



COPYRIGHT, 1896, BY F. TENNYSON NEELY.

CHAPTER I—Royle Farrar disgraces himself at West Point, deserts the school and leads a wandering life, sinking lower and lower, marries his employer's daughter, and then commits a forgery. II—Colonel Farrar, father of Royle, is killed in battle with the Indians.

CHAPTER III.

All this was but part and parcel of the story of the old Wyoming fort. Long years had it served as refuge and resting place for the emigrants in the days before the Union Pacific was built, when the overland stage route followed the Platte to the Sweetwater and then past the Devil's Gate and Independence Rock, old landmarks of the Mormons, and on to the backbone of the continent, where the mountain streams, springing from rocky beds not long pistol shot apart, flowed rippling away, the one to the Missouri and the gulf of Mexico, the other to the Colorado and that of California. Frayne was but a huge stockade in the early days of the civil war, but the government found it important from a strategical point of view even after the railway spanned the Rockies and the emigrant and the settler no longer trudged the weary trail that, bordering the Sioux country, became speedily a road of fire and blood second only in its terrors to the Smoky Hill route through "bleeding Kansas."

Once it was the boast of the Dakotas, as it had been for generations of their enemies, the Absarakas, or Crows, that they had never shed the blood of a white man. Settlers of the old days used to tell how the Sioux had followed them for long, long marches, not to murder and pillage, but to restore to them items lost along the trail or animals strayed from their little herds. But there came an end to all this when, resisting an unjust demand, the Sioux being fired upon, retaliated. From the day of the Grattan massacre beyond old Laramie there had been no real peace with the lords of the northwest. They are quiet only when subdued by force. They have broken the crust of their environment time and again and burst forth in the seething flame of a volcano that is ever bubbling and boiling beneath the feet of the frontiersmen to this day.

And so Frayne was maintained as a military post for years, first as a stockade, then as a subdepot of supplies, garrisoned by four companies of infantry and four of cavalry, the former to hold the fort, the latter to scour the neighboring country. Then, as time wore on and other posts were built farther up in the Big Horn, Frayne's garrison dwindled, but there stood upon its commanding bluff the low rows of wooden barracks, the parallel rows of double sets of broad piazzed quarters where dwelt the officers, the long, low, long riveted walls of the corrals and cavalry stables on the flat below. Here, easily enough, the Twelfth had spent a lively year or two before it went to Arizona. Here it learned the Sioux country and the Sioux so well that when, a few years back, the ghost dance craze swept over the plains and mountains like the plague, the old regiment was hurried from its sunshiny stations in the south and mustered once again, four troops at least, within the very walls that long before had echoed to its trumpets. Here we found them in the midst of the Christmas preparations that were turned so suddenly into summons to the field, and here again, three years later still, headquarters and six troops now, the proud old regiment is still at Frayne, and Fenton, "vice Farrar, killed in action with hostile Indians," holds the command.

A good soldier is Fenton, a brave fellow, a trifle rough at times, like the simple plains bred dragoon he is, but a gentleman, with gentle heart in his breast for all the stern exterior. Women said of him that all he needed to make him perfect was polish, and all he needed to give him polish was a wife, for at 54 the grizzled colonel was a bachelor. But Fenton had had his romance in early youth. He had loved with all his big heart, so said tradition, a New York belle and beauty whom he knew in his cadet days, and who, so rumor said, preferred another, whom she married before the war, and many a garrison belle had since set her cap for Fenton and found him faithful to his early love. But, though the ladies often speculated as to the identity of the woman who had held the colonel's heart in bondage all these years and blocked the way for all successors, no one of their number had ever heard her name or ever knew the truth. One officer there was in the Twelfth who, like Fenton himself, was a confirmed bachelor and who was said to be possessed of the whole story, but there was no use asking Malcolm Leale to tell anybody's secrets, and when Fenton came to Frayne, promoted to the command so recently held by a man they all loved and honored, it was patent to everybody that he felt sorely, as though he were an usurper. Fenton was many long miles away with another battalion of the Twelfth the day of the tragic battle on the Mini Pusa, and it was long months thereafter before he appeared at regimental headquarters, and then he brought with him as his housekeeper his maiden sister Lucretia, and in Lucretia Fenton—the dreamiest, dowdiest, kindest, quaintest middle aged prettier that ever lived, moved and had her being in the army—the ladies of the

ment. She owned, under pressure, that she meant to marry Will some day, but not in any hurry, and therefore, but for one thing, the mother's gentle heart would have been content.

