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## BOURKE ON THE SOUTHWEST, IV

*Edited by* LANSING B. BLOOM

### CHAPTER VI

#### SIDE LIGHTS ON ARMY LIFE

THE Irishman is a born fighter, whether it be with a shillelah in hand on his native heath or with a carbine on the mountain trails of Arizona. But, in creating the wild Irishman, the good Lord tempered his sturdier qualities with the saving grace of humor. When the round of duties at a dreary, sweltering army post became deadly in its monotony; or when, on a campaign, men were driving themselves day after day to the limit of physical endurance, often it was a dash of humor that brought the needed relief to taut nerves. It might take the form of swapping yarns around a camp fire, or in an amusing incident on the trail, or in the staging of an amateur theatrical.

Diversion of a different kind, also, was found by many of the officers who became interested in the country itself, and in the new forms of life which came under their observation. We learn, for example, from Bourke that General Crook was an excellent shot and that he enjoyed not only hunting wild game but also securing rare specimens of humming birds. Or again Bourke writes:<sup>1</sup>

My old friend Capt. Charles Bendire who served with me at Camp Lowell, Ariz., near Tucson in 1871 was then, as he is now, intensely interested in ornithology and its subdivisions of ovology and nidology. His collection of eggs and nests, now on deposit in the Smithsonian, cannot be surpassed. He wears a very rare ornament attached to his watch-chain, a fossilized tortoise-egg.

Bourke himself, from his first arrival in the Southwest, wanted to know and understand the peoples whom he found here. He went about it by observing and interviewing, with the result that the diary records of his army service

1. Bourke notebooks, under date of June 11, 1888.

are thickly interspersed with ethnological data such as Apache vocabularies, descriptions of customs and ceremonies and prehistoric ruins, often with illustrative sketches. Many pages are filled with the questioning of some informant as to clan relations or tribal lore.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time there is abundant evidence in Bourke's notebooks which shows that the tedium of army life was not relieved only by serious study. He could tell a good story—and he liked to hear others reminisce; and some of the anecdotes which he jotted down rival Bret Harte at his best.

July 29 (1880) . . . Tom Ewing,<sup>3</sup> an inveterate story-teller, kept our party in a roar with his inimitable jokes and tales; we became so hilarious that the other passengers eagerly listened to the cause of our amusement. I can't venture to repeat many of his anecdotes, so much depends upon the inimitable grace and mimicry with which he delivered them; but I'll try two or three, sorry however that as here written they are scarcely the shadow of the stories as he told them.

Judge "Charlie" Meyers of Tucson was, as I have elsewhere stated, a terror to evil-doers and an upright, conscientious administrator of Justice, altho he knew scarcely any law. Being afraid that some of his victims might attempt to belabor or even to assassinate him, Judge Meyers avoided going out of his house or opening the door at night. He had a hole cut in the front door and a small shutter placed there which he could open to find out the character of people coming, as they sometimes did, to get drugs from his dispensary.

One night a terrible knocking aroused the old man from his slumbers. He went to the door, raised the little shutter, and demanded to know who was there.

"Me—Jedge." "And who are you, mine frent?" "Jedge, I want to give myself up, I've just killed a man." "Vat you kill him for?" "Wa'll, Jedge—yer see-e he ca-alled me a

2. Bourke himself made extensive use of this ethnological material, as will be apparent by a glance at his bibliography. See *N. Mex. Hist. Rev.*, vol. VIII, 13-15.

3. Heitman, *Historical Register*, giving the Civil War record of "Thomas Ewing, Jr.," states that he resigned from the army February 23, 1865. Apparently he came west to Idaho; and later Bourke knew him in Arizona. At the time of this record, Bourke was with General Crook and other officers going by train from Omaha to Cheyenne.

liar en I—"Vare did you keel him?" "Down in George Foster's Quartz Rock Gambling Saloon" (this was a notorious deadfall.) "Vary goot, mine frent, dot's all right," said the Judge soothingly, "dot's all right—go back unt keel unudder von"—and then he turned in to bed. . . .

Ewing had a particular friend in Silver City, Idaho (in 1866)—Ike Jennings—who took it into his head that he ought to get married and selected a great big bouncing Missouri girl as the partner of his future joys and sorrows. Jennings consulted Ewing about the details of the wedding, which he desired should be a high-toned affair, with nothing wanting.

