

Below the midnight now,
The shadows of the night
The moonlight glimmers
In the distance, dimly
The breeze is quiet
And through the rhythmic silence falls
The throbbing of vesper hymns, that leaves
You distant wood which night entralls.

And while the solemn trees at prayer,
Chant low their mystic litany,
An awful majesty they wear,
Like prophets of eternities!
Unobscured of the clamorous world,
Or, mindful thus of its dark stain,
With reverent hands of peace upheld,
In pleadings for its heavy pain.

Swift stalks devouring Darkness forth
In giant shapes; and Twilight pale
Yields her meek reign 'mid dying mirth,
And heaven begins her starry tale,
And through the tender even song,
The last low accents of the day
Blend with the far receding throng,
Of joys that passed on the way.
—Lulu Curran in Youth's Companion.

ENRIQUE.

Enrique was the child of some Spanish, or, more properly, Spanish-American, people who had been friends of Mr. French, and who, when they died, had left their little boy to his care. Both his wife and he had taken a strong fancy to the pretty orphan, and had finally adopted him.

The summer—the dry season—of California was just beginning. Enrique was a little fagged with his studies, and it had been deemed advisable to send him to the coast to recruit. Pescadero had been selected as at once healthful, and possessing the proper attractions for the little fellow, and the time had come for him to be made ready. But just as everything else had been arranged, his board engaged at the house of a fatherly ranchero, even his little trunk brought down from the attic—when, in short, all things were ready to be got ready—what should occur but a startling stage-coach robbery!

When Enrique got out upon the platform at Redwood, there was a tall, spare man with a face heavily bearded and much sunburned, ready to show the passengers to the stage. This personage proved to be the driver himself, and Enrique looked with deep respect at his tall, strong figure as he moved about directing how things should go, and nodding his head authoritatively.

At last everything seemed to be arranged; Enrique and three of the other passengers—all women—had been disposed of inside, a stout old gentleman and a tall young man had been given seats upon the box, and the driver mounted to his place. He received the reins graciously from an assistant, pulled his gloves a little better in place, and gave the signal to the horses. Away they went at a great pace.

First they cradled and bounced along the streets of the little town, then proceeded more slowly across the black, flat open country covered with farwood that extends to the beginning of the foot hills; and at last, more moderately still, up the hills themselves.

Now it was very uncomfortable, for a while. The sun poured down, the dust rose up, and no refreshing breeze found its way into the deep cut road. The poor horses clattered and sweated and panted. The stout man outside put up his umbrella and grumbled. The passengers with Enrique complained and "Oh-deared."

At last they reached the little hamlet of Searsville, and here the driver stopped the horses. They were glad enough, poor brutes, for the moment's rest, and gladder still when water was brought and they were allowed to plunge their heads up to the very eyes in its coolness.

Then forward again, and presently the way became more agreeable. The road wound about more exposed places, little puffs of air reached them, and now they rolled down into little dells where the cool trees almost met overhead.

"I heard this mornin' how the driver was goin' to carry three or four guns with him, after this," said one of the women, who sat by Enrique. "I didn't see nothin' of 'em," she continued, "when I got in, but I s'pose he must have hid 'em round somewheres. Can't be he would tempt Providence not to take 'em."

"Ler!" said another woman. "I hope to mercy he hain't took 'em. What could he do lone aginst sight or ten road agents? I'm sure, for my part, I should go for all han's bein' just as submissive as they could, s'pos'n the agents did come."

"And I think with you," said the third passenger, a lady like, rather pretty young woman, somewhat better-dressed than the others. "We could do nothing to resist a gang of men fully armed and determined. I am sure, for my part, I only came today because I thought it would be an unusually safe time. Lightning rarely strikes twice in the same place."

"That's what father said," here spoke up Enrique. He judged it a fitting time to say a word, and was heartily tired of keeping still. "He thought the robbers would keep away from this stage for a while," he went on, "and hid, maybe, for a spell, like me."

The bright, animated countenance of the boy, and especially his great, dark, Spanish eyes, had been observed by his fellow passengers for some time, but his rather shy manner had prevented their making any advances toward acquaintance. They were glad to hear his voice, and at once replied to him. They had succeeded in finding out most of his brief history, and had learned that he was nearly 10 years old, when they were interrupted by the coach stopping.

The passengers all glanced out in some alarm, but were reassured by discovering that it was merely a pause for a way passenger. He seemed to have come out of a kind of gorge, and appeared to have come across from another road. He was a short, stoutly built man, dressed in a grey business suit, was smoothly shaven and wore green spectacles. He appeared to be about 45 or perhaps 50 years old.

