

THEIR FIRST BROTHER.

Isn't he a wonder. Isn't he a pet? Now we've got a brother. Who never had one yet!

The Great Hesper.

BY FRANK BARRETT.

CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED.

"I think we may as well get off it, for that case." "Wal, yes. It ain't more risky standin' on it than standin' under it; but as we've got to go under it, and down the hole, we may as well git."

"There ain't no need to get ourselves in a muck over this job. We'll put our rubbers on," he said, "the wet drips through."

"They don't know danger—kids don't," said Brace, in a low tone. "End," he added, looking into the depths about him unseeingly.

"It's the very same," said Brace, taking the stone in his hand. "Do you take care of it," said I, "for I find enough to do to take care of myself."

"Wall, I reckon it won't be long afore we're on the best side o' this hole," he replied, putting the stone in his pocket.

"The ropes had been years exposed to the damp, and they are bound to go one day. Hef they should happen to go this day, this here knotted rope may come in particular handy. You know how to use it, my gol. Here's for a start."

"What's that?" he asked sharply, holding the upper rope with one hand, while he raised the torch with the other, and peered out into the darkness.

"A cachette," he explained, is a place where you keep things snug. A most every miner, before the vigilance committee nominated me judge, had a cachette. This was mine, and many a ounce I've brought down here; for you see, barvin' accidents, it's wonder'ful safe. You will allow that no one could find his way down here in the dark? (I shuddered at the thought of any one attempting such a fearful venture), and from here right up to the hole is a fair straight line, so that no light could come down without it being seen; but that ain't the only safeguard, as you shall see. Come on, sir."

lowed ample standing room for us three. "The greaser never got no furdur cown than this; but it weren't fur enough for me," said Brace. "I had my idea of gettin' right down to the bottom of this hole, where these waters must have carried tons of gold."

"But the ledge ends here." "It do; but," he added, lifting his torch, "it goes on again over there." The light fell on a jutting projection of quartz upon the opposite side of the chasm, distant at least twenty feet.

"We must hitch 'em tight—give us a hand, sir," he said. I helped him to make the ropes taut, and fasten their loose ends upon the projecting crags that he had long employed for that purpose.

"There sir," he said, taking his torch from Lola, and holding it over the black gulf, "there's as pretty a bridge and hand-rail as the heart of a man could reasonably desire."

"For all that, I held my breath as I saw him step out on the lower rope, and make his way holding by the upper one, across that black abyss. My turn came and with the blood humming in my ears, I stepped out upon the rope. It swung to and fro in the middle, and I was seized with that irresistible suggestion of self-destruction which affects the imagination of most people in looking down from an extraordinary height.

"You can stay here; you're too heavy for where I'm going," said she, taking the torch from his hand. With a swiftness that terrified me, she went down the side of the precipice, finding foothold where we, looking down from the projection, could see none.

"They don't know danger—kids don't," said Brace, in a low tone. "End," he added, looking into the depths about him unseeingly. "I wouldn't mind feeling the same myself. First time I ever felt skeery, down this hole, and I'm darned if it shan't be the last. I'm gettin' too old to enjy risky work."

"I could not take my eyes from the light below, as it passed in jerks from point to point. At last it stopped, and after a minute's pause, to my great relief, it began to return.

Quicker and quicker the light danced along until I felt sick and giddy with fear for the girl's safety; and then, with one last bound, she stood upon our shelf of rock, holding the Great Hesper in her hand. "Am I good?" she asked earnestly, nestling up to my side.

when he was no longer visible to our eyes. This reflection struck me as a torch in hand, I sprang upon the rope bridge to cross to my fallen partner. "Back, pardner, back," groaned Brace; "he's got the Hesper, and he'll have your life—back!"

I raised my torch, and looking toward the ledge, I saw a man kneeling over Brace. He raised his arm to silence Brace, and the light fell on the bright blade of the knife in his hand. I shouted. Turning, he saw me midway across the chasm, and sprang to his feet. Then I recognized him. It was Van Hoek.

It was he, but could I believe my senses? His eyes were not the same. At that distance his sightless eyes should have been indistinct. He came from his cadaverous face, now they shone out black and lustrous. Yet in that instant, as he looked toward me, they seemed to fade away in the light of my torch. And this was no deception of my sight.

With a savage cry of rage he held up his arms to shield his eyes from the light, and grasping his knife, he made his way quickly toward the rock to which the rope on which I stood was attached.