Silver City at that date was a wild mining town in the wildest part of Idaho territory; built on both sides of a steep, narrow gulch with houses offering to their inmates the advantage of being able to look down their neighbors' chimneys and see what they had for supper. From the door of Jennings' house which was situated upon the crest of the steepest part of the hill, access was had to the street 120 vertical feet below by a steep grade and by a series of steps almost as steep, both coated with ice as slippery as glass, from water carelessly thrown from the building.

The concourse of invited guests had much difficulty in climbing up this slippery path, but once inside the house were made welcome to a pretty fair collation, provided by the liberality of Tom Ewing from whom Jennings had borrowed the money to defray all expenses.

As Tom officiated as a sort of master of ceremonies, he had arrayed his friend Jennings in a suit of black, decked out with a pair of yellow kid gloves in which his huge paws looked like a couple of canvas-covered hams. The ceremony was soon over and the twain made one. Drinking succeeded, poor whiskey, bad rum, and a kind of chemical preparation styled champagne circulated freely and began to make their effects perceptible.

Ewing, afraid of his company, had gotten himself up for an emergency. Around his waist was strapped a six-shooter and along his back, under his coat, a pick-axe handle, the tip projecting slightly above his collar, to admit of being grasped at a moment's warning.

Dancing commenced to the music of two squeaky fiddles and by the fitful glare of tallow-candles stuck to the walls. Some of the boys were already beginning to get a "little bit high." As Fate would have it, Dick Tregaski's

"girl" gave him "the dead shake" and bestowed her fair hand for a dance which he had anticipated upon a Southerner named Welker—a man of fine education—since a Professor in the University of California. This was too much for Tregaski: running up to Tom Ewing, he asked excitedly,—“Tom, hev yer enny weepins, bee G-d? Thar’s my gal over thar a shassaying through the quadrille with that damm Secesh outfit, Welker. Lend me yer revolver.”

To oblige his friend Ewing lent his six-shooter, but at the same time felt it incumbent upon him to prevent a row by every means in his power. Tregaski, walking up to Welker as he was “shassaying” with the fair lady, gave him a ferocious whack over the nose. A champagne bottle popping at the same instant sounded like the report of a pistol. “Don’t shoot, for G-- sake,” yelled Tom Ewing, throwing open the door of the house. Men and women impetuously “piled out” into the open air and, striking the frozen grade, never stop sliding until they strike the street, 40 yards below, “where they lay,” says Ewing, “fifteen feet deep.”

“Yes, boys,” said Jedge Tregaski in speaking of the affair a month afterwards, “we hed a hell of a good time at Ike Jennings’ wedding.”

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[April 6, 1880] . . . While travelling in a Pullman car, on a western road, Reade played an atrocious prank on a number of bald-headed old deacons who occupied adjoining berths. He waited until everybody had gotten up in the morning and then, pulling on a pair of bright red striped women’s stockings (which he had in his valise), he thrust one of his legs out from the curtains enclosing his bed. The car was soon a ferment: the ladies were shocked at such brazen-faced conduct by one of their own sex (as they supposed), while the bald-headed deacons nearly twisted their necks off in trying to get a closer look at the liberal exhibition of anatomy. Phil. waited until he was certain he must be the cynosure of all eyes and then thrusting out his bright red head and aquiline nose, applied his extended palms to the tip of the latter and gyrated his long fingers in derision at the gentlemen.

At another time, in *Prescott, Arizona*, he was invited by the officers of Fort Whipple to attend a social hop to be given at the garrison the very evening of his arrival. He sent a very elaborate reply to the committee, regretting his

4. Lieut. Philip Reade. See p. 36, *supra*.

inability to attend, not having any suitable clothes—his baggage had been detained—nothing could give him more pleasure than to attend as he was extremely fond of dancing, but under the circumstances, etc., etc.; in brief, he wrote such a note that the committee had nothing else to do but insist upon his coming in anything he had.