"I think I will ride inside, if there is room," he said, in a pleasant, rather

As he spoke he came up to the coach door. "Plenty of room," said the driver. He descended as he spoke and let in the stranger. The others made room for him promptly, and he was soon seated beside the pleasant young lady. He had no baggage, but carried simply a stout cane.

There was something attractive about the man's face, and all were pleased with him. Perhaps they thought he would be a valuable aid in case there should be trouble from the dreaded "agents."

Now the road began to ascend once more, and soon the coach had reached the loftiest altitude of the trip. The whole Santa Clara valley lay spread out like a map at their feet, and far in the distance loomed the blue peaks of the northern spur of the Coast Range. The air here was thin and hard to breathe, and one seemed almost neighbor to the blue summer sky with its tracery of white low lying clouds.

The driver now urged his horses a little, and they bowled along at a good pace over the mile or so of smooth road that extended along the summit. Soon they entered upon a narrow, winding way, penetrating a growth of low branched trees, and with its course cut out of the side of the mountain like a shelf. So onward till at last they reached the open again. It was high noon now, and time they reached Weeks' ranch.

A tremendous crack of the driver's whip, a swinging, cradling gallop, and they tore around a low hill, and in a moment were descending a little declivity to a large farm house.

A dexterous, back handed twist of the whip, dropping it in his socket, a quick gathering of the reins in the driver's hands, now a firm foot on the brake. Presto! it was done. One sudden jerk, and then a jolt.

"How are ye, Mr. Weeks?" says the driver. It was an old trick with him, and why should he not be cool? But Enrique thought that it was a wonderful performance, and his admiration for the driver increased.

The passengers hastened to rid themselves of what dust they could and sat down to dinner. This was presently over, and they saw the four new horses put to, in place of the six that had brought them hither, and then they took their places again.

"Why do they put only four horses in place of the six?" Enrique ventured to ask the new passenger, as they started.

"Because," said the man, with a pleasant smile, "the way is now mostly down hill."

"Thank you," said Enrique, much gratified. The man smiled again.

"He's a first class chap," thought the lad to himself. "I reckon he likes boys."

The fresh horses now seemed disposed to show their mettle, and the driver was willing that they should. So they dashed on bravely for a while, and during the interval no one seemed disposed to talk. A few miles further and they came down to a slower pace, and now the way was growing wilder and more rocky.

"It was along here somewhere, I was told, that the stage was robbed," said the gentleman with the spectacles. His hearers started.

"Great Joshua! I hope they ain't none round this time," said the old lady, who had been formerly for war.

"I told Mr. Dillyhook 'fore I left this mornin'," she went on, "that jest as likely as not some of the critters might pounce on us." He only jest laffed at me."

"And I told my husband," said the other older woman, "says I, Mr. Penridge, if I come back dead to-night, you musn't be surprised," and he said he wouldn't. I do believe he didn't feel jest right about havin' me come, though, truly."

The young lady and the gentleman smiled in spite of themselves, and even Enrique was amused. The two women chattered on. Soon they passed through the romantic little village of San Gregorio. Here the two old ladies made some talk about "gittin' up and stoppin' over," but made no move to carry the idea into execution. Now they were whirling through a desolate region, and presently the horses were holding back, aided by the break, down a long and perilously steep hill.

Looking out Enrique saw, on one hand, a high, bald cliff, and on the other a frightful ravine, and still further on a long succession of gulches, precipitous cliffs, and bare, rocky hillsides. Always on the left rose the frowning, craggy mountain. He drew in his head with a little sigh.

"What is it?" asked the young lady, pleasantly.

"Nothing," said Enrique, trying to smile back. He was ashamed of the depression this wild scenery gave him, and like the little man he was, would not say anything to disturb the others.

Now the stage lurched, and came to an abrupt halt.

"Yes," they heard the driver say, "I saw 'em."

"Then drive slowly," said a voice, which they recognized as that of the tall young man.

"Get your pop ready," he added, next moment, "I do believe there's goin' to be bustness."

The young lady turned deadly pale. The other women uttered dismal groans. Even the man in the glasses looked disturbed. As for little Enrique he did not quite understand it all, but felt strangely excited.

"Hello!" said the driver, "Why them fellers are comin' down, and mean to show themselves. Bold, ain't they?"

"One, two, three, four," answered the young man rather irrelevantly.

"Four of them?"

"Yes, they've got down into the road, and are waiting. Drive on."

Here Mrs. Dillyhook thrust her head out of the window. She drew it in abruptly.

"Great Joshua! There's four men armed to the teeth, a-standin' down there in the road. What will become of us? Oh, dear, why did I ever leave my home and poor Mr. Dillyhook? Oh dear! Oh dear!"

"Be quiet, madam!" This in a stern voice from the young man on the box.

