AS FORTUNE SMILES.

A TALE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

CHAPTER II.

If there was ever a man who represented in a worthy and stalwart fashion the bone, the sinew, the pluck, the perseverance and the indomitable courage of the hardy English yeoman, driven from a Staffordshire home by hard times, and a harder landlord, that man was Dick Ashland. His father, and his grandfather before him, had farmed some meagre lands at Chauncey Green, in South Staffordshire, and when the old man died an elder brother claimed possession of the farm. There was an aged mother to support, and Dick Ashand shared that duty with his brother, though he did not share the latter's inheritance. Dick tried a little farming of his own, and was uniformly unlucky. Rent accrued, and for its payments, goods, chattels, implements and stock were seized and sold, until Dich Ashland, sick at heart and despairing of success at home, went to seek fortune in a freer and less iron-hearted country. Fortune did not smile very broadly on Ashland, even when he reached the vast prairies. He worked hard, but year after year passed on, and he was not much the richer. He was hard witted and shrewd withal, and, in days gone by, he had dabbled a little in coal and ironstone mining. When, therefore, he built a hut far up the mountain, and lived there year in year out in stubborn loneliness, George Maclane, like others beside him, came to the conclusion that Dick Ashland was like themselves, hunting for that fabulous gold with which, according to rumor, the region teemed, but which no one yet had been able to find.

He was a burly, broad-shouldered, broad-chested, British bulldog, was Dick Ashland, who, even in the Rockies, affected the dress, and, as far as he could, the habits of the English farmer. His jovial, round and florid face, always smoothly shaven, but for a pair of small, fair side whiskers, beamed with honest good-nature, and, as on that evening, he sat with Herbert Chauncey, outside his primitive hut, two finer specimens of the English farmer and the English gentleman could hardly have been found.

Herbert was a younger—the youngest son, in fact, of the Earl of Cleve, and his lordship had been blessed by his lady with nine children, which included six then grown-up and marriageable, but unmarried, daughters. His lordship was not a hard-hearted father, but six marriageable and unmarried daughters, each of them engaged in frantic efforts to enter the holy state of matrimony, and each of them failing repeatedly and decisively, are apt to sour the tempers among elderly gentlemen, and the result was that Lord Cleve looked with a less lenient eye than he might otherwise have done, upon the escapades of his younger son. Herbert had the misfortune of resembling, in a marked degree, his mother, who had been supremely beautiful, while his two elder brothers, and all the young ladies, were juvenile reproductions of the face and features of my lord, who was ferociously ugly. A day of reckoning came, and Herbert Chauncey, badgered by creditors, whom he could not pay, denied assistance by his father and by his brothers, followed on the wake of Dick Ashland, and packed up his traps to roam and rove abroad, and to lead a wild and hardy life on the Western plains, where his genial bonhomie, his manly and distinguished bearing, won him many friends.

While engaged in hunting the buffalo on the Platte River, where at that time they were still to be found in huge herds, a letter of Dick Ashland's reached him, begging him to come to the mountain hut.

"I have something to tell you Mister Herbert," Dick wrote, "That will be worth while coming to hear. I want your arm and your head both."

Herbert, in the vigor of his youthful impulse, had saddled his horse and fitted it for the jouney ere that letter had been two hours in his pocket. The journey of two hundred miles, between the Platte and the Sanger de Christo Range, lay across barren plains, where, in many parts, both horse and rider wanted for ordinary necessities. But Herbert Chauncey was not easily daunted, and when he dashed across Blacknose Corner that afternoon, his spirits were as buoyant as though he had just completed a ten-mile journey.

Herbert Chauncey's adventure with the fair ones had been at one time the talk of the metropolis. He was a wild, harum-scarum fellow, not over careful of his reputation. There had been a sort of half engagement between him and Lady Evelyne Winter, but the young lady's parents were told of the young man's follies, and closed their doors against him. He was constantly falling in love with every pretty face, and it was no wonder, therefore, when he came across Miss Lucy, in all her natural and youthful charm, that his heart went straight out to her and left him a sighing, love-lorn swain.

The two men were speaking in undertones, taking short puffs of their pipes in the meanwhile.

