife, beginning from the earliest times," said Prof. Mason at the National Museum.

"First, you observe, is the fragment of flint, which the savage split by banging it on top with a stone hammer into a number of flakes. The smaller ones were used for arrow points and the bigger ones for knives, their edges being split off so sharp that you might almost shave with some of them. Next you see the flint inserted into a handle of split wood or bone, and, as further improvements, the fastenings of this primitive knife in the handle by the use of a cord of tree bark or of another bound around to secure it. The most beautiful knife in the collection is this exquisitely molded blade of greenish jade, belonging to the stone age, handled with a walrus tusk. You can hardly find a more admirably formed weapon among the products of modern cutlery wares. Most curious of the modern tools, there is this sailor's knife, square in the blade and intended, pointed, to prevent stabbing in a row, or the dangerous falling of the weapon from aloft. Its blade drops out of the end of the handle when a spring is touched, so that Jack can hold a rope with one hand and open the knife for service without the need of ten fingers."

—Washington Star.

Prayers for Rain.

I have heard my father say that in the days of his early manhood, which dates back to more than a century, in a season of protracted drought it was a custom for the deacons of the church situated in the town of East Windsor to call together the members on a week day and put up petitions for rain. And he has assured me that these meetings were always followed by rain. He failed to tell me just how soon. Among those always in attendance was a man of the name of Potwine, one wonderfully gifted in prayer. My father called to mind some of the pious man's earnest expressions, such as "Send down the rain, O Lord, not in torrents but in copious [sic] effluvia." On an occasion of extraordinary and prolonged drought he put his petitions nearly in the form of a demand. Rain they must have, rain they would have, and they could not do without it. Realizing that he had gone too far in that direction, he qualified his demands by saying, "O Lord, we do not wish to dictate, but only to advise."

The Professor had just explained that in medieval times they used to bring brute beasts and reptiles into court and try them for misdemeanors. "Professor," asked a young man in the rear seat, "is that the origin of the frog felon?"

It is very discouraging to have your tailor tell you that the most desirable thing this season for clothing is a large check.

FASHIONS FOR YOUTH.

CHARMING COSTUMES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

Pretty Frolicsome and Calling Dress for a Young Girl—A Most Stylish and Fashionably Glad Young Man—Hats in Soft Felt Find Much Favor—Maternal Dignity of the Mother.

Children's Clothes. MOTHERS extract a double pleasure from the task of dressing their children prettily and tastefully. They satisfy the maternal instinct which prompts them to shield the little forms from cold and exposure, and they gratify their pride and general desire of commendation at the hands of their fellow beings. True, the world is malicious enough at times to take advantage of this weakness, if it may be called such, and to warp the mother's better judgment by heaping undeserved praise upon her child, but there is no doubt about the fact that there is an education in a well-dressed and well-behaved child which you can't find in your philosophy that Hamlet sneered at so contemptuously. Good clothes have the same effect on little folks that they do upon children of larger growth; they inspire self-respect, and refine the instincts and soften the manners. When a sudden quiet happened to fall upon a crowded drawing room, someone asked the meaning of it. "Why, everyone is looking at my dress," exclaimed little Lady Pinkandwhite, fully persuaded that her pretty gown must be the cause of the sudden hush. There is no particular harm in this petty display of egotism. It is always much safer to be too much afraid of my dress, than to be too much afraid of my dress, for, although many, very many, of us never

fractive appearance—possibly not quite so quaint and picturesque a figure as the little princess in the Tower of London, but, all in all, a creditable specimen of that refinement and good breeding so often met with among the boys of this practical and matter-of-fact age.

I have noticed many charming bits of headgear for children this season. They are plain felt or beaver and are most tastefully trimmed; also in rough felt and soft felt. Sailor hats, too, I note still continue popular for young girls. They are far more elegant and dressy than they were last season, and are made up in combinations of cloth and velvet. One, in particular, which attracted my attention, had a brim of black velvet edged with jet beads and a crown of cream-white cloth, surrounded by several folds of cloth with a wisp of white egrette held by a pair of small black birds. Another style has a velvet brim wider than the sailor hat and is smoothly overlaid with a piece of Irish point lace. At the back is a bow of black satin ribbon mounted with a bunch of lyre bird feathers. Young girls also look extremely well in the little Henry II. capotes with their pastry-corn crowns and nodding plumes at the back. For those who like to wear something of the masculine mode, Tyrolese, the riding hat, and the Brighton, all in soft felt, will be sure to find favor.

You will find a very pretty hat represented in my fourth illustration, a red felt for a little girl. The trimming consists of two bows of cream woolen stuff with red dots and large cork feathers held in place by a pleated band of the stuff. Felt turbans, too, are very popular. They are trimmed with silk ribbon and have one or two quill feathers, or are both trimmed and bound with ribbon. The soft heather felt runs in many shades and can be made very dressy. The conical crown turban and

get any further than cutting out and making dresses for our dolls, yet there never comes a time when these buds of humanity haven't the power to set our heads nodding in friendly fashion.

In my initial illustration you will find represented a very pretty suit for a young girl. It may be made up in pearl-gray anacon cloth, the corsage closing in the middle, and is trimmed with a plaited plastron of white surah, or, if you prefer, of the same shade at the side piece. It should be lined with silk until the plastron has been adjusted. The little figure is shaped as indicated and is caught in the shoulder seams. In the arm-holes, in the seams of the third side piece, it should be lined with silk and should be edged with black beaded bobbin. The figure is shorter in the back than in the front. The two narrow ba-quavants are cut away in front. These volants are gathered most at the bust and are lined with silk and are ornamented with three rows of beaded galloon. The skirt foundation may be of silk or alpaca, should be bordered with a small pleated ruffle, and there should be a drawing string in the back of the skirt. With such a long coat a Tam O'Shanter looks well, with a single quill feather at the side and a dainty little mull made up in the same material and trimmed with the same fur completes the costume. The tailor-made long coat in heavy cloth is very stylish for young girls. It should have broad cuffs and turn-down collar in astrachan. The double-breasted refter coat will continue to be popular for young people. They must be tailor-made. For ordinary rip weather the cloth mantie is a seasonable garment for a young girl, adjusted to the figure at the back, loose fronts and double sleeves, the outer being loose and full and set high on the shoulder. And here we end our talk about what little men and women should wear in doors and out. Of course much depends upon the taste and ingenuity of the mothers, and I should add, their patience, too, for quite as much patience and good judgment are required in dressing a trio of little girls as in working out a problem in statecraft or higher mathematics. But after the task is done comes full and deep satisfaction. The mother, as she gazes upon her work, has good reason to be satisfied. She has added largely to the happiness of those dear to her, which is her mission in life.

My last illustration portrays the mother in her pose of maternal competency and dignity. She presents a very sweet and gentle picture as she follows the movements of her children in the joyous throng of little ones.

A FIVE-MILE TUNNEL, to cost \$750,000, is projected by Leadville (Col.) parties. It will drain the principal mines below that city, and is expected to be the years in course of construction.

There was a great deal of interest felt among dentists some years ago when one of the royal mummies taken from the Egyptian catacombs was found to be fitted out with an upper set of artificial teeth. The plate was of wood, carved to fit the roof of the mouth, and the teeth were of brass, the natural shape of the tooth being quite closely imitated. It shows that some of the old Egyptian folk had the incisors and grinders and had the court tooth-doctor do the best that could be done for him. Before this discovery it was commonly supposed that artificial teeth were a modern contrivance, but false teeth in ancient Egypt furnish convincing proof that there is nothing new under the sun.

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