And that one thing was that Will had applied for and would hear of no other regiment in all the army than that at the head of which his father had died, the Twelfth cavalry, and no one could understand, and Mrs. Farrar couldn't explain, how it was, why it was that of all others was the one she had vainly hoped he would not choose. He was wild with joy and enthusiasm when at last the order came, and, with beaming eyes and ringing voice, he read aloud: "Twelfth regiment of cavalry, Cadet Will Duncan Farrar, to be second lieutenant, vice Watson, promoted, Troop C." Leale's troop, Queen Mother; blessed old Malcolm Leale. What more could I ask or you ask? What captain in all the line can match him? And Kitty's uncle in command of the regiment and post! Just think of it, madam, dear, and you'll all come out, and we'll have grand Christmas times at Frayne, and we'll hang father's picture over the mantel and father's sword. I'll wire Leale this very minute and write my respects to Fenton. What's he like, anyway, mother? I can't remember him at all, nor can Kitty."

But Mrs. Farrar could not tell. It was years, too, since she had seen him, "but he was always a faithful friend of your father, Will, and he wrote me a beautiful, beautiful letter when we came away."

And so, late in September, the boy lieutenant left his mother's arms and, followed by her prayers and tears and blessings, was borne away westward to revisit scenes that were once familiar as the old barrack walls at West Point. Then it required long days of travel over rough mountain roads to reach the railway far south of the Medicine Bow. Now the swift express train landed him at the station of the frontier town that

"Hiven save us if it isn't really Master Will!"

had grown up on the site of the prairie dog village he and his pony had often "stampeded" in old days. Here at the station, come to meet the son of their old commander, ignoring the fact that the newcomer was but the piebald lieutenant of the Twelfth, were the ruddy-faced old colonel and Will's own troop leader, Captain Leale, both heartily, cordially bidding him welcome and commenting not a little on his stalwart build and trying hard not to refer to the very downy mustache that adorned his boyish lip. The officers at Frayne, on the other hand, in the opinion of the citizens of that section of Wyoming, were none of the four, and Bunko Jim's new resort across the Platte was a big improvement in point of size, though not in stock or sanctity, over its predecessor. Jim ran a ferryboat for the benefit of customers from the fort. It was forbidden to land on the reservation, but did so, nevertheless, when the sentry on the bluff couldn't see, and sometimes, it must be owned, when he could.

The boat was used when the water was high, the fords when it was low, and the ice when it was frozen, and it was a curious thing in winter to see how quickly the new fallen snow would be cleared with paths leading by devious routes from the barracks to the shore and then across the icebound pools straight to Bunko Jim's. Bowing, as became the soldier of the republic, to the supremacy of the civil law, Fenton swallowed the lesson, though he didn't the whisky, but Jim had his full share of customers from the fort, and the greatest of these, it soon transpired, was the big recruit speedily known throughout the command as Tough Tom Graice.

Joining the regiment at the end of September, it was less than a month before he was as well though not as favorably known as the sergeant major. There is more than one way of being conspicuous in the military service, and Graice had chosen the worst. Even the recruits who came with him from the depot, the last lot to be shipped from that once crowded garnier of "food for powder," could tell nothing of his antecedents, though they were full of grousing details of his doings since enlistment. He was an expert at cards and billiards, said they—for they had found it out to their sorrow—and a demon when aroused by drink. Twice in drunken rage he had assaulted comparatively inoffensive men, and only the prompt and forcible intervention of comrades had prevented murder on the spot, while the traditional habit of the soldier of telling no tales had saved him from richly merited punishment. Within the month of his arrival Graice had made giant strides to notoriety. He was a powerful fellow, with fine command of language and an education far superior to that of the general run of noncommissioned officers, and it was among the younger set of these he first achieved a certain standing. Professing to hold himself above the private soldier, proving himself an excellent rider and an expert in drill with carbine or saber, he nevertheless declared it was his first enlistment and gave it to be understood that a difficulty with the sheriff, who sought to arrest him, had been the means of bringing him to the temporary refuge of the ranks.

The third man from the front, heavily bearded, with a bloated, ill-groomed face and restlessly glancing eyes, gave a quick, furtive look at the new lieutenant as he passed, then stumbled and plunged forward against his file leader. The squad was thrown into momentary disarray. The sergeant, angered at the mishap at such a time, strode quickly up to the offender and savagely muttered, "Keep your eyes to the front, Graice, and you won't be stumbling up decent men's backs." And the little detachment went briskly.

"I thought I'd seen that man before," said Leale an instant later, "and now I know it, and I know where."

CHAPTER IV.

