

## THE BANKER'S SATCHEL.

### How I Was Forced to Help to Carry it Into the Hills.

I liked John Drew from the first time I saw him. He was then a man about 40 years old, had a handsome wife and a child 2 years old, and was a private banker in a town not far from the capital of New Mexico. Assessor and treasurer of a large freighting company I had business dealings with Mr. Drew which continued for over two years. Although conducting a private institution, his bank was considered as safe as any in the country, and during a business career of nine or ten years he had made hosts of friends and considerable money. In the two years there was hardly a day I didn't meet him, and after the first three months I was often a visitor at his home.

I was a young man, just making my start in life, and I took John Drew for an example and guide. If any man had told me that he had a dishonest hair in his head or could do a wrong, that man would have been my enemy. My liking for the banker was returned. It is rare that a man of 40 and a boy of 20 strike up a close friendship, but it was true of us. He gave me the advice a father would, and his friendship and interest was so marked as to attract attention and prove of the greatest benefit to me in a social and financial way.

In July of the third year Mrs. Drew and the child went East, to be gone for a couple of months. Within a few days thereafter the banker began talking to me about a fortnight's vacation. Even before opening the subject to me he had gone to my employers and

#### SUGGESTED THE IDEA,

and as I had not lost a day for over two years and was really in need of a play spell, they cheerfully granted leave of absence. It was arranged that we should go up into the Taos Mountains to fish and hunt and have a good time generally, but to my surprise, after we had made our plans, Mr. Drew said to me:

"I shall leave the bank in charge of Mr. Williams, the bookkeeper, and everything will go on as usual, but it will be wiser not to mention the matter of my going. I need a vacation, but people have an idea that a banker ought to stick right by the shop. If it is known that I am going there will be more or less gossip, which I wish to avoid."

I was surprised, but yet it seemed all right, and the idea of questioning his motives never entered my head. By his advice I told them at the office that I was going up into the mountains with a friend, but mentioned no names. We were to make our start on the 20th of July, which fell on Saturday. The weather had become hot, and we had a ride of 20 miles to the foothills. Therefore it seemed perfectly right and proper again when the banker said:

"We had better not make our start until after dark, when we shall have it cool and nice. You come at about 7:30 o'clock, and you will find me waiting for you at the stable. We will take my horse and wagon and send them back by some one to-morrow."

As to outfit, I was not to furnish anything but such firearms as I desired to take along. The banker insisted on supplying all else. I cleared up everything at the office on Saturday, gave my substitute full directions and banked about \$3,000 in greenbacks. At the bank I was about to speak to Mr. Williams in relation to our trip when Mr. Drew suddenly and almost rudely interrupted. It struck me a bit queerly, but I laid it to his nervousness about getting away. The stable indicated was only a shed in the rear of the bank. Mr. Drew lived a mile away and always drove to and fro. The horse was hitched to a light wagon, and I noticed that the vehicle contained a load of packages and bundles.

Darkness was coming on, and the streets of the town were pretty well deserted and in getting out we did not pass any one who saluted us. For the first half hour of our journey the demeanor of

#### THE BANKER PUZZLED ME.

I was about to offer to give up the trip, thinking he was worrying over business matters, when he seemed to come to himself again and was soon as chatty and enthusiastic as I had ever found him. We had talked about going north to reach the mountains. He had taken the road to the west from the start, and after getting out about ten miles he explained that a friend had advised this change that we might get better fishing. He said we were to drive a good portion of the night, as it was starlight and we had a fair trail, and it was a good four hours before we pulled up to give the horse half an hour's rest. The banker said we would go on about fifteen miles further, and it was at his suggestion and after he had arranged things in the wagon that I turned in to sleep during the remainder of the drive. Sleep I did, though the road was rough in places, nor did I open my eyes till sunrise.

"Well, here we are," said the banker as I climbed down from the vehicle. "I am just starting a fire, and you may turn to and help get breakfast."

We were in a thicket, with a range of mountains to the east and a river to the west. The river was at our feet, but the mountains were two or three miles away. The harness hung on the limb of a tree, but the horse I could not see. I expressed surprise at his selecting such a camping spot, and the banker replied that it was only a halt for breakfast. I now saw the contents of the wagon for the first time by daylight, and there was cause for wonder. There were two blankets, two baskets of food, and two rifles, but no tent and no fishing outfit, while the only cooking utensil was a thin coffee pot. I couldn't see how we were to make ourselves comfortable with such a meagre outfit, but asked no questions, and Mr. Drew volunteered no information.