Phil. made his appearance in the midst of the festivities, clad in a suit of "pajamas" (a garment in one piece, much like a child's night-gown and used by the laboring classes in China, parts of the E. Indies and Mexico); red stockings, pointed Turkish slippers and a wig, terminating in a long Chinese queue. The ladies were terribly perplexed and offended, but Reade stood his ground, insisted upon it that he had let the committee know he had no suitable clothes, that they had urged him to come in the best he had and there he was; and there he staid, too, until the end of the hop.

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[November 6, 1880] . . . Lieut. Watts and I had a long conversation about former service together in Arizona; of this my journal of the time gave a sufficiently accurate description. It is sufficient to say here that the country we then scouted in search of hostile Apaches is now filled with a thriving population and that at the head of *Cave Creek*, then an unknown country, is the Rowe Gold mine, a very valuable property. No conversation between Watts and myself would be complete without a reference to "Moses Henderson." "Moses" was a wild Apache boy, one of those who had surrendered and been enlisted as soldiers to hunt down the persistently hostile. He was cross-eyed, hook-nosed, had a tuft of hair hanging over his forehead, a whining voice and a cringing manner; altogether, was so like a Chatham Street Jew clothes dealer that the men in our companies, with their usual felicity in such cases, dubbed him "Moses" and as he certainly looked like Mr. Henderson, a Hebrew merchant of *Prescott, Arizona*, I thought to have a little fun when the campaign [ended] by starting the story that he was Mr. Henderson's little brother who had been recaptured from the Apaches who had carried him off when a child.

It took weeks of patient effort to prepare my pupil. The success crowning my work repaid me ten-fold for the trouble undergone.

When we reached Prescott, I had John Marion, the editor of the "Miner" insert a notice in his paper to the effect that Mr. Abraham Henderson's young brother had been recovered from the Indians and was then in Prescott. The joke deceived a great many people. "Moses" was taken to the front of Henderson's store, where he played his part beautifully. He would seize each passer-by by the coat-collar and assure him that:—"Dot gote luk like hit crowt on you—mine frent. Dem glose vash mate fur der Brince o' Vales. I got a brudder—his name is E-e-e-li and he scholtes, 'Sara-a-h luk vot noice ha-a-ir dis young mane's got.'" He really had learned his piece to perfection and dumfounded everyone who heard him. People would ask, "who are you? What's your name?" to which he would reply—"Moses Henderson," to the great disgust of "old man" Henderson, who never relished a joke in his life and certainly not one of this kind. . . .

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[October 31, 1880] . . . Dr. DeWitt recalled to my mind a very amusing incident of our former acquaintance in *Prescott, Arizona*. The ladies of the little town were desirous of building a church and felt that the Court-House was not the most suitable place for holding religious services. Arizona, the northern part of it especially, was at that period very feebly served so far as ministers were concerned. The few who penetrated there were illiterate, uncouth, often unprincipled, itinerants, who after begging the biggest collection possible, decamped and were seen no more.

I remember in one case the ladies raised about \$300 for a "beat" named Groves, I think, but as soon as he received the money he started for the Los Angeles conference and never returned. The ladies were much dispirited but kept up a bold front, nevertheless, and insisted upon it that Mr. Groves was a "good man" and that any one thinking the contrary must be an atheist, a scoffer and an enemy of religion—But Brother Groves never came back all the same, so the ladies had the task of raising funds all over again.

In this they were assisted by our worthy army chaplain, Alex. Gilmore, as good an old soul as ever lived, but perfectly worthless in any ecclesiastical sense of efficiency. I never heard "old" Gilmore preach but once, but that once was enough to last during my life-time. The text was something about the trumpet of Zion.

"Bee-low ye the tr-rumpet  
"Bee-low ye the tr-rumpet of Zion  
"Sound it in the hi-i-igh per-laces  
"Sound ye the ter-rumpet of Sal-va-a-tion"

This text the worthy parson divided into four parts—What was this ter-rumpet? Why should we ber-low the ter-rumpet? Why should we ber-low it in the hi-i-igh per-la-a-ces? What was Zion and what was Sal-va-a-tion?

After handling his four "heads" in his usual able manner, the worthy parson got down to the "application" and the amen—the old women waked up with a start and the congregation began the massacre of that lovely hymn—"Nearer my God to Thee."

