IN A HOTTENTOT'S TRAP.

HORSE THIEVES FOILED BY A BLACK BOY'S CUNNING.

They Were White and He Was Only a Small South African Native, But He Left Their Bones to Bleach in the Sun While He Took Back Their Plunder to the Owners.

July sat in the sun, unspeakably lonely, and felt depressed beyond measure, for, although a Hottentot delights like a lizard in the warmth of an African day, revelling in it, yet he also desires company. So was it with July, for his case was unusually grievous. On the hill behind the stage stables, newly buried, lay his father and mother, dead of cholera, and it was a wonder that he himself, who had been attacked, was alive. So he was alone in a huge world. At intervals, three times a week, came the great galloping stage, with inordinate tumult, blowing of horns, cracking of whiplashes, snorting of horses, and shouting of drivers and prospectors, full of excitement, who were going up country to the newly found gold fields on the Witwatersrand. For five or ten minutes thrice weekly July thought that the universe was crowded with bustle and business, and thereafter he sank into silence and solitude.

July looked after the relays of horses temporarily. His father had done so, helped by the boy, but since his death, a week ago, the superintendent of the company, three hundred miles away, had sent word to July that a new man would be sent to relieve him And then July would be sent adrift, where he did not know and nobody cared. Hottentot boys, even if they are as faithful to feed and water their charges as this, are not articles of value in the land, and July's prospects of employment were not bright. So he sat in the sun, with a mournful envy of the horses, which were more thought of than he.

It was in the hot afternoon, and the only thing stirring was a cloud of dust in the distance, and from that cloud, louder and shriller as the stage drew near, came blast after blast of

THE GUARD'S HORN.

Rattle and clatter and dash, a shout from the driver, a prolonged series of artistic, but purely ornamental flourishes from the great whip, and the coach stopped, its horses all foam and flutter.

Instantly the driver and the whip were down and unharnessing the glad team.

"Ho, July! Now, you little black rascal! All by yourself still, hey? Well, it's the last time. There's a man coming up the road to relieve you—a white man, too, leastways, half and half. So you'd best be packing up, July, though for me, nigger if you be, I'd sooner see your ugly little landmark of a phiz than some surly blackguard full of Cape Smoke all the time. Horses all right—as, usual, fresh and frisky—as usual. Good boy, July. Blowed if I ain't sorry to see the last of you. There's a cigar for luck. Look out for your relief—he's a-riding his own horse."

Taroot-tatatool-rata tool-tooraray! The horn blew, a passenger began again, "The Song That Reached My Heart," on a concertina, the horses reared and kicked and were an undisciplined mob for an instant and on the next were stretched in a taut, fleet line at a spanking canter. Rattle and crash and clatter and a fresh cloud of dust, and July was once more alone in the sun, richer by a cigar, which he smoked at once, having his race's love for the weed.

About sundown he came, riding his own horse, as July expected, but he did not seem a half-breed. He was very red-faced and had red hair and red eyes—certainly nothing even half African about his looks. His horse was a fairly good one, and not much put out by what July knew should have been a long journey. Across the pommel of the saddle he carried a rifle, and that was all the baggage he brought. Even July marvelled somewhat at a man coming to live on the bare veldt without a blanket or a "billy" to boil his coffee in. But a native has the same awe, though perhaps in a less degree of a white man that a monkey must have. Therefore

HE MADE OBEISANCE

in a very conciliating and smiling way.

"Maru, baas! Jolly hot. 'Ope may die!" cried July graciously, for he prided himself on his polite English, picked up from drivers and gold prospectors. "You new baas?"

"Yes, you durned little ugly imp, I'm your new baas, and the first thing you've got to do is to take your bloomin' hookey out of this, d'ye mind? I've heerd all about you. Last thing the superintendent says to me, he says, says he, 'You kick that lazy nigger out of that, first thing, Mr. Roser, he says, 'cause he's no good,' says he. I says, 'Supe,' says I, 'no 'ottentot or Kaffir ain't no good,' I says, 'an'- ye can depend on me to do the necessary kickin' in a methodical and artistic manner not to be beat,' says I, 'cause I believe most teenashushly that the only way to make the natives of this blasted land know their place is to kick 'em hard and frequent. In pursooance of which—take that!"