There was one more article in the wagon. It was a large, old-fashioned satchel, and it was full of bursting, and had two straps buckled around it so that it could be carried as a knapsack. The banker had greeted me pleasantly enough, but

#### HIS DEMEANOR SOON CHANGED,

and I couldn't tell what to make of him. We ate our breakfast in silence, but then I made bold to ask him if I had in any manner given offence or if trouble had come upon him suddenly. He sat looking into the thicket for a minute before he answered:

"I was about to explain matters to you. Do you know what that satchel contains?"

"No."

"Money—greenbacks—gold—over \$50,000 in all. I have robbed my own bank and am leaving home, family, and country forever! I have been planning this thing for years."

I was dumb with astonishment, and without looking up or changing his tones he continued:

"This vacation is but a blind. I left on Saturday night so as to get a long start. I brought you along because I wanted company in the wilderness. It is a matter of 300 miles from here to El Paso, with hard and dangerous travelling, and you are to go with me."

I sat and stared at him and wondered if it were not all a dream. He had spoken very seriously, but I could not credit him. I was about to say so when he turned full upon me, and then I knew the worst. The man was insane! His eyes were restless and fierce, his hands trembled, and his facial expression had undergone a wonderful change. He sat thus for a minute, and then a look of deceit and cunning came into his face, and he laughed and exclaimed:

"Don't look so sober my boy! I've robbed only the rich, who won't feel the loss, and I'll go halves with you. We'll get out of the country, and I'll send for my family and we'll have a glorious time. Come let's be moving."

You will not be surprised that I didn't know what to do under the circumstances. I might have bolted through the thicket, but my rifle was in the wagon, and I had no idea where we were. Under his direction I removed everything from the wagon, placed the harness in it, and he then drew it over the fire. The horse had probably been turned loose, as I saw his tracks later on. When the wagon was well afire, the banker

#### LOADED HIS RIFLE,

motioned me to do the same, and then lifted the satchel on my shoulders and made it fast. Its weight was near fifty pounds, I should say. He took basket and blankets, and we set off for the mountains. In his cunning he ordered me to take the lead. We kept down the bank of the river, which was the upper Rio Grande, for several miles and then crossed a narrow valley and reached the mountain chain, which extends from the Colorado line down to Las Cruces. At noon I thought we had made about twelve miles. As we halted to get a bite to eat, Mr. Drew spoke for the first time since leaving the other camp. I had led the way and selected the route, and he had followed like a dog at my heels. After I had lighted a fire and got the coffee on he said:

"We are good friends, and let us have no more of this. Let us laugh and be jolly as we go along. You can leave me if you wish, but I know you wouldn't do such a mean thing. Shall we suik or be merry?"

Long before this I was satisfied of his insanity and had partly made up my mind what course to pursue. I answered him promptly and pleasantly, without reference as to what had passed, and we were soon chatting away in his friendliest spirit. There was no heartiness in his laughter, however, and I could not help but mark the sly and crafty look on his face. That afternoon the way was very rough and the weather very hot, and at five o'clock I told the banker I could go no further.

He had by far the heaviest load, but was continually urging me onward. I estimated the distance from our first camp at twenty miles, and during the day we had not encountered a soul. He reluctantly consented to camp for the night, and after supper he grew quite jolly and friendly. He said he was sorry to have deceived me, but now that we had got safe

#### AWAY FROM PURSUIT

I might return to town, though I must promise not to tell where I left him. Sane or insane, he knew that we were fifty or sixty miles from town, in a portion of the country strange to me, and that I would not dare the chances. Had I started off he would probably have shot me down.

That night before I slept I planned what to do on the morrow. I had a pocket compass, while he had none and did not know of mine. I was satisfied that the town lay to the north-east and also that he did not know its direction. If I had the lead, I would gradually turn to the northeast, and if he failed to suspect me I would pilot him home in about three days. The idea had full possession of me the next morning when we were ready to set out, but what did the cunning rascal do but take the lead himself and hold to the south! He also took charge of my rifle, and all I could do was to follow in his footsteps. On this day we reached the crest of the range and probably travelled fifteen miles, and our demeanor toward each other was that of friends.