"There may be no danger at all, and

if there is we must have absolute quiet. You must be ready to act as we direct."

"Who is that feller?" faintly inquired Mrs. Dillyhook.

"I think he is Wells-Fargo's express messenger," said the gentleman with spectacles. "I noticed that he looked carefully after a box he took up with him."

The poor woman groaned, but made no other rejoinder.

Now the stage jolted on again slowly, and presently came to a halt once more. They were now just beneath a huge, lowering cliff, while on the other side was a fearful ravine. A little to one side of the cliff the mountain receded less abruptly, and here grew a few stunted trees and bushes. A kind of sheep path here appeared, and it seemed to have been by this that the new comers had descended.

Enrique thrust out his head once more. Far away to the south and east he could see where the road repeated itself, in a white, indistinct line. Just below this it appeared more plainly again. He had heard his father say that near Pescadero there was a place where the road wound about in such a manner that three distinct sections of it could be seen at once, one above the other. He knew that this must be the place. They were then upon the upper of these shelves or terraces. He was enabled to see the two sections, because the road there curved.

All this took but a glance, and he noted it scarcely realizing that he did so. Then he leaned out still further, and looked eagerly for the four men.

There they came, guns in their hands, and dressed in rough, coarse clothes. But what interested him most was the fact that they were not masked, as road agents were said to be, and that they carried their weapons in a peaceful manner.

"Only a party of hunters," he thought, with a glad jump of the heart. Then his eye happened to rest on the uppermost distant curve of the road. Something was flashing in the afternoon sun and creatures like horses were seen to be in motion.

"A party of men with guns," he said to himself, "and they are riding dreadfully fast. What can they be after?"

He sank back in his seat too much excited to speak, or scarcely to think. Just then—"Well, Buckskin Tom, how's the old body? I used to know you, but guess you've forgotten me. My name's Chandler, from Deer Licks."

"Don't know you, Mr. Chandler," they heard the driver say.

"No; thought you didn't. Well, me and the kit of us here have been huntin' and we're pretty tired. Reckon you can give us a lift to Pescadero."

They heard a low murmur from the box at this, and it was apparent that the driver and the express messenger were talking. Once or twice they also thought they heard the tones of the stout passenger.

"Can't accommodate you," spoke up the driver, at last. "It's only a mile to Kennett's ranch. Keep the road we're going a mile, and take the first turn to the left. Only half a mile from there, and Kennett will keep you till you are rested."

Once more Enrique ventured to peep from the window. He witnessed a sight that gave him a thrill of astonishment and terror. One of the four men was standing near the window, and Enrique saw that one of his long whiskers was hanging loose from his face. It was evident that the man wore a false beard.

A glance at the other three strangers showed that they also wore an unusual amount of hair about their faces. It was evident that they, too, were disguised.

Scarcely had Enrique made this startling discovery, when their fellow passenger with the spectacles drew off his gloves, and made as though to leave the coach. The boy, glancing at him in surprise, saw that he was fumbling with some object in an inner pocket, and the next moment he produced a small revolver. His mouth had a fierce, set look now, and his eyes seemed to shine through his spectacles in a way that terrified the lad. While Enrique yet stared at him he deliberately cocked the revolver, deftly opened the coach door, and swung himself out upon the step.

The next moment he pointed his revolver up at the messenger. Before a word could be said, a motion made, a pistol shot rang out from the box, and the man with the detached beard dropped instantly from sight.

"He on your whiskers better, next time, Tiger Rod!" thundered the voice of the express messenger. "I'm on to your game. Give 'em the lash, driver!"

As he spoke the crack of the heavy stage whip sounded, and the coach made a great bound forward.

Meantime, how had it fared with the man with the spectacles?

We have seen that he had raised his pistol, and seemed in the very act of firing it. It was at this precise moment that the messenger himself had fired, and in doing so had changed his position. On firing he had leaned far over toward the driver, so as to avoid a return shot, and by so doing had taken himself out of the would-be assassin's range. And now the stage was flying forward at a terrible pace, and the man had much ado to keep his footing. He managed it after a few seconds, and then flattened himself as much as possible against the coach. This was to avoid the return shots of his friends, which now came singing past them.

Taken completely by surprise by the act of the messenger, and not prepared for the headlong plunge of the horses, they had been unable to make an effort to prevent the escape.

The young girl sat dumb with fright, the other women were crouching in the bottom of the coach, also tongue tied with terror, and poor little Enrique half stood in his place, his great eyes fixed wildly on the man with the pistol.

And now the ruffian seemed to think a second opportunity had come. Doubtless the messenger was in his old place, and could be reached by a

bold outward swing. It was evident the effort must be made soon, too, as the man might look down and discover his enemy.