When old Gilmore wasn't butchering theology on Sundays, he passed much of his time in the village school, mangling the English Grammar. The children under his charge, with the keen intuition of their age, understood the value of the old man's equation much better than their parents imagined they did; I need not add that the school was a miniature Bedlam, the worst imp in the whole being Dick Dana, a bright, bold youngster, the son of Major Dana of the Army. Poor Dick was always under the ban—and always without cause. I know this to be so, because he told me so himself: he said that "old Gilmore" was down on him, but that he would have revenge on him. Sure enough the boy had. It happened soon after my conversation with Dick that the chaplain accused him, unjustly of course, of "lamming" one of his schoolmates over the head with a "spit-gob." "Master Dick Dana will stand behind my chair for an hour'n wear a fool's cap." Such was the dread edict. There was no appeal. Every eye turned upon Dick. Every boy and girl felt sure that he would resist the order, as he had so often previously done and gallop home on his pony which was hitched to one of the trees outside.

But no! This noble boy evidently felt that it was his duty to observe the discipline of school even when it bore with unmerited severity upon himself. He walked quietly up to the Chaplain's desk and took his place behind the Dominie as he had been directed.

Gradually, the excitement subsided; the children resumed their studies and the worthy chaplain nodded in his chair, his brown wig half rubbed from his head.

This was precisely the moment for which Dick had been



waiting. A yell as fierce and loud as the war-cry of an Apache Indian filled the little school-room. The chaplain awakened from his doze to see the children giggling and howling in mad delight and Master Dick dashing out of the room with his cherished wig in his hand. Dick jumped on his pony, clapped his heels to his ribs and darted into the plaza, holding the wig in air and crying out—"I've got ole Gilmore's scalp; here it is!" The children used to say afterwards; "we don't have no more fun now since Dick Dana was expelled," as I should say he was by the School Committee.

This was the worthy chaplain who suggested to the ladies that, to raise funds for the contemplated church, they ought to arrange some *tabloos*. The idea spread like wild-fire. Everybody seemed to have *tabloos* on the brain. The ladies said it would be just too sweetly lovely;—they would do all the work, the gentlemen would have no responsibility at all except to pay the bills.

I am sorry to pollute these pages with any reference to the behavior of the tyrant man on this interesting occasion. The tyrant man, individually and collectively, expressed himself as of the opinion that the "hull thing" was a "Dam-m-m hen outfit" and further that the "hens wuz a trying to run the town." I blush to my ears when I make the admission that the term "hens" means the gentler sex, God's last, best gift to man. Some of the more irreligious went so far as to say that Prescott had done well enough so far without "no dam-m-m Gospel Shop" and could get enough trouble without "hevin' no preachers come 'roun.'"

But when "woman wills, she will, you may depend on't." The ladies were fearfully in earnest and the more miserable man scoffed, the more determined they were to make the affair a success. A regular Crusade was inaugurated; everybody was drawn into the arrangement. There was as much harmony as could be expected in a convention of ladies; and to tell the truth, they did work in perfect concord until the time came to distribute parts in the "tabloos" and then we men were let into some fearful secrets. "What, have Mrs. So and So take the part of the Goddess of Liberty—her ankles are too thick!" "No, Miss Blank won't do either, she's too round-shouldered and I'm sure her eyes ain't straight either. What the gentlemen can see in that forward minx, I'm sure I can't tell, but it must be something." And so it went on: heart-burning and calumny—

squabbling and rancor in the name of our Savior who bade us "Love one another." I wish to anticipate a little and say that after awhile the ladies buried the hatchet and smoked the pipe--- I mean drank the cup of peace and unanimously agreed that Lieutenant Bourke's account of their disagreement was all "made up," that he ought to be ashamed of himself and what would his mother think of him if she knew he was going on in this dreadful way! &c, &c, &c.

At last the important day had come. The ladies who "had done *all* the work" looked smiling and fresh as roses, while the men who "hadn't done anything" seemed utterly fagged out. I was one of these wretches. Early in the morning a very sweet lady approached me, went into ecstasies over my appearance, said I always looked so well, expressed herself as happy to think she wasn't a young maiden any more because she didn't know what she should do with such a handsome man living in the same town—and much more to same effect. I wish I could say that I told her—"get thee behind me, Satan," but I didn't. I swallowed all this "taffy" and much more and believed it all.