When night came again, I determined on another plan, and the first signs of daylight saw me putting it into practice. Mr. Drew had used the satchel for a pillow, but his head had slipped off, and he was sleeping soundly. I made up a package of meat and bread from the baskets, got hold of my rifle and the satchel, and then cautiously withdrew from the camp. I figured that as soon as he missed me he would go back over our trail, and so I headed to the east to descend the range on that face. I could not have been above half a mile from the camp when I

#### HEARD HIM YELLING,

and thinking he was on my trail I looked around for cover. On my left was a mass of rock, and a few feet up was an opening. It was not large enough to shelter me, but I crowded the satchel into it, and then set off in a wild flight which lasted for miles.

It was night when I got down among the foothills, and I had seen nothing of the banker. It required two days to get back to town and another day to organize a party to go in pursuit of the lunatic and the money. There were twenty men in the party, and we were two whole days finding the spot where the wagon was burned. I had paid but little attention to the landmarks of the country while travelling ahead of the banker, and our party was three days in covering what we had made in two. When our last camp was found there lay the blankets, there hung the baskets, and there was Mr. Drew's rifle. On waking up and finding me gone he had rushed off and doubtless become lost.

Sixteen of the party divided themselves into squads to search the crest for him, while the other four looked for the money. I imagined I could go straight to it, but as a matter of fact, we kept up a hot search for three long days before we came upon it. Not one single trace of poor John Drew has been found to this day. We kept up the search for a week, and it was renewed at

intervals till winter set in, but nothing was discovered.

About the satchel—what do you suppose it contained? Not a cent of money—for the bank had not been robbed—but a lot of old clothes. We had searched for it simply as an evidence that the banker was insane. Yes, he was crazy enough, but the robbery was all imagination, and he died as he had lived—an honest, upright man.

## MR. AND MRS. BOWSER.

He Had Theories as to Action in Case of Fire, but They Didn't Work.

"Mrs. Bowser," said Mr. Bowser, as he looked up from his paper the other evening, "has it ever occurred to you that this house might get afire some night?"

"How could it?" she innocently asked.

"How could it?" Why, in 10,000 different ways. That's just like a woman. So long as nobody builds a bonfire in the basement she argues that the house is safe from a conflagration. You should go to bed every night with the possibilities of a fire in view."

"Do you?"

"Certainly I do, and I know exactly how I should act under the circumstances. I should be just as cool and calm as at this very moment. Have you ever given a thought as to what you would do?"

"I never have, but I know I should go out of the house," she answered.

"That's the woman of it—no thought, no plan, but trusting to luck. There isn't one chance in a hundred, Mrs. Bowser—no, not one chance in a million—that you would escape with your life unless I assisted you. You would awake to be confused, mistake the clothespress door for the back stairs, and having got in there you would remain until overcome by smoke and heat."

"In your confusion you might go into the bathroom," quietly observed Mrs. Bowser.

"In my confusion! Are you talking to a man 45 years old or to a boy of 3? It's no wonder that women are the ignorant, helpless creatures we find them. The minute a husband begins to talk sense his wife loses all interest in his conversation and even ridicules him! It's all right, however—all right! If you want to leave your charred skeleton amidst the blackened ruins of the house I am not particular. I suppose I could hire a man to gather up the bones in a soap box and bury 'em somewhere for a couple of dollars!"

And Mr. Bowser crossed his hands under his coat-tails and proceeded to pace back and forth across the room and utterly ignore the fact of Mrs. Bowser's continued presence. A night or two later, as he slept and dreamed, something nudged his ribs and he heard a voice saying:

"Wake up, Mr. Bowser! Wake up! Can't you smell the smoke? I do believe the house is on fire!"

It was the voice of Mrs. Bowser, and he sat up in bed and rubbed his eyes and shouted "Fire!" and "Police!" at the top of his voice.

"Get out of bed and hurry downstairs and see if you can put it out!" she called to him as she sprang out herself.