"Theer's enough of it, Mr. Herbert," Dick Ashland said, accentuating each word by a tap on his companion's knee, "to pave the street at the Green. Theer's tons on it most likely, and no great job to get at it neither. The only wonder is that it hasn't been spotted afore this."

"But with all this untold wealth around us," Herbert interrupted, "why haven't you let me known before?"

"I wanted to make sure on it. I wanted to know exactly what I was about."

"Well the best thing we can do now, I suppose," said Chauncey, is to send to Hatcher's and get some hands to help us.'

The yeoman gave a low whistle.

"No, thank you," he exclaimed. "Not if I know it. I don't wan't my throat cut, not just yet. My find wouldn't be no good to me if I were rotting at the bottom of one of the canyons."

"What do you mean?" the young man asked, eagerly.

Ashland looked warily about the place as if, even in that lonely wilderness, he was afraid of being overheard by a prying ear.

"What do I mean?" he asked, with intense earnestness. "I mean that if as much as a whisper got abroad that I'd made this find—that if a human finger could point out the spot where it lies, our lives wouldn't be worth four-and-twenty hours' purchase. We'd have all the scoundrels of the plains down upon us, and they'd think no more of blowing out our brains from behind, and then killing one another to get hold of the booty, than of eating their dinners."

Herbert stretched his legs widely.

"That's warm," he said quietly.

"You'd find it warmer than you cared for Mr. Herbert," Dick continued; and if we want to save our skins and my gold as well, we've just got to put our heads together, that we have. It's easy that does it this time, and we've got to work slow and sure. Theer's enough theer to set up a dozen on us for life, and we mustn't loose our heads in getting it."

"What do you propose to do?" Chauncey asked.

"Our only chance is to get Government protection, and they wouldn't give us that without an order from Fort Bent. I'm not much afraid of anybody else finding the place. It's taken me just seventeen months, and then I only stumbled across it by a fluke. All the same I don't intend to leave it without one of us keeping an eye on it. What we'll have to do is to pick out enough to show that the stuff is theer all right, and then you or I will have to ride to Fort Bent and get Captain McAfferty to send a squad of soldiers here. All these cut-throats will fight shy of Uncle Sam's uniform, though we shall have no little trouble even then!"

"Where's the difficulty in all this?" Herbert asked.

"No difficulty," Ashland replied, "If we only keep our heads clear and our nerves stiff. But theer are over half a dozen stations between here and Fort Bent, and if, at any of these, so much as a breath got abroad of what we were about, neither I nor you would live to see the end of it."

He again turned and looked 'round cautiously.

"I thought I heard something move among them cedars," he said. "Don't take any notice of it. You may have been followed. I'll go by-and-by and look from another place. Did you tell anybody at Hatcher's you were coming here?"

"No," the young man replied. "I had no need of that; your description of the road was plain enough; but I remember now, I did ask a girl, about two miles down, how far it was to your place."

"That was foolish," said Ashland. "That girl was Lucy Maclane, Freckled George's daughter, and he's the man of all others that I'm most afraid of. He's always dogging and dodging me about, but I've put him off the scent so far. He's been on the same game as myself these months past, and he's as great a rascal as is to be found on the plains. That killing of Dick Meguire was never properly explained. George insists that it was done in fair fight, but I for one don't believe it. I'm sure theer's some one dodging about them cedars," Ashland continued.

"Perhaps it's some beast," Herbert suggested.

"Not a bit of it," Dick replied. "Theer's no game there this time o' the day. You sit here and I'll get round to the back of the cabin and from there I'll quietly climb on to the rock, and if theer's anything alive among them cedars I'll spot it. Keep your weather eye skinned while I'm away."

With that he rose and sauntered carelessly to the door of the small, rude log hut which formed his habitation. He stolidly walked to the further end of it, and there disappeared.

The young Englishman looked about him in that lovely wilderness, tinged as it was in all the sheen of that midsummer eve. The luxuriant thin mountain grass reached to his knee, here and there a brilliant wild flower looked like a bright spot on the sober green, and further on feathery ferns rose in all their drooping grace. All round the hut the wild geranium, the box elder, the spikenard, and the bear-berry throve in wild confusion; while hop plants, wild vines and flowering creepers stretched out verdant tendrils to enlace tree and shrub. The rocks were covered with soft mosses and hanging grasses and ferns, while a plantation of great cedars and mightier pines stretched as far as the eye could reach to the west, there to be overtopped by the great crags and mountain fastnesses in all their evening glory of purple and gold.