Swiftly the wretch swung out from the step. His revolver was once more raised. Then came the climax of Enrique's life. He saw the pistol raised, he saw the man's corley fingers clinched upon the door frame.

The one supreme suggestion of the moment came. At the boy's feet, where he had kicked it about all day, was a small iron wrench. Stooping like lightning the little hero caught it up, swung it aloft, dashed it down with all his force on the clinging fingers!

There was a yell like that from the throat of a dying wolf as the man loosed his hold and fell, bruised and maimed, into the road, and Enrique saw him no more. The coach rolled on; the messenger was saved!

The coach did not stop until Kennett's ranch was reached. Then the driver dismounted and the women told him the story of Enrique's opportune act. You may be sure that both the driver and the messenger whose life the boy had saved made much of him during the rest of the trip. He was a hero at Pescadero for a whole week.—F. H. Costellow in The Youth's Companion.

Arkansas Women Who Use Tobacco.

A popular vice among the ladies of this part of the state is the use of tobacco. Some will chew it like veterans, while others are content to smoke. But by far the most common way of deriving enjoyment from its use is to take it in the form of snuff. When a number of women get together the snuff box is nearly always produced, with the instruction to "take a dip" as it goes around the circle. Then they will sit and gossip, interrupting the flow of conversation with frequent expectorations into a big spittoon or the fireplace. A snuff dipper's outfit consists of a small tin canister about an inch thick by two inches long and a wooden brush.

The latter is about three inches in length, and in size resembles a slate pencil. It is usually cut from black gum or some other tough wood. One end is chewed and splintered by the teeth till it looks like a small paint brush. The splintered end is dipped into the snuff and worked around till a little ball has been collected. The snuff thus secured is rubbed over the teeth and gums. Usually the stick is held between the teeth till the snuff has all been absorbed, when another dip is taken. For ladies who object to using a canister and brush a small snuff wafer has been invented which can be concealed between the lips and teeth. A grocer's clerk asserted emphatically that fully 90 per cent of the women used either tobacco or snuff, or both. By thinking men the tobacco habit among women is considered one of the worst evils with which Arkansas is obliged to contend.—Ozark (Ark.) Cor. Omaha Bee.

The Tear Handkerchief.

In some parts of the Tyrol a peculiar and beautiful custom prevails among the peasantry. When a peasant girl is going to be married, before she leaves her home to go to the church her mother gives her a handkerchief, which is called the "tear handkerchief." It is made of newly spun linen and has never been used. She is supposed to dry her tears with this when she leaves her home and when she stands at the altar. After the marriage is over, and the bride has gone with her husband to her new house, she carefully folds up the handkerchief and places it unwashed among her little treasures.

So far it has done only half its duty. Her children grow up, marry and go away to new homes, each daughter receiving in her turn a new "tear handkerchief," and yet the last present, the present received from her mother, has not fulfilled its object. Years roll by, and the once young and blooming bride becomes a wrinkled old woman, and outlived, perhaps, her husband and all her children. At last, when the weary eyelids are closed for their long sleep, the "tear handkerchief" is taken from its resting place and spread over the placid features of the dead.—New York Home Journal.

What Makes Wrinkles.

"It is customary to say that wrinkles come from worrying, but the truth is that most of them come from laughing," says a well known physician. "To know how to laugh is just as important as to know when to do it. If you laugh with the sides of your face, the skin will work loose in time, and wrinkles will form in exact accordance with the kind of a laugh you have. The man who always wears a smirk will have a series of semicircular wrinkles covering his cheeks.

"When a gambler who has been accustomed to suppressing his feelings laughs, a deep line forms on each side of his nose and runs to the upper corner of his mouth. In time this line extends to the chin and assumes the shape of a half moon. A cadaverous person with a wax like skin is very apt to have two broadly marked wrinkles, one running up from the jaw and the other under the eye. These meet at right angles at the cheekbones and look as though they formed a knot at the apex. The scholar's wrinkles form on his brow, while the scheming politician's come round his eyes, where they look for all the world like the spokes of a wheel."—New York Mail and Express.

A Strong Motive.

Just expectations are valuable things. Many people are toned up to their best endeavors by knowing that much is expected of them. The desire is strong within them that the good opinion which some one has formed of them should be upheld, and they make strenuous efforts to this end. Whoever has had much to do with children knows how powerfully this motive will influence them, and added years seldom decreases its force. To preserve the influence, however, it is essential that only that should be expected which can be rendered.—Once a Week.

A Word to the People.

The motto, "What is Home without a Mother," exists in many happy homes in this city, but the effect of what is home without the Local Newspaper is really realized in many of these "happy homes" in Plattsmouth.

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