Thereupon the ugly brute, having dismounted, twisted July round by the neck and kicked so viciously that the boy went sprawling through the doorway into the barn. The cordial smile of welcome which had broadened his innocent black face had died away as the white man talked, giving place to a look of extreme fear, for even his life had not been so lonely but that the roughness of outcast civilization had scratched it. Now, with one long howl of grief and dismay, he picked himself up, sore in mind and body, and fled from the house, until, from the shelter of a distant antheap, he felt it safe to watch the fierce newcomer.

Mr. Roser, having carelessly flung a few Whitechapel terms of affection after July, appeared to dismiss him from his mind, led his horse into the stable, stayed there a while, probably examining the stock, and coming out again, sat down in July's former seat in the sun and smoked a pipe with patience and apparent content.

Suddenly there came a distant call, the Australian "coo-ee," from the veldt, and Roser jumped to his feet and sang out "coo-ee," in return. Swiftly loping over the plain came another horseman with another rifle, and the two met in quick and eager consultation. Says Roser:

"It's all right. We'd best be off. Wheeler can't be here before morning, but we'll get a good start. I've frightened the young nigger away, and he won't stop running, I bet, to-night. There's

ONLY TWELVE HORSES

though, fit to take, and if we get them into Bechuanaland by to-morrow night we'll be all right. There's no hurry, but there's no telling who may pass along the trek; so as soon as dark, an' that's now, we'll drive 'em off. Are you on?"

"Sure, I'm on," says the other rogue, "an' it's easy as mud, if you ask me."

It darkened rapidly, and at last was fairly night—a moonless night. As the twilight died away July crept nearer the stable, from one ant hill's covering to another. He had as yet no doubt that the newcomer was his father's legitimate successor, but he crept near for a chance to recover his worldly possessions without being kicked. His amazement was vast, therefore, when from across the trail, he beheld the two men leading out the horses, mount their own and drive the herd quietly off across the veldt, with a cool leisureliness, too, which was dumbfounding, for the villains knew well that no coach would pass for two days, and the new station master would not now arrive until next day.

July's mouth was wide open with surprise as it dawned upon him that the company's horses were in the possession of a pair of audacious horse thieves, who would drive them across the Transvaal border to dispose of them to Bechuanaland settlers at their leisure.

The boy awoke at once to a fair realization of his own part in the matter. No more faithful servant than his father had the stage company ever had, and July had been trained to look upon a horse thief as the vilest of mankind. He was oppressed with his own unwariness in being so tricked, and he was terror-stricken at what the company, a thing of unlimited power for punishments and rewards, would do to him for his lack of faith in not defending the stock. July ran into the stables and found four horses left, those in poorest condition, but one of them, though along in years, and gaunt, was not so contemptible as the hasty thieves had apparently thought it.

July jumped bareback on the old horse and proceeded to follow the thieves with great cunning, never coming within sound nor sight of them, but continually dismounting, and by listening close to the ground and by the help of an instinct which only a veldt-born native could have,

TRACKING THEM SURELY.

Mile after mile through the night, over boulder-strewn strips, and through parks of scrubby trees, now down a ravine, now across a ridge of hillocks, through grass up to the horses' bellies, and over rocky streams all by the faint light of the stars, went the herd and the thieves, and, all unsuspected, little July.

Suddenly the Hottentot came to a halt, and listened, for a minute puzzled. After a while, he proceeded cautiously, leading his horse very, very slowly and cautiously, so that he took more than an hour to go a little way. Then he came out round a low kopje, having fastened his horse and himself crawling like a snake on the ground. By the ghostly light he looked into a little hollow and saw that the thieves, quite unsuspicions of being followed, were stretched on the ground fast asleep—after the superciliously confident manner of too clever people—while a picket rope was stretched between two iron pins driven in the ground and to this the horses, six a side, were fastened by their halters.