He had been an inveterate theatre-goer in his days of London frolicry, and could not help, being an imaginative man, transporting on to the stage of the Princess or Drury Lane the picture that unrolled itself before his eyes.

"Begad," he said to himself, "this beats your pantomimes and sensational dramas hollow. And to think that there's gold—bushels of it, tons of it—lying somewhere about. And I'm to have my share of it. Who says there's no such thing as luck in this world. Gold!" he repeated to himself. "Gold! gold! tons of gold!"

He shook himself together on a sudden, and commenced to pace up and down.

"That was a pretty girl," he murmured to himself: "a downright jolly girl. And looked to me, too, as though she were a good girl. The sort of a girl that would stick to a man through thick and thin and help him to fight it out, though the devil and his chances were against him. Dick doesn't like her father, but he didn't say a word against the girl. He'd have mentioned it if there had been anything against her. No, no. She's a little brick, I'm sure. And if I'd dress her in a nice gown and polish her a bit, she'd drive the girls at the Towers mad with envy. A long way between here and Staffordshire, but if there isn't a slip betwixt the cup and the lip I'll take her there, or my name isn't Herbert Chauncey."

He stood tapping the ground with his right foot, puffing away at his pipe, while he kept his hands in the pockets of his buckskin trousers, and, with a vacant gaze, searched the ground in front of him.

A broad hand tapped him on the shoulder. It was Dick.

"I was mistook," said the yeoman, "theer's nobody theer. It must have been some beast after all. But I think we'd better wait until it's quite night for all that, before we climb down and have a look at my find."

The pale hazy light of the young moon had swathed the mountains, and the hut was lost in the black shade of the giant rock that sheltered it. Among the cedars beyond, the night seemed so dense as to become nearly palpable, while just one or two furtive gleams shot through the pitchy gloom where the more open space permitted the light to penetrate.

Ashland and Chauncey were still puffing away at their pipes, talking of old times at home, of those cheery times in the old country when they both would have thought one half the hardships they now endured a tribulation. Yet they both felt happier in being thus freed from the trammels of nineteenth century civilization, its shams, and its hypocricies.

And here they were upon the brink of untold treasures. They were both to be rich—rich enough to satisfy every craving of the body. It would have been unnatural if, under these circumstances, they had not felt that tremor of excitement which the most cool-headed and least sanguine of men cannot sometimes avoid. The younger man especially was eager to feast his eyes upon the spot where the treasure lay.

"I'll tell you what we'll do, Mr. Herbert," Ashland said, at last, when they had locked the rough cabin door, and with rifles slung across their shoulders, and belts garnished with knife and pistol, were preparing themselves for their mountain journey. "I'll have a look along the trail down hill, first of all. I shouldn't be at all surprised to find Freckled George and that lanky Dave crawling around theer somewheer. You abide here awhile, and keep your weather eye to the top of that rock at the back theer. If you see anything moving theer, man or beast, blaze away at it, and mind you hit it, too. Theer ain't nobody nor nothin' that's got any business theer this time o' night, nor that's theer for any good to either of us."

With that he cocked his rifle to the full and strode, with body bent forward and head down, toward the cedars below. His wary figure could be seen moving stealthily across the moonlit open, and then vanished in the black night beyond. The creaking of broken branches, as he now and then unguardedly stepped upon them, marked his progress to Herbert's accustomed ear, but beyond that all was silence—that wavy, breezy, musical silence of a beautiful summer night in a mountain wilderness when the things of the air and the creatures of earth are quiet in sleep, and when only the soft wind makes melody as it plays upon each leaflet.