A glance at the looking glass would have told me that nature had endowed me too liberally in the matter of feet, hands, nose, mouth, ears and eye-brows, but I rejected the overtures of common sense and listened to the voice of the Siren.

My business was to drive tacks, hang up curtains and pictures and under direction of one lady strain my back in moving heavy pieces of furniture which had to be moved back again to their original places whenever some other lady of the management came along. My shoulders and spine were aching from my exertions and I had already knocked one thumb nail off with a tack-hammer, but what of that? Wasn't I regarded by the ladies as one of the handsomest, brightest, bravest, noblest and most generous of men?—No, I wouldn't give up—and anyway, I said, here comes DeWitt, he'll help me with this heavy baggage—Hullo, DeWitt. But DeWitt is talking with *my* lady and his face is beaming with smiles. I play the eavesdropper. Good Lord! She's telling him word for word the very same stuff she told me. He is the handsomest, brightest, bravest, most generous of men, is he? DeWitt! Great Heavens! DeWitt isn't a homely fellow by any means, but I now see through woman's wiles. I drop my tack-hammer, descend the step-

ladder and have ever since been a bitter, uncompromising foe of church fairs, festivals and *Tabloos*. For all that, the *Tabloo* appeared to be fully as great a success as if I had remained faithful to the end. DeWitt performed my duties with as much ability as if he had not usurped the place of the only genuine, original, handsomest, best and bravest and brightest man in the vicinity.

I did not always look upon the matter in this light. For a long time I cherished rancor towards DeWitt, but Time, the healer of all wounds, has poured balm upon my outraged pride and vanity and today I willingly concede that DeWitt did nobly. His principal duty was to take care of the red light in the glare of which the Goddess of Liberty was to appear upon the stage, wrapped in the American flag and surrounded by the representatives of American industry.

It was a thrilling sight, the girls stopped chewing gum and the men stopped their talk of "Yes-sir-ree, He's struck her rich in Cerbat and Jedge Dawkins sez its jest the pootiest ledge *he* ever seed; richer'n the Tiger by a Doggoned sight and reminds him of the Comstock." DeWitt shared in the general excitement and blew so hard upon the red fire that it flared up and burnt off his eye-brows and moustache. In front of the stage the audience, delighted with everything, sat spell-bound, little dreaming of what was so soon to disturb its placidity. Occupying one of the foremost seats was a very pretty girl, Miss Alice Dickinson, who, like many other young ladies, was in that state of mental perplexity that she couldn't quite decide which of her suitors pleased her most. Two of them, more assiduous or more pleasing than the rest, gradually absorbed all her attention and looked upon each other as hated rivals. The young lady managed her cards with great dexterity, keeping her two slaves chained to the wheels of her chariot.

She accepted an invitation from the one we shall designate as Mr. A., but before the evening of the *Tabloos* came around, he was suddenly called away to look after mining interests in the western part of the Territory and had barely time to leave word that he would be back in time or break his neck. The day arrived and as Mr. A. had not yet returned, Miss Dickinson yielded to the pressing invitation of Mr. B. and under his escort, attended the performance, occupying a seat in the full glare of the foot-lights and very close to my own. She had not been especially gracious to

Mr. B. of late and thought that as Mr. A. was safely out of the way she could easily make amends for past coldness and be for this evening at least as agreeable as he could desire. But as Fate would have it, Mr. A. made the journey home with great speed, reached Prescott after dark on this very evening, hastily made his toilet and rushed to the dwelling of his adored one only to find that she had started for the Court-House in company with his rival. There was no help for it; he had to grin and bear it. He repaired himself to the Court-House; found every seat filled and had to content himself with standing room near the door. Close by his elbow, the ladies had placed a small stand with refreshments which they disposed of at Shylock prices. It has always struck me as a queer combination, this mingling of lunch and liturgy, Pumpkin pie and Presbyterianism, Doughnuts and Dogma, but ladies insist upon making it and will make it, I suppose, to the end of time. Mr. A. endeavored to soothe his lacerated feelings with a slab of pumpkin-custard and was slowly conquering grief, when, looking over the heads of those in front of him, he saw his adored cuddling up awfully close to his rival and evidently giving him some very sweet flattery to judge from the delighted countenance of the listener.