Slowly, slowly, the black boy crept among them and they knew his familiar smell and touch—had he not used to sleep in each one's stall in turn? He untied them, and they fell placidly to grazing without a whinny, and the two rogues snored and slept through it all. July hesitated over the two horses the property of the robbers, if a robber may be said to have any property at all. But he would not take them. He wanted only his own. While he hesitated, however, one horse playfully bit another, and the bitten one kicked and snorted. Up sprang Roser and up the second thief, awake at once. They ran to their horses, but July was quick. He smote the nearest of the herd with his assegai and yelled, and the herd stampeded. July rushed to his hidden horse, mounted him in a twinkling, and went after the horses, skilfully rounding them up, even in the darkness, and heading them for the trek. But the yell and the noise of the horses' scamper were sufficient guide for the thieves.

"It's that durned little black imp that I ought to have knifed. He's been a-follerin' us, the vile heathen," shouted Roser, and in a second, they threw themselves on the saddled horses and gave chase. It was a desperate, headlong, reckless ride, where every step and every second might send horse and rider smashing to the ground, but July was worked up to desperation and his pursuers to fury.

JULY HAD A GOOD START,

but his horse was no match for the younger beasts of the thieves. So after five minutes of the chase, when the black boy found himself losing, he almost gave up. The herd were keeping together, and, unburdened by riders, were gaining, but July dropped rapidly behind. He heard the crack of a pistol and a bullet whistled past, and it may be that new danger quickened his wits, for he suddenly conceived a scheme of vengeance. He let the herd go and kept edging off to the right, and as he galloped he began to scream out as if guiding the stampeding horses. In the darkness the thieves followed the voice, firing once or twice in that direction.

Away over July veered, until he was leading the men in a different direction altogether, and he kept shouting all the time. Suddenly, he was silent, but pressed his horse forward eagerly. His eyes, the eyes of a savage, could see better than a white man's in the night, and he knew the country well. At last he gave voice to a loud shout and then the men were close upon him, and doubtless they thought that they had caught up with herd. They poured forth a storm of curses and emptied their revolvers at the sound. July shouted again only fifty yards ahead of them, and then was grimly silent as he pulled his wearied horse hard away and sheered suddenly off at right angles.

On came the thieves, too fast to draw rein, all ignorant of a trap. Raging and swearing and triumphing in the thought that they had caught up with the stolen herd, they galloped past. Ten, twenty, forty yards, there was a horrible scream, followed by another, a crash, a torrent of cries of agony and howls for help, and all was still. July had led them to a line of deserted shafts dug by gold prospectors in the days of a rush—the land was dotted with such holes—and there was an end of them, and the little Hottentot boy was revenged.

The stolen horses, not so fresh as usual, were all back in their stable, when the genuine stable master arrived. He was a decent man, and reported July's feat to the company, as of course, did the enthusiastic drivers, so that the little heathen boy was thanked and well taken care of by his employers. But the bleaching bones of the robbers and their horses lie to this day where they fell in July's trap.

HOW TO WEAR CORSETS.

Wear nothing under the corsets but a silk or lisle-thread knitted vest, writes a correspondent. Over the vest put on the drawers as smoothly fitted to the hips as possible, all fulness drawn smoothly back, with the yoke edge below the waist line. Nothing else belongs under corsets.

With a pair of long silk laces lace in the usual way, but with the drawholes a little lower than the belt-line. Open out the lacings to their utmost stretch, even all the length of back. Take a rough Turkish towel, double and hold one end by the chin pressed against the breast, so that the towel hangs doubled over the front of the body, almost to knees. Hook the corsets loosely around the body, with the towel inside.

Begin slowly at the very bottom to draw in the laces. Stop, bend forward, pull the bottom of corsets down with one hand, at the same time pull the towel slowly up with the other for a space of a few inches, then draw a little tighter the bottom of the lacing.

Bend forward and draw up the towel while pulling down corsets, first on one side, then on the other. Work the hips into place by twisting to right and left. In this way draw up the towel while tightening the laces from bottom up. When the towel is drawn out pull the laces taut, tie firmly either at back or crossed and drawn to the front and tied under one edge of busk. The back opening must present a slender V-shape, meeting at the bottom. Don't wear a corset cover except when it is fully boned as a blouse lining

The upper skirt should not have a band, but be flatly fitted to the hips; a small hook on the busk prevents the skirts from riding up in front. Except for slender figures, I advise the under skirt basted to the lower edge of corsets. I do not think that a few hours of tight corsets put on in this way can injure a woman if there is no dragging weight at the same time. For ordinary house wear I believe in no corsets nor health waists of any kind. The body requires to breathe from the pores of the skin.