Herbert stood there, quietly resting his arms upon his rifle, and eagerly scanning the uneven top line of the rock that stood black as a coal against the hazy, transparent, dark blue green of the distant moon bathed mountains. As he strained his eyes, he thought that some of the unevenness of that rock line was not stationary. He sank down upon his knees so as to be totally hidden in the dense shadow, and carefully examined the top of the rock. No he must have been mistaken. He quickened his hearing, and listened with hushed heart-beat for any sound that might reach him from the high level. No, there was nothing; he felt sure of that. He rose, rather annoyed, if anything, at having allowed himself to be thus deceived. But even as he looked again, he fancied that the phenomenon of the moving rock was repeated, only to call himself a fool for thinking so the moment afterward.

He cocked his rifle, nevertheless, and remained kneeling there for a minute or two with his eyes glued upon the rock above. It was only when Ashland's muffled footfall fell on his ear as the pioneer returned, that he rose and went to meet his friend.

"Theer aint nobody within miles of us," said the yeoman quietly. "Everything's as quiet as mice. Let's go."

The words were upon Herbert's lips by which to apprise Ashland of his suspicion that somebody or something was alive at the top of that rock at the back, but he was interrupted by Dick's cheery, "We can light our pipes now, Mr. Herbert, and do the thing leisurely." He imitated his friend's example by filling his big wild cherry-root bowl and the moment afterward the two set out mountainward, much after the manner of a couple of poachers who are going out for a midnight raid in a neighborhood where the keepers are known to be aged and unwary.

The road was rough, and, less than 600 yards from the hut, they deserted the narrow path altogether, and struck across broken ground, where the giant pines rose like hundreds of huge masts from the turf and moss-covered earth, with their crowns stretching out like myriads of jagged yard-arms, from which as many tempest-torn, ragged bits of sails were drooping. Between the forest monsters the underbrush—briar, bramble, wild currant, and wild vine—intermingled in snaring confusion, and made progress difficult and now and then painful.

"You mustn't mind this, Mr. Herbert," Dick exclaimed, "I'll save a good mile and a half this way."

The young man laughed.

"I've been through many a thorn-bush before to-day, Dick," he said, "and a little trifle like this does not upset me much."

They were climbing up hill fast then. The vegetation was becoming scarcer and more stunted, the rocks bigger and more smoothed-faced. The moon stood at its brightest, and where its silvery light did not penetrate, the shadow was black as ink.

Once or twice they halted and listened with suspicious ears for the sound of pursuing footsteps, but although they both had from time to time imagined that unwarranted noises had reached their ears, on consultation they agreed that they were mistaken. Once Dick imagined that he saw a shapeless figure, he could not tell whether man or beast, crawling about the rocks and the underbrush some 200 yards away from them, and he had already lifted his rifle to aim at it. He lowered his weapon, however, saying, "No I won't make a fool of myself," and, uncorking his canteen, invited his friend to imitate his example.

"We're not very far now and a pull or two won't do us any harm."

Even as he spoke the shapeless something which he thought he had noticed appeared to him again, and without saying a word he lifted his rifle and fired. The sharp crack rang through the midnight air and reechoed among the crags and in the stillness which succeeded the report, the two men stood breathless waiting the result. But the black thing disappeared—vanished again as if by magic. Not a sound, not a sign, ruffled the hush of the night.

"If theer's anybody following us," said Dick "he'll know that we don't mean to stand any nonsense, and what he'll have to expect if we catch him."

The road lay straight up hill now, along a jagged mountain face where they had to climb now and then like cats. In five minutes or more they had reached the summit, and there stood upon a smooth and sparsely wooded table-land, about half a mile in length, and some four or five hundred yards broad. They walked across it with rifles trailed, and came to the edge of the gulch not more than five-and-twenty or thirty feet deep through which a mountain torrent was rushing in melodious turmoil.

Dick stopped and pointed with outstretched fore-finger to the bottom.

"There's where it lies, thick as peas," he said. "Any amount of it. I'd never dreamt o' coming here, only I shot a buck, and that was the place I had to get him from. Now you know it as well as I do."

After a moment's pause they made their way down. At the bottom among the young pines, the moonlight dripped in silvery flakes and blotches into a moss and fern strewn rocky ground. The fretting waters had in winter time overrun the whole bed of the gulch, and smooth flints, varying from the size of a man's fist to the smallest of pebbles, gleamed and glittered in the pale sheen. Dick took up one unevenly rounded fragment, and advanced with it to the water's edge, where the light fell clear and bright on his face.