In a moment the whole mystery was revealed. He was a Nycalops, and his eyes, blind in the light, were gifted with the extraordinary power of seeing in the dark—a power by which was explained all that had hitherto been inscrutable in the robbery of the Great Hesper and the attendants even at Monken Abbey.

With a perception that he intended to cut the rope which sustained me, I hastened to reach the ledge on which he stood. But my progress was necessarily slow, for the lower cord, stretched with the weight upon it, formed a deep bend, and my damp boots slipped upon its wet surface.

Which would he cut first? If it were the upper one, I must trust to catching the lower as I fell. With this view, I kept myself as perpendicular as circumstances permitted; at the same time grasping the upper one with all my force, in case he cut the lower one.

I was within a yard of the rock when I felt the rope under my foot jerk as Van Hoek cut through the first strands; the next instant it went all together, and I was left swinging by my hands to the upper rope over the chasm.

William had Presence of Mind. William the Fourth of England seemed in a momentary dilemma one day when, at the table with several officers, he ordered the waiter to "Take away that marine there," pointing to an empty bottle. "Your majesty," inquired a colonel of marines, "do you compare an empty bottle to a member of our branch of the service?" "Yes," replied the monarch as if a sudden thought had struck him, "I mean it has done its duty once and it is ready to do it again."—Argonaut.

LEGISLATIVE DOINGS.

NEBRASKA REPRESENTATIVES AT WORK.

Summary of the Past Week—Bills Introduced, With Number, Author and Text—Committees—Plenty of Matter to Work On—Other News.

IN THE HOUSE.

Tuesday, January 19. After roll call in the house this morning Colonel Alexander Hogeland was granted permission to discuss the curfew law applied to the reform of neglected children.

Twenty-six new bills were introduced at the morning session. Following are among the important ones: H. R. No. 40, by Mr. Snyder—To prohibit issuance of bonds for transportation.

H. R. No. 41, by Mr. Clark of Lancaster—To amend section 2728 of the compiled statutes of 1895, relating to school lands and funds, to prevent the further sale of school lands.

H. R. No. 125, by Burkett of Lancaster—To amend section 2728 of the compiled statutes of 1895 of Nebraska, relating to school lands.

H. R. No. 127, by Julius Smith—To amend chapter 80, compiled statutes of 1895, relating to school lands and funds, to prevent the further sale of school lands.

H. R. No. 128, by George U. Jones—An act providing for the payment of taxes in installments of not less than 25 per cent of the amount due at time of payment.

H. R. No. 129, by Casebeer of Gage—An act providing for the payment of taxes in installments of not less than 25 per cent of the amount due at time of payment.

H. R. No. 130, by Klaster—An act to amend section 3972 of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, and to repeal said original section defining a legal newspaper.

H. R. No. 131, by Byram—An act to amend section 109, 112, 123, 126, 127, 129, 134, 137 and 181, of an act entitled "An act to provide a system of revenue," approved March 1, 1879, to repeal said original section and to repeal section 126 of said act.

H. R. No. 132, by Rich—An act defining cruelty to children, prescribing punishment for, and for guardianship of children in certain cases.

H. R. No. 133, by Rich—An act defining cruelty to children, prescribing punishment for, and for guardianship of children in certain cases.

H. R. No. 134, by Rich—An act providing for the sale upon execution of stock and corporations, and interests in companies not incorporated and designating the manner of levying thereupon under executions and writs of attachment.

H. R. No. 135, by Rich—To amend section 2490, chapter 23, of the compiled statutes of Nebraska for the year 1895, to provide that the widower of a deceased intestate shall be entitled to receive the same share of the residue of said intestate's personal estate as a child of the intestate would be entitled to, and to repeal said section as now existing.

H. R. No. 136, by Rich—To authorize and empower county clerks to grant to executors, administrators and guardians a license to mortgage real estate for certain purposes, to appoint guardians ad litem for minors and if necessary authorizing and empowering county courts to appoint a special administrator to carry out the provisions of this act.

H. R. No. 137, by Rich—To amend section 2445, chapter 23, entitled "decidents," of the compiled statutes of Nebraska for the year 1895, to provide that the widower of a deceased intestate shall be entitled to receive the same share of the residue of said intestate's personal estate as a child of the intestate would be entitled to, and to repeal said section as now existing.

H. R. No. 138, by Rich—To amend section 27 of chapter 19 of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, entitled "courts," and to repeal said section 27 as heretofore existing relative to the venue law.

H. R. No. 142, by Hull—To regulate the manufacture and sale of vivagars, to prevent deception and fraud therein, and to provide penalties for violations thereof.