Mr. A. was merely human: he could not stand everything. It took him but a second to make up his mind. He took careful aim at his rival's head—Swish!! and the pumpkin pie sailed through the air and landed, not upon his rival's head, as he had intended, but just back of Miss Dickinson's ear. The confusion and uproar occasioned were, I need not say, very great. Mr. A. of course, escaped, altho' Mr. B. promptly jerked out his six-shooter and ran up the aisle to catch him and shoot him. Much sympathy was felt for the poor young lady and she stood in want of every bit of it, as I don't think I ever saw a lady in sadder plight than she was with all this pumpkin pulp filling up one ear and covering neck, collar and hair. She tried hard to rake it out with her fingers, but without success and had to remain through the remainder of the performance, happily only a few moments, with all the marks of the unfortunate affair upon her garments.

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[March 20th, 1880] . . . The newspapers today contain telegrams announcing the completion of the Southern Pacific

R. R. to *Tucson*, Arizona. No event in the history of American railroad construction illustrates more strikingly the melting away of the first of old time apathy and ignorance which kept this grand continent in the fetters of barbarism. Tucson, founded in 1542,<sup>5</sup> by the Spaniards as a "mission" for the Indians of Arizona has preserved in a marked degree to the present hour all the tokens of its mixed Castilian and Papago origin. Proud of its claim to being considered the oldest town within the limits of the United States, it had apparently an equal pride in being regarded as the dirtiest. In all its streets and alleys, offal, dirt, straw and rubbish were allowed to lie in piles undisturbed save by the scratching of inquisitive hens or the rooting of drowsy pigs. Its swarthy "caballeros" proudly bestrode their half-starved "bronco" ponies hardly big enough to support the weight of the immense saddle covering them from loin to withers. In the bright fresh air of the morning, the solemn clank of the Cathedral bells summoned to early mass groups of dusky maidens whose faces betrayed their Indian lineage, but in whose soft eyes lurked the witchery of Andalusia and Granada.

Jesús and José, Ramón and Miguel grew from happy, prattling babyhood to the full vigor of adolescence with scarce a care except such as must ever surround the games of early boyhood or later on attend the "mozo" who is becoming deft and skilful in use of lasso, spur and pistol. To play with marbles, tops and ball—to play all these languidly and as they were languidly laid by to take up with equal languor the cigarrito, and the use of "mescal"—to lazily plow the fields, or work in an automatic kind of a way at making adobes—these were the occupations of the male sex. Nothing was done energetically, unless we speak of riding the "bronco" ponies which was always at a furious gallop or the dancing with their "dulcineas" at the frequent "bailes" which continued from the setting of the sun until the dawning of the same.

With the girls, the same weary lassitude marked every action, altho' the women as a class were more energetic than the men and never lacked an exquisite ease and grace of motion which would have made glad the heart of a sculptor.

Anita, Francesquita, Guadalupe and Jesuscita quietly baked their tortillas, prepared the "chile con tomatos,"

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5. A mistake of some 200 years, due to writers who had connected Tucson with the time of Coronado.

"con huevos," y "con gallina," or boiled the strong coffee which was to wash down the noon-day meal and then, first gracefully rolling and lighting for herself a cigaritto, one would gently touch the strings of harp or guitar and sing, in a voice not altogether unmusical, strains of love and flowers, while the others busied their hands in deft lace and needle-work or wagged their jaws in gossip about their absent neighbors.

Thus passed the day with these primeval people when I first knew them in 1869-70-71; nothing disturbed the monotonous routine of daily life but an occasional "carrera" (horse race) or "pelea de gallos" (cock-fight) or perhaps Don Carlos Velasco was about to christen another olive branch and would celebrate the event with an appropriate "spread" to which all the worthy "compadres," "comadres" and "tocallos" of the village would hasten to do full justice.

The "Americanos" (may the Devil fly away with them!) had already planted their feet in the sacred dust of Tucson and were slowly but surely drawing to their own coffers every cent in the country.