"Look at this," he said, pointing to a yellowish shining spot on the dull, creamy stone, "that's gold, I might 'a' taken bushels from here if I hadn't been afraid o' somebody prying about my place and finding it while I was away. You see, while I was alone, I had nobody to take care of the place, and those fellows are mean enough for anything."

He turned the glittering auriferous stone in his hand over and over again. Both his figure and Herbert Chauncey's were standing out, dark and sharp, against the hazy, moonlit, further side of the ravine.

Crack! Crack! Two shots rang through the air in quick succession, and Dick Ashland, with an unearthly cry, jumped full three feet in the air, and dropping rifle and flint from his outstretched hands, fell face foremost with his hands toward the stream.

Herbert Chauncey felt a sharp sting below his shoulder, and the rifle dropped from his useless right arm. He looked round in vague amazement, and noticed that the blood trickled over his buckskin hunting shirt. A suffocating faintness came over him, and he sank down on the ground. The noise of footsteps attracted his attention, and as he looked up he saw at the top, where he and Dick had descended, two men, rifle in hand, who were peering down, shading their eyes with their hands against the moonlight, and evidently preparing to descend.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ADVENTURE WITH A SHARK.

A Pearl Diver Had an Exciting Experience.

The life of the pearl diver in Australian waters is the most exciting of all. I shall never forget the dreadful feeling that came over me when, for the first time, I found myself in close quarters with a shark. I felt, instinctively, a strange presence before I saw anything, though I might have walked by unconsciously had not my attention been drawn to the fact that the mall fish, which are usually found in great numbers among the corals, had entirely disappeared.

The absence of these flitting little companions, when one has become accustomed to them, produces the effect of intense stillness—a feeling of silence. A creepy, indefinable sensation of dread took hold of me, but it turned to one of downright terror when I turned and beheld within ten feet of me the bulk of an immense shark. The creature had not perceived me, and lay almost motionless, half-hidden among a mass of cobweb corallines. Through the medium of the face-glass it looked about twenty-five feet long, the upper part of the body of a dirty, dark-green color, shading away to a light yellow as it neared the belly; the dorsal fin black and rigid, the side fins slightly trembling. My first thought was to pull up, but as fish have human nature enough in them to want a thing as soon as they see it is being taken away from them, I rejected the idea, and, in fear that my bare hands might attract the man-eating propensity that sharks are supposed to have, I tucked them carefully under my breast-weight.

A sweep of its tail, and the great fish and I were face to face. Holding my breath, I stood perfectly still, my heart beating wildly, and my eyes riveted on its wicked eyes and cavernous mouth. I felt that the shark was inspecting me with some curiosity, and after a few moments I became aware that, by an almost imperceptible motion of its flexible tail, it was gradually approaching me.

Nearer and nearer came the leviathan, the shovel shaped nose pointing directly to my face-glass, the gleaming under part now plainly visible. Flesh and blood could stand it no longer, and, with a yell, I threw up my arms. Instantly there was a swirl of water, a cloud of mud and my enemy vanished.

The only thing to do, says Lieutenant Herbert Phelps Witmarsh, R. N., is to close all openings in the head as tightly as possible and be pulled up.

Japan's Proposed Eiffel Tower.

Japan is to have its own Eiffel Tower. The Eastern World published in Yokohama, announces that a number of Japanese patriots in Tokio have conceived the idea of so commemorating their victories. The tower will be a thousand feet high, and the lowest story is to contain an exhibition of national industries, while the highest will be a Walhalla devoted to the statues of Japanese patriots who have died for their country. The cost is to be $350,000, and European contractors are invited to send estimates.

TWO DESPERATE ROBBERS.

THEY TRY TO LOOT A BANK AND SHOOT SIX CITIZENS.

Blazing Away at a Bank Cashier in a Little Town in Indiana—When the Bank Got Too Hot for Him He Fled, Closely Followed by Some Citizens.