H. R. No. 144, by Burkett—An act relating to distorting, mutilating, desecrating, exposing, receiving, concealing or otherwise interfering with, dead human bodies, aiding and assisting in the doing of the same, declaring the same to be unlawful and a crime, defining the crime thereof, and providing for its punishment, and repealing sections 244 and 245 of chapter 23 of the criminal code of the state of Nebraska.

H. R. No. 145, by Soderman—To amend section 19, entitled "swamy," and section 20, entitled "decidents," of chapter 7 of the compiled statutes of the state of Nebraska for the year 1895, and to repeal said original section providing reduced pay for county attorneys.

H. R. No. 146, by Kapp—To authorize counties, precincts, townships, towns, cities, villages and school districts to compromise their indebtedness of whatever nature and issue bonds therefor and issue new bonds in case debt compromised be a bonded debt. And repealing sections 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36 of chapter 9 compiled statutes of Nebraska.

H. R. No. 147, by Feiler—To amend section 328, 331 and 332 of title 10, chapter 1, compiled statutes of Nebraska for 1895, entitled "evidence," allowing persons before regarded as incompetent witnesses to testify in case of fraud.

H. R. No. 148, by Feiler—To amend section 581, of the code of civil procedure, and to repeal said original section relative to final orders made in special proceedings.

H. R. No. 149, by Loomis—To amend section 535 of the criminal code and make the county liable for costs in cases of misdemeanor.

H. R. No. 150, by Hull—To regulate the manufacture and sale of cider, to prevent adulteration, deception and fraud therein, and to provide penalties for violations thereof.

H. R. No. 151, by Loomis—To amend section 28 of chapter 34, entitled "guardians and wards," of the compiled statutes of 1895 and to repeal said section as now existing relative to removal of guardians.

H. R. No. 152, by Loomis—To define the liability of railroad companies for damages sustained by employees, by reason of the negligence of other employees, making every railroad in the state liable for damages by reason of negligence without contributory negligence on the part of the injured party.

H. R. No. 153, by Loomis—To provide for the destruction of noxious weeds and for the collection of expenses incurred thereby, to fix penalties for the violation of this act and to repeal sections 412, 414, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 426, 427 and 428, compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895. The bill provides for the destruction of chablis, sunflowers, snap dragon, burdock and cockle burr.

H. R. No. 154, by Wooster—Defining that gold and silver shall be legal tender in the payment of debt.

H. R. No. 155, by Grimes—A joint resolution proposing an amendment to section 1, of article 7, of the constitution of the state of Nebraska, relating to woman suffrage.

H. R. No. 156, by Hamilton—To amend section 20 of chapter 7, of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, and to repeal said original section as now existing relative to assistants to county attorneys.

H. R. No. 157, by Hamilton—To amend section 8, of chapter 28, of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, relative to sheriff's fees.

H. R. No. 158, by Hamilton—To amend section 3, of chapter 28, of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, relative to fees of the clerk of the district court.

H. R. No. 159, by McGee—To amend section 31 of chapter 19 of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, and to repeal said section as now existing relative to town boards.

H. R. No. 160, by Severa—To amend section 189 of chapter 19 of the criminal code, entitled "offenses against election laws," and to repeal said section.

H. R. No. 161, by Eastman—An act to assist and develop the Iowa, Lake Superior & Gulf Railroad in the state of Nebraska.

H. R. No. 162, by Crook—To collect a direct tax on dogs, for the purpose of creating a fund for the payment of the bounty on wolves, coyotes and wildcats, and the suppression of the dog nuisance.

H. R. No. 163, by Dohson—To amend section 119 of chapter 77 of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of the year 1895, and provide that land sold for taxes may be redeemed in three years.

H. R. No. 164, by Welch—An act to prevent the desecration of the American flag.

H. R. No. 165, by Van Horn—An act entitled "An act to amend section 4 of chapter 89 of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, entitled 'swamp lands,' and to repeal said original section."

H. R. No. 166, by McCracken—To amend section 847, title 27, of the compiled statutes of Nebraska of 1895, code of civil procedure, relative to degree of infelicity.

H. R. No. 167, by Grandstaff—To amend section 3, chapter 73, subdivision 3, of compiled statutes of Nebraska, 1895, naming the legal holidays when school teachers shall not be required to teach.

H. R. No. 168, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

H. R. No. 169, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

H. R. No. 170, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

H. R. No. 171, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

H. R. No. 172, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

H. R. No. 173, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

H. R. No. 174, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.

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H. R. No. 181, by Horner—To provide for improving and maintaining public roads.