Mr. Bowser had declared that he would be calm, and that he had figured out a regular programme to follow. Perhaps it was down on his programme to roll out of bed with the coverings "wapped" around him till it took two minutes to kick himself loose. During the intervals he was yelling "Fire!" and directing Mrs. Bowser to telephone to the police station. She had the bedroom door open for him to run down stairs, but he got into the hall to canter up and down and dodge into the various rooms and out again.

"Mr. Bowser, be calm!" she called to him as she seized his arm and tried to hold him.

"Yes—yes—I am calm—Fire! Police! The house is on fire!" he shouted in reply as he broke away and continued his cantering.

Mrs. Bowser let him go and hurried down stairs, where she found the covering of the lounge smoking and smoldering from contact with the cigar he had smoked just before going to bed. She ran into the kitchen and filled the first dish she could find with water and had the fire out at one dash. She had turned to go upstairs when there was a fall and a great bumping and clattering, and down rolled Mr. Bowser with his arms tightly clasped around a soap box full of old hats and shoes which he had pulled out of the storeroom at the back of the house.

"Our child!" she screamed as he brought up in the hall.

"Yes—our child be hanged! Police! We shall be burned alive!" he yelled as he struggled up and flew up the stairway.

She followed a minute later to find him galloping around the upper hall with a foot bath under one arm and an old picture frame under the other, and he didn't come to a realizing sense of the situation until he had raised a back window and heaved them into the yard. When he had learned what caused the smoke and that all danger was passed he sat down on a chair and waved his arm enthusiastically and exclaimed:

"Didn't I tell you so? Didn't I say I should be as cool as ice and make every move according to programme? By George, but that was a close shave! You were perfectly helpless, and between having to look out for you and the child and put the fire out I had business enough for any two men!"

Mrs. Bowser looked hard at him and was going to speak, but on second thought she didn't say a word, and to this hour Mr. Bowser continues to brag of how he did just the right thing at the right time to save them all from being cremated.

Jack—"Cheer up, old man, don't look so blue!" Harry—"Can't help it." Jack—"Oh, come! Think of your best girl." Harry—"No good. I married her three months ago."

Cook (to nurse)—"The mistress says to be very careful in moving the clock, and not let it fall." Nurse—"Then you carry the baby and let me carry the clock. You might let the clock fall."

So many ships are making knots All through the ocean wide— Of course the sea gets tied up lots— And that's what makes the tide.

About the land of pure delight There are many different views; But men will all agree it's where They will not have to tie their shoes.

Everyone said he was color blind, Though it did not seem quite clear, That because his clothes were loud He selected them by ear.

## SHIP CANALS.

### The Struggles of the Manchester Canal Co.—An Enterprise Which Dwarfs All Previous Ones.

The chairman of the Manchester ship canal has written to Lord Rosebery, foreign secretary, asking him to make known to British consuls and agents abroad that a new port will shortly come into existence. The canal has been opened to Weston Point for two years; it is now complete to the London & Northern railway crossing at Acton. The railroads get \$500,000 alleged damages; they claimed \$2,750,000. The award seems to Manchester a large sum to be mulcted in for the privilege of making ship navigation, for which the corporation of Manchester has put up \$22,500,000 in addition to the \$50,000,000 furnished by private capital.

The enterprise, says the New York Sun, has had a tough struggle for existence against the combined opposition of Liverpool and the railroads reaching that port. But that struggle is now won, and the struggle for traffic will shortly begin. During the last half year 708,169 tons of merchandise have been carried over the opened portion of the ship canal, as against 423,579 tons so carried during the corresponding period of the year before. Recently a vessel laden with 4,000 tons and drawing twenty-one feet of water sailed from the canal for Calcutta.

Amsterdam has had an experience not wholly dissimilar from that of Manchester. At last, after twenty years of struggle against the jealousy of neighboring cities, she has established better communication by the Merwede canal with the Rhenish provinces of Germany. Even now she has had to put up with a less satisfactory route than that contended for; the canal has only a minimum width on the bottom of 65 feet and a minimum depth of 10 feet. Transit that formerly needed from sixteen to eighteen hours is now done in seven. The canal is free of tolls.