On Tuesday morning at 9:10 o'clock one of the most sensational bank robberies in the history of Iowa occurred at Adel, Dallas county, twenty-five miles from Des Moines. A few minutes after the bank opened two strangers, now known to be Orlando P. Wilkins and Charles W. Crawford, drove into town, hitched their team in front of the bank, and entered. The only occupant of the bank was Cashier S. M. Leach. One of the men carried a sack and said he wanted to deposit some silver. The cashier came to the railing, when one of the robbers slipped a rifle from under his coat and pointed it in his face. The other man kicked in the inside door and went around for the money. About $250 was put in a sack, when Merchant C. D. Bailey happened in.

The robber who was on guard quickly turned and fired at Bailey, shooting him in the neck, and again in the jaw after he had fallen. He then turned and shot Cashier Leach, who, although shot, struggled to the vault and closed it, after throwing in a bag of gold.

Sheriff Payne heard the shots, and, hastening to the scene, opened fire with a revolver. The men ran to their buggy and started out of town, followed by a posse of twenty men, formed almost in an instant. They were close behind them, and continually sent volley after volley after them, but to no effect. Finally the fleeing buggy struck a log, which completely demolished the fore wheels and sent the robbers sprawling on the ground. Crawford seemed to be dazed for a moment. Wilkins grabbed his rifle and made for a barn. Crawford crawled under a brush heap. He was dragged out and made to take a can of kerosene and set fire to the barn, the posse knowing Wilkins would not shoot his partner in crime.

Wilkins held out until his whiskers were singed, and then came out and made a dash for liberty. Nineteen rifles rang out, and he fell to the ground a dead man. Crawford was taken to jail and talk of lynching followed, but as the wounded men are not expected to die the feeling quickly subsided. Wilkins was from Patterson, Madison county, and has just finished a term in the Minnesota penitentiary for robbing a Jew. Crawford is from Iowa, also, and is only a boy of 19 years. The crime seems to have been instigated by Wilkins.

While on the bank and during their retreat the robbers fired repeatedly at the citizens who were after them.

PUZZLE IN ANCESTRY.

A Mathematician Tries to Clear up a Difficulty.

It goes without saying that a man has two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, and so on, so that if we go back, say 10 generations, doubling at each step, we have 2,048 ancestors. This sort of argument has been used by superficial genealogists to show that at the time of William the Conqueror each of us had more ancestors than the total population of England, hence we must each be descended from every Englishman of that day, including the immortal William himself.

The absurdity of this sort of reasoning has been pointed out by Prof. Brooks. His immediate object is to establish a point in the theory of evolution, but he confutes all silly genealogists at the same time. While it is true that we have four grandparents, they need not be four separate and distinct persons. First cousins have no more than three separate grandparents; if they are doubly cousins they have but two. So in the tenth generation one's 2,048 ancestors are never 2,048 separate persons. They abound in "duplicate," so to speak, as every one knows who has tried to trace his descent, not in one line, but in all possible lines. These duplicates abound especially, in small communities, whose inhabitants have intermarried for years.

Besides this the lines from a given pair of ancestors tend to become extinct sooner or later, so, as ancestry is traced back, the probability is that all the persons living in a given community will be found to be descended, not from all, but from a very few—perhaps only one or two—of the inhabitants of the community as they were centuries ago. So instead of having all Englishmen for the year 1000 for our ancestors, the probability is that we are descended from comparatively few of them—the number may be technically many thousands, but one individual does duty for several scores, or even several hundreds of these, the lines of ancestry converging upon him from many different directions. This is what Prof. Brooks calls the "convergence of ancestry."

FLOGGING IN RUSSIA.

Its Abolition Refers to the Use of the Plet, and Not the Knut.

The St. Petersburg despatch to the effect that an imperial edict had been issued during the past week abolishing the flogging of criminals apparently refers to the use of the plet or pleti, and not to the knout, as was first supposed. Punishment with the knout, or more correctly the knut, was abolished by Emperor Nicholas I. more than forty years ago. The lash of the knout was composed of broad leather thongs, prepared to a metallic hardness, and often intertwined with wire. A sentence of from 100 to 120 blows was considered equivalent to death. When the knout was done away with, the plet, a simple lash, was substituted for it. This was considered a much milder form of punishment, but the prison officials found ways of increasing its efficacy, and death might be caused by a hundred blows of the plet. The abolition of flogging, if the report proves to be correct, is therefore a distinct gain for the Russian peasant and for humanity.