These suggestions to plump women are given by an artist who has made a study of the subject in her own case.

Why go limping and whining about your corns, when a 25 cent bottle of Holloway's Corn Cure will remove them? Give it a trial and you will not regret it.

SOLID.

Merritt—Do you think your sister cares for me?

Little Johnny—I'd rather bet my money on the other young man who calls.

Merritt—What makes you think he has a better chance than I have?

Little Johnny—Ma told me not to go near the parlor whenever he called.

WHAT HAPPENED.

Once a friend of mine agreed that it would be helpful for each of us to tell the other his faults.

How did it work?

We haven't spoken for nine years.

THE CURE WAS PERMANENT

The Story of a Man Who Suffered the Agonies of a Living Death.

MEDICAL EXPERTS PRONOUNCED HIM INCURABLE AND HE WAS PAID A LARGE DISABILITY CLAIM.

The Case Probably the Most Wonderful in the History of Medical Science—Brought from Hopeless, Helpless, Inactivity to Health and Strength.

From the Meaford, Ont., Monitor.

About two years ago the Monitor procured an interview with Mr. Reuben Petch, of Griersville, in order to ascertain from his own lips if the reports were well founded that he attributed his most astonishing return to health to the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. The result of the interview was published in the Monitor under the date of Jan. 17th, 1896. Mr. Petch's case was certainly one of the most extraordinary in the annals of medicine in Canada—if not in the world. He had been ill for five years and in that time he consulted no less than six of the best physicians he could find, but none could give him the least relief. His limbs and body were puffed and bloated to such an extent that he could not get his clothes on, and for two years he had not dressed. He had lost the use of his limbs entirely. His flesh seemed to be dead, and pins could be stuck into various parts of his body without being felt or creating the slightest sensation. He could not move about and if he attempted to get up would fall and would have to be lifted up. He was unable to open his mouth sufficiently to take solid food, and had to be fed with a spoon like a child. The doctors said his trouble was spinal sclerosis, and that he could not possibly get better. He was in fact nothing more or less than an animated corpse, so helpless was he. He was a member of the Canadian Mutual Life Association, and was under their rules entitled to disability insurance and made a claim for it. Two doctors, on behalf of the association, were sent to examine him, and they pronounced him incurable and permanently disabled, and in accordance with their report he was paid a disability insurance of $1,650.00. This was about two years after his sickness began. For three years more he lingered in the condition above noted, utterly helpless, and a burden to himself and friends. He was then advised to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. He did not hope that they would help him, but in his sad condition he was prepared to grasp at anything that afforded the prospect of even a slight relief. The first change noted in his condition after he began the use of the pills was a disposition to sweat freely. Then life began to return to his hitherto dead body, and from that time on his progress towards recovery and activity was steady and certain.

The publication of the interview, containing the facts above noted, created unusual interest, not only in this section, but throughout Canada. That a man, whose limbs and body were all but dead, who had been examined by medical experts, and pronounced incurable and on the strength of their report was paid a large disability claim, should afterwards be cured by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, was looked upon as a marvel. Many were skeptical; not as to the cure—for the fact that he was actively going about proved this—but they did not believe it would prove permanent. In view of the doubts then expressed, the Monitor determined to watch the case closely, and now, nearly two years after the cure was first published, has again interviewed Mr. Petch, with the result that we are in a position to say most emphatically that this remarkable cure has proved permanent.

On being again questioned Mr. Petch said:—"You see those hands—the skin is now natural and elastic. Once they were hard and without sensation. You could pierce them with a pin and I would not feel it, and what is true of my hands is true of the rest of my body. Perhaps you have observed that I have now even ceased to use a cane, and can get about my business perfectly well. You may say there is absolutely no doubt as to my cure being permanent. Indeed I am in even better health than when I gave you the first interview."