The winter came on early at old Fort Frayne. Even as early as mid-October the ice was forming in the shallow pools along the Platte, and that eccentric stream itself had dwindled away in volume until it seemed but the ghost of its former self. Raging and unfordable in June, swollen by the melting snows of the Colorado peaks and the torrent from the Medicine Bow, it spent its strength in the arid heat of a long, dry

summer and when autumn came was mild as a mill stream as far as the eye could reach and fordable in a dozen places within rifle shot of the post. Many a time did old Fenton wish it wasn't. Frayne's reservation was big and generous; but, unluckily, it never extended across the river. Squatters, smugglers and sharpers could not intrude upon its guarded limits along the southern shore, and the nearest grogery—that inevitable accompaniment of the westward march of civilization—was a long two miles away down the right bank, but only a pistol shot across the stream.

In his day Fenton had waged war against the rum sellers on the north shore and won, because then there were only soldiers and settlers and no lawyers—outside the guardhouse—within 90 miles of the post. But with the tide of civilization came more settlers, and a cattle town, and lawyers in abundance, and with them coming the question at issue became no longer that of abstract right or wrong, but how a jury would decide it, and a frontier jury always decides in favor of the squatter and against the soldier. Fenton strove to take pattern after Farrar and very nearly succeeded in landing himself in jail, as the outraged vendor went down to Laramie, hired lawyers there, swore out warrants of assault and appealed to his countrymen. The fact that no less than four of the Twelfth within six months had died with their boots on, victims of the ready knives or revolvers of the squatters across the stream, had no bearing in the eyes of the law. Fenton had warned the divekeeper a dozen times to no purpose, but when finally Sergeant Hannifin was set upon and murdered there one fine April evening within easy range, and almost within hearing of his comrades at Frayne, Fenton broke loose and said impetuous things, which reached the ears of his men, who went and did things equally impetuous, to the demolition of the "shack" and the destruction of its stock of spirits and gambling paraphernalia, and it was proved to the satisfaction of the jury that Fenton did not interpose to stop the row until it had burned itself and the "shack" inside out. The people rallied to the support of the saloon keeper—he, at least, was a man and a brother, a voter, and, when he couldn't lie out of it, a taxpayer. The officers at Frayne, on the other hand, in the opinion of the citizens of that section of Wyoming, were none of the four, and Bunko Jim's new resort across the Platte was a big improvement in point of size, though not in stock or sanctity, over its predecessor. Jim ran a ferryboat for the benefit of customers from the fort. It was forbidden to land on the reservation, but did so, nevertheless, when the sentry on the bluff couldn't see, and sometimes, it must be owned, when he could.

"D'y know him, Crow?" asked Corporal Rorke one day as he watched the expression in the Indian's face. "Ye don't like him any more than I do. What's the reason?" "There is," said the Indian, "saying among my people," was the answer in the slow, measured tones of one who thought in another tongue, "Eyes that cannot meet eyes guide hands that strike foul. He that stabs-in-the-dark is the name we give such as that man."

"D'y know him, Crow?" persisted Terry. "Ever since the day he came the captain has had his eye on him, and so have I, and so have I. I can't ask the captain, but I can ye. Where have ye seen him before?"

But Crow Knife shook his head. "I cannot remember his face. It is his back I seem to know. My people say that way they see their enemies."

And so Rorke could find no satisfactory solution of the ever vexing question. Twice or thrice he accosted Graice and strove to draw him into talk, but the newcomer seemed to shut up like an oyster in the presence of the Irish corporal, a great contrast to the joviality he displayed when soliciting comrades to take a hand at cards. The recruits had hardly any money left. Graice had won what little there was on the way to Frayne, and now he had wormed his way into the gambling set that is apt to be found in every fort—all comers who have money being welcome—and for a few weeks fortune seemed to smile upon the neophyte. He knew, he protested, very little of any game, but played for fellowship and fun. Then he kept sober when others drank, and so won, and then came accusations of foul play and a row, and the barracks game was broken up, only to be resumed at night in the resort across the Platte, and there whisky was plenty, and so were the players, and there Graice began to lapse into intemperate ways, and by the time the long, long nights of December came his reputation as a "tough" was established throughout the garrison. All but three or four of the most dissolute members of the command had cut loose from him entirely, a matter he regretted only because pay day was at hand—the soldiers would then have money in plenty for a few short, feverish hours. The squatters and settlers had none until the soldiers were "strapped" and so Graice and three or four Ishmaelites like unto himself were left to the concentration of brutality to be found in one another's society.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The first observatory was located at Williamstown, Mass., in 1836.

FRANK D. RICH, M. D.

Office, Rose Dispensary, Rooms 208-209.

TERRE HAUTE, IND.

Directions of Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat.

Hours—9 to 12 a. m., 1:30 to 4 p. m. Sundays 9 to 10 a. m.

Frank D. Rich, M. D.

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON,

Funeral Directors.

Cor. Third and Cherry streets, Terre Haute.

Artists prepared to execute all orders in their line with neatness and dispatch.

Embalming a specialty.

ISAAC BALL & SON