The opening of the Corinth canal was noted not long since. This is not strictly a self-help canal, having been constructed by a private company which got most of its capital in France. This canal does not cross the isthmus at the narrowest spot or even the lowest. The question of surface drainage was mainly considered in choosing the line. It transpired that almost the identical course chosen by Nero's Roman engineers had been followed, for at a distance one from another of 151 feet two parallel lines of shafts were found, forming part of an excavation 225 feet wide between them. A similar system to Nero's was followed on the modern work.

French political enterprise in Siam has been quickly followed by engineering projects. The canal which the English declined undertaking is now likely to be built across the Malay peninsula. The selected point is in the Samsam provinces, where the canal could be connected with the inland sea, which could easily be rendered navigable. The French wish, it is said, to secure thirty miles of territory on either side of the water way. This scheme, if carried out, would allow ships to take a short cut to Saigon without passing through the straits of Malacca and would be important from a political as well as from a commercial point of view.

All of these projects, except that of Manchester, are dwarfed by the new seaway between the North sea and the Baltic now under construction by Germany. The total length of this noble work is about sixty-one English miles, the width at the water line is 197 feet, and at the bottom, at the toe of the slopes, seventy-two feet; the total depth is nearly twenty-eight feet. It is shown that not only will two of the largest Baltic merchant vessels pass one another without difficulty, but also that there is room for a vessel of this type to give way to one of the finest ironclads of the German navy, such as the Koenig Wilhelm, with a displacement of 9,757 tons. Special passing stations have, however, also been arranged at intervals, similar to those on the Suez canal. The cost of the work was originally estimated at \$39,000,000. It promises to be completed within the estimate.

## THE HORRIBLE DESPOTISM OF RUSSIA.

### Count Tolstol's Realistic Picture of the Little Father's Discipline.

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the London Chronicle has been favored with an opportunity of reading in manuscript Count Tolstol's forthcoming work, "The Kingdom of God Within Us." It is a passionate defense of his favorite doctrine, "resist not evil," and is written in even plainer and more outspoken style than any of his previous works, and advocating as it does a complete change in the whole order, or as he calls it, "complete chaotic disorder of things," it is likely to give plenty of offense in official quarters. It is not probable that its publication in Russia will be allowed—at least till Stecherin's arrangement "thirty years" have passed; but arrangements are already being made for an English translation. In the twelfth and final chapter the Count tells that on Sept. 29 of last year—the day on which he had written the last lines of his new work—he was traveling in one of the famous districts, when he happened to notice the arrival at an intermediate station of an express train carrying a General and a small battalion of troops on their way to Toula to punish some refractory peasants who had dared to resist a flagrant invasion of their rights on the part of a young but influential landed proprietor. He says:

"The troops were drawn up before the door of the district court of justice; a body of policemen with new red belts, from which hung loaded revolvers, stood marshaled in order around the small band of guilty peasants awaiting the just punishment of their crime. At a little distance off was arranged a crowd of silent spectators, some thousand men, women, and children. On arriving at the district court the Governor-General alighted from his carriage and delivered a short and touching speech, after which he ordered a bench to be brought. A previously prepared bundle of rods was produced and the executioners were called to the front. The first of the victims was the father of a family, a man about 40 years of age, whose probity had been proverbial, and who enjoyed the trust and esteem of his fellow-villagers. He knew that all prayers were vain; he therefore silently crossed himself and lay down. A learned doctor stood close by in readiness to render medical assistance. The two convicts first spat in their hands and then gave a

preparatory flourish with their whips and the punishment began. The bench, however, proved too small, and it was difficult to steady the writhing tortured creature. So the Governor-General ordered another bench to be fetched and a plank to be fixed on either side. One of the soldiers gave the military salute, and with the words, "I obey your excellency," hurriedly and humbly fulfilled the great man's instructions.

"In the meantime the half-stripped, poor, mutilated creature remained with scowling brows, eyes cast down, his lower jaw quivering, and his bare legs trembling. When the second bench had been brought he was once more bound down, and the convicts resumed their work. Each moment the scars became more hideous and more ghastly; the back, sides, and legs of the tortured creature were streaming with blood, and after each blow the sufferer gave forth a dull groan, which he tried in vain to repress. And from the crowd that stood around could be heard the sobbings of wives, mothers, children, and relatives of the dear, tortured one, and the frightened half-cries of those who were awaiting their turn. The unhappy Governor-General, who in the drunkenness of his authority imagined that he was obeying the righteous call of duty, all this while was counting on his fingers the number of blows as he placidly smoked his cigarettes, to light which an obsequious Adjutant was always ready with a quickly-offered match. When more than fifty blows had been given the peasant ceased to groan or stir, and the learned doctor informed the representative of imperial authority that the victim was unconscious and that further punishment would be dangerous to his life. But the torturing process went on till the seventieth blow had been struck, and then, taking his cigarette from his mouth, the Governor-General quietly said, 'Enough! bring forward the next.'"