Mexican social life went on all the same, the presence of the Anglo-Saxon element making about as much difference in the life current of the place as would the casting of large stones by mischievous boys into the bed of a slow-moving brook.

With the coming of the iron horse all will soon be changed; the dignified, grave and courteous bearing of the Castilian will give way to the prying, obtrusive and calculating manners of the Yankee and the Jew: soon from the signs above the doors of the "tendajones" will disappear the names of Velasco, Carrillo, Leon and Suastegui and flaring black and white will tell us that "Gottlieb and Co." deal in "Cheap Clothing" or that G. Washington Smith has just received another invoice of "Gents' Nobby Eight Dollar Ulsters." I know its heresy to say so, but I am just a trifle sorry to hear that Tucson is being so rapidly Americanized: I had much rather have it remain as it was, dirty, dusty, vermin-infested if you will, but for all, a link binding our bustling aggressive civilization to the years when men in their sober senses scoured this vast continent in search of fountains of youth and caskets of treasure or when benevolent, good-hearted people burned their fellow creatures at the stake for God's sake. . . .

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[June 1st, 1878] . . . Left Omaha and Council Bluff, by the Kansas City, St. Joe and Council Bluffs R. R. for St. Louis, where a quick connection was made in the Grand Union Depot with the Ohio and Mississippi R. R. for Cincinnati. On the latter train was pleased to find my old friend Lieut. E. D. Keyes, 5th Cavalry, and mother, travelling from Texas to Washington. Keyes, a bright intellect ruined by addiction to liquor, promised at one time to be an ornament to the service, but dissipation brought about his dismissal and, to my unfeigned regret, I saw that he was still a victim to his degrading passion and steadily running downhill.

In 1872, Keyes and myself, formed part of the detachment, which, under command of Col. Coppinger, 23 Inf'y, sailed from San Francisco, in the good steamer, "Newbern," to the mouth of the Colorado River, in the gulf of California. The voyage of some 2,000 miles occupied 13 days, a period long enough to enable us to become pretty thoroughly acquainted with each other; outside of pleasant comradeship of the occasion not much can be said of the journey. The arid cliffs of Baja California, Sinaloa and Sonora, gave us a very unfavorable idea of Mexico; a school of dolphins, glistening in the sun, a long shark, or, semi-periodically, a whale, or what we land-lubbers thought must be whales or sea-serpents, helped to kill time pretty well; then at meridian, we used to "haul the log" or "take the sun" with Captain McDonough, an odd genius, (since drowned at sea). The astronomical part of the business didn't interest us very much; strictly speaking, I never thought that our worthy skipper knew how to handle a sextant; he preferred running his ship along the coast, of which every promontory and indentation was perfectly well-known to him; but, if he couldn't manage a sextant, he could make a very acceptable toddy, and every day, just as soon as the log had been read and the bearings determined, proofs of his skill in his favorite line were in eager demand by a throng of thirsty young officers. As McDonough was a perfect skinflint about his whiskey, strategy had to be brought into play whenever we felt like having more than one round of the enticing beverage; there was only one vulnerable point in the skipper's character; it was his Achilles' heel, but we found it out almost intuitively and assailed him there every time with success. He was very fond of telling us about his "viges"; his "vige" to Callao, his first "vige" out from

Liverpool, his second "vige" to Puget Sound, and so on.

To these we listened with intense gravity and interest, more or less simulated. Our patience never went without its reward. The Captain's throat was certain to become parched and we shared in the toddy, brewed for its refreshment.

Peace be to his ashes. Softly let the waves of the Gulf of Cortez sing his requiem. He was the biggest liar I ever met, and some of his stories of adventure were masterpieces of mendacity.

Colonel Coppinger, our worthy commander, was one of the neatest men in his dress I ever knew: the one apprehension that clouded upon his mind was that our large batch of recruits would not keep themselves clean. To insure absolute cleanliness among them became almost a mania with him: every fine morning, he would have large squads of them stand out on the forecastle, while water was thrown over them from the force pumps.

This seemed to tickle the soldiers amazingly: the voyage was made very pleasantly, only one man lost and he drowned through his own cursed carelessness and disobedience of orders, while we were steaming into the mouth of the muddy Colorado.