"Do you still attribute your cure to the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills?" asked the Monitor.

"Unquestionably I do," was the reply. "Doctors had failed, as had also the numerous remedies recommended by my friends. Nothing I took had the slightest effect upon me until I began the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. To this wonderful medicine I owe my release from a living death. I have since recommended Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to many of my friends, and the verdict is in their favor. I shall always bless the day I was induced to take them."

The above are the chief statements made by Mr. Petch in his latest interview, and the Monitor may remark, from a long acquaintance with him, that we consider his statements absolutely true and reliable. He has no interest to serve other than a desire to recommend the medicine that has done so much for him, and we feel sure that if any sufferer will write Mr. Petch, enclosing a stamp for reply, he will endorse all the statements made above. We may further add that Mr. Petch's remarkable recovery, leaves no doubt of the wonderful curative powers of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and it seems reasonable to infer that they will do for others what they have done for him—restore health and vitality.

ECLIPSE OF THE SUN IN CHINA.

Warning to Reigning Princes — Sober, Everyday Garments to be Worn.

Eclipses of the sun and moon—more especially those of the sun—in China are treated as a warning from heaven that the reigning prince has been wanting in wisdom and morality. This is now exemplified by an imperial edict dealing with an eclipse of the sun which the imperial board of astronomy at Peking has just reported to the throne as about to occur on January. 22, 1898, which happens to be the Chinese New Year day.

The decree in question states that "for centuries, an eclipse of the sun has been accepted by the princes of past dynasties as a warning to themselves from heaven to reform their ways and rule righteously, and even in the present dynasty, namely, during the reigns of K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung, A. D. 1662-1794, there happened eclipses of the sun on New Year's day." In view of this and the warnings such an occurrence seemed to indicate, the emperor declares, that he is "filled with great fear" and that he has tried "during his moments of leisure to inwardly question himself as to the errors he had committed." Farther, as "a token of humility and submission to the will of heaven," he commands that the New Year day ceremonies of congratulation paid to him, held annually in the T'aiho throne hall, be changed to the Ch'ients'ing throne hall—the last named meaning "to clear the political atmosphere."

The annual banquet given to the clansmen of the imperial house on the day in question is also ordered to be discontinued for that year, while everyone belonging to the court is commanded to put on sober, every day garments while the eclipse is in evidence instead of the gorgeous full-dress court robes demanded by etiquette on the first day of the year. The court will then assemble in the inner palace, where an altar to heaven will be erected, facing the open air, before which the emperor and his full court will prostrate themselves "to beseech the mercy of high heaven to his chosen people."

With regard, however, to the ceremonies to be observed when congratulating the empress-dowager, the emperor commands that the usual etiquette be observed at the Tzeningnai-ace, "for as they are to be paid to one senior to the emperor high heaven will not be displeased at this display of imperial pomp, being really an expression of his filial piety."

GROWTH OF NAILS.

Those on the Middle Fingers Are the Most Rapid.

Fingernails, like hair, grow faster in summer than in winter. The nails of two fingers never grow with the same degree of rapidity.

The nail of the middle finger grows with the greatest rapidity and that of the thumb the least. It has been computed that the average growth of the fingernail is 1-32 of an inch per week, or a little more than an inch and a half per year. The growth, however, depends to a great extent upon the rate of nutrition, and during periods of sickness or of abstinence it is retarded.

Authorities differ with regard to the equality of growth on both hands, some holding that the nails of the right hand grow faster than those of the left, but others can perceive no difference between them. According to the rate of growth stated, the average time taken for each fingernail to grow its full length is about four and a half months, and at this rate a man of seventy would have renewed his nails one hundred and eighty-six times. Taking the length of each nail at half inch, he would have grown seven feet nine inches of nail on each finger, and on all his fingers and thumbs an aggregate length of seventy-seven feet six inches.

AT THE CONCERT.

Why on earth are they encoring this woman?

Perhaps they see that she wants practice.

FOR TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS

DUNN'S BAKING POWDER

THE COOK'S BEST FRIEND

LARGEST SALE IN CANADA