## CHOLERA'S ENDEMIC HOME.

### Not India But Arabia Is the Real Breeding Place of the Plague.

Shocking as are the statistics of mortality among pilgrims to Mecca reported in The Sun from Unis a few days ago, where of 9,000 who set out but half the number returned, the death rate of this year is but little greater than that of ordinary years. The health officers of Bombay and other Indian cities have for some time been collecting facts and statistics to show that India does not deserve the ill reputation it has of being "the endemic home of cholera," but that Arabia is the home of the plague, and they are preparing to make strenuous efforts to arouse the Arabian authorities and convince them of the fact, and to have them apply a remedy. Some of the statistics printed in the Bombay Gazette reveal a terrible state of affairs.

According to the official returns of the Health officer of Bombay, of 91,000 pilgrims who left that city for Mecca during the past eight years only 61,000 have come back. Thirty pilgrims in every hundred have perished in every year of that period, and very many of those who survived to return home have come back only to die of disease contracted on the pilgrimage. The facts adduced go to prove that the pilgrims do not carry disease with them from India. There is a rigid inspection at Bombay before embarkation, and every pilgrim is required to pass a medical examination, to undergo a certain quarantining process, and to possess a certificate of good health. The mortality on the voyage from Bombay to Arabia is very small. It is after the pilgrims have entered the holy cities, and during the return, that the mortality is great.

A record is kept by the British Consul at Jeddah of the number of pilgrims arriving at and departing from that port, with such particulars as will insure general identification. The figures of this record fully corroborate those of the Bombay officials. An average mortality of one-third among the Indian pilgrims in each year, when there is no general epidemic of cholera, is clearly established, and the belief is expressed, founded on such corroborative statistics as are obtainable, that fully one-third of all pilgrims to Mecca perish in every year.

The Indian officials assert that the cholera plagues which periodically sweep around the world "have their origin in the filth of Mecca and Medina." There is a great scarcity of water in these places, and the quality of the little obtainable is bad. The famous Holy Well at Mecca offers the most complete conditions for spreading disease. It ordinarily contains but little water. One of the most essential devotions in the pilgrimage is to bathe in and drink of the water from this well, and its brink is always crowded with pilgrims, some drawing its water and pouring it over their persons, others dipping it up in cups and gourds and drinking it. The water used for bathing runs directly back into the well, and thus diseases are directly spread.

The authorities did for a time this year close up the well. Drainage in the city there is little or none, and the most ordinary sanitary precautions are utterly disregarded by the choked crowds of pilgrims. Not alone cholera is thus bred and spread, but the holy cities are hotbeds of small-pox and other like terrible diseases. The same conditions are true of El Tor, Jeddah and Camaran, and the Indian health officials will, for the protection of its people as well as for the sake of the country's reputation, make strong endeavors to induce the authorities of the holy places of pilgrimage to take an interest in drainage and general sanitation; to have more scavengers even if they have to have fewer priests. They think that the Western nations might profitably take an interest in the condition of things in Arabia, and the result of their investigations will be offered in the hope that steps will be taken to crush out the cholera plague in what they assume to prove its real endemic home.

There are about 1,700,000 Christians in India out of a population of about 260 millions; the great majority of Christians in the country are Roman Catholics.

The Princess of Bulgaria has won the hearts of her people by her simplicity. She attends the weekly market at Sofia on foot, going from stall to stall to make her purchases, escorted only by a respectful crowd of peasants.

Mdne. Christine Nilsson, the famous soprano, has two of her rooms in Madris decorated in a rather novel fashion. The bed-chamber is papered with leaves of music from the operas in which she has sung, and the dining-room with the hotel bills she has collected in her tours through the world.