Then as we got upon the river steamboat, "Cocopah," Jack Mellon, master, and steamed up the channel to Ehrenburg, 400 and odd miles, it seemed as if our troubles had only commenced. We couldn't make more than 62 miles a day, against the swift current, and, while the sun lasted, groaned on account of the heat and at night suffered a little from the mosquitoes, but not much, for it was then in the month of November (1872).

When we would come to a "wood-landing," everybody rushed ashore. Our "roustabouts" were Cocopah Indians and Mexicans, who worked to my unpracticed eye very faithfully. This wasn't the first mate's opinion and the way that man poured out profanity and tobacco juice from his mouth was a caution. The "roustabouts" never seemed to mind him in the least, and probably fancied he was praising their good looks whenever he "damned their eyes." About halfway up from Point Isabel (the miserable collection of hovels at the mouth of the river) to Fort Yuma, Cal. (the first point inside of the American lines) we met the steamboat "Gila," commanded by Captain Mellon's friend and comrade of years, Captain Steve Thorn.



The meeting was very funny: the two men were of the same general type—red-faced, broad-shouldered, warty-knuckled, deep-chested, profane, good-hearted, honest old fresh water mariners, who could out-drink, out-smoke, out-chew, or out-wear any two men in Arizona—and that's saying a good deal. Each was very proud of his boat, and as this periodical meeting was always looked forward to with fond anticipations—the respective commanders were arrayed sumptuously in their “nobbiest” apparel. Each wore black doe-skin pantaloons, and a white linen shirt which would have been very presentable, if it had not been so disfigured with so much jewelry. Neither wore a collar, but Mellon's garment was buttoned at the neck, while Thorn's lay open carelessly, exposing a red-flannel undershirt beneath. In the matter of jewelry, Thorn completely eclipsed our more unpretentious commander, but either could have equipped a Jew pedlar with the amount carried on his person. Thorn had, besides the usual studs and cuff-buttons, not far from half a dozen breastpins, all of them bounteous in material and one or two of good workmanship. He had a good-sized gold anchor, held by a small cable to a gold cross, and, if I remember correctly, he also wore a gold anvil, almost big enough for the uses of a blacksmith. But he didn't have any hat, at least not at that moment, while Captain Mellon, in a brand new, black silk “plug,” presented by admiring friends in San Francisco, fairly obscured the glories of Solomon.

As the steamboats bumped their prows together and the gangs of “roustabouts” were, under the jealous supervision of two screaming and swearing mates, actively fastening cables and running gangway planks between them, two streams of simultaneous objurgation burst from the lips of our rival skippers.

“Easy thar with your blank, blank, blank, old canal-boat, you horny-handed, land lubber.”

“Awast you bilious-eyed, blabbering mouthed mud-turtle—don't talk to your boss, your master, you dash, dash, dash, dash son of a sea-cook.” I didn't hear all the conversation; about the time I descended to the lower deck, the air was blue and hot and sulphurous with profanity, but our gallant Captain was already silencing his less accomplished adversary. At Fort Yuma our party broke up; myself, under orders to rejoin General Crook, at Prescott and the

others, under Colonel Coppinger, to proceed, by easy marches, to their proper stations.

Fort Yuma fully merited all the bad reputation given it in the camp-talk of the army, as the hottest and most dreary post in our country. During the time of our stay, there wasn't much to be seen, except now and then a squad of "Cocopah," Yuma or "Mojave" Indians lazily floating in the water which appeared to all intents and purposes to be their native element.

Give one of those Indians enough blue mud with which to plaster his hair as a shield against the sun and a cotton-wood log to support him partially in the water, and he will be happy as any king and float on the turbid bosom of the Colorado, until he meets an upcoming steamer, whereon he knows he is always welcome to a ride back to his little patch of squashes and melons, with which he will surfeit himself until the humor takes him for another float in the river, or until some brother Indian challenges him to a game at cards—the ruling passion of all these tribes. I am wandering away from my text, seemingly, but not in reality, as Keyes has been in my mind all this time. He was a most jovial companion, one fitted for better things than the life of a drunkard.

These reminiscences, awakened by meeting with him, are inserted because I fear that the note-books of that date, 1872, have been mislaid, destroyed or stolen.

*(To be continued)*