

which we have the privilege to belong, and in the same manner imparted to us that patriotic feeling ranking next to holy faith, namely, the love of the land of our forefathers, the island of saints and scholars. We earnestly hope, with yourself, that the oppositions to that noble cause, self-government for Ireland, are the last rays of the sun fast sinking below the horizon, are when that golden orb of light shall rise on the next morn it will shed the sunbeams of justice, prosperity, and happiness on every Irish home. We are also very grateful to your devoted brother, Mr T. M. Lonargan, for the many tangible benefits we have received from him. In conclusion, we unite in wishing you health, happiness, and prosperity. We are sure this slight memento will call to your mind, when in a far distant land, the many pleasant occasions we have spent together, and we earnestly hope that the tide of your fortune may once more wait you to this Isle of the Pacific.—We beg to sign ourselves, W. O'Shaughnessy, Frederick Milner, W. McManaway, Vice-Presidents; R. O'Shaughnessy, Secretary; W. Courtney, Librarian.

Tuesday evening, June 22.—On this occasion 23 members attended, and his Lordship Dr. Grimes not only honoured the Society with his presence, but presided for the most part of the evening. At the request of his Lordship, Mr. Lonargan kindly consented to retain the office of President until his departure. Mr. E. O'Connor, junr., was elected a member, and Mr. F. Mehoney nominated for membership. A balance-sheet and report from the bandmaster, one from the band-organ, and another from the librarian were read.—Mr. Lonargan having spoken at some length of the objects of the Society, his Lordship addressed the meeting. In the course of his remarks his Lordship said that he was satisfied with the position of the Society, as evinced by the balance-sheet and the other reports just read, that as long as the words "Catholic" and "Literary," forming the Society's glorious name, were not misnomers, the institution would receive his warmest encouragement and that of his clergy, and that a Society truly Catholic and literary demanded, and ought to obtain, the unanimous support of all the parish. He was aware that the Society was at present purely literary, but he approved of a fair amount of innocent amusement taking place under its auspices, and related a beautiful story of St. John the Evangelist and one of St. Philip Neri, showing that some recreation should be joined to study. He said that members could never err in imitating a St. Philip Neri, and exhorted them to be really devout and Catholic. If they proved true to their faith, they must deserve, and would obtain, universal esteem, and would become, what Catholic youth should be, a power in the land.—Mr. Lonargan thanked his Lordship for his visit.—A vote of thanks was accorded to the retiring officers. The meeting then terminated.

THE PONY-RIDER OF THE PLAINS.

(From the *Philadelphia Press*.)

BOB GETCHEL was one of the most daring and reckless riders on old Ben Holliday's pony express line across the plains in the early days, before the Central Pacific Railroad took the place of both stage coaches and ponies. I made the acquaintance of Bob in 1861. I was then city editor of the *Territorial Enterprise*, and Virginia City, the chief town of the Comstock silver mines, was then the western terminus of Bob's route. Bob had his "lay-off" days in the town, and was much about the *Enterprise* office. In those days there was no telegraph across the continent, and we depended on the pony express for news from the Atlantic States and also from all points west of the Missouri river.

Bob was born in Utah, and his early days were passed among "cow-boys" on a ranch near Provo and among beaver trappers in the mountains, or in long brotherly visits among the Goshute Indians, whose manner of life had many charms for him.

When Ben Holliday established his pony express Bob found himself in demand at good salary. Nearly all the pony-riders were recruited from the ranks of the stock-herds or vaqueros, now called "cow-boys," and among those Bob was, as he termed it, "Big Injun," having been almost born on horse-back. The position of pony-rider just suited Bob. To fly like the wind through the wilderness, up hill and down dale, with a fresh and fiery mustang standing all ready for him to mount every ten or fifteen miles, almost filled his cup of happiness.

The position of pony-rider was one that was full of hardships, privations, and dangers. They rode sixty, eighty, and even a hundred miles with scarcely a halt. Most of the Indian tribes were then more or less hostile, and all the wilderness region along the overland stage route was full of thieving and murderous bands of Indians, made up of renegades from half a dozen tribes, and responsible to none. Small and weak parties of emigrants were preyed upon, stages attacked, and pony-riders made to run the gauntlet. The prowling bands of reds thought it good fun to take a shot at every flying pony-rider they chanced to encounter at a distance from a station. As the stations were from ten to twenty miles apart, opportunities for taking a shot at a pony-rider "on the wing" were not lacking.

Bob lacked the middle finger of his left hand. I had often thought of asking him in what way he parted with the member, believing that some adventure was connected with its loss. But although only about twenty-nine years of age, Bob possessed the gravity of an Indian brave, and was generally very reticent. However, one Sunday when we were lounging in the printing office and had it all to ourselves, I managed to get his tongue loosened, and he gave me quite a history of his career and adventures. On asking him about his maimed left hand, he said:—

"That? Oh, I got that one evening about five miles this side of Antelope Station. A half-dozen Injuns in a patch of willers took a shot at me as I passed, jist for the fun of the thing, I reckon. The same bullet that took off my finger knocked the pommel of my saddle to splinters, which hurt me more than the loss of my finger. You see it was a tiptop new Mexican saddle, and was my private property—cost me eighty-five dollars. A second bullet cut one of my bridle reins close to the bit, and a third took off the rim of my cap. Besides, when I got safe into the station they found a bullet lodged in the

mail pouch. That pouch and the package of letters in it saved the boss, and in savin' the boss also saved my bacon."

"It was a pretty close call for you, Bob," said I.

"Yes; tolerable. The bullets whistled about my head right lively. But somehow, do you know, I wasn't a bit skeert. Ef my bridle rein hadn't been cut out of reach, and I couldn't have turned my mustang and handled him right, do you know, I'd have charged the whole pack of 'em and peppered 'em with my revolver, I was so mad about my saddle. I was jist sure, from the noise they made, that the blame fools had fired off every gun they had. As it was, I sorter ris in my stirrups and made 'em a few signs they didn't like. Ef you sabbie Injun sign talk, you can guess the mean things I said to 'em as I sailed away."

"Wern't you afraid they'd 'lay' for you on your next trip?"

"I didn't give it a continental! They'd lay for me anyhow. They laid for all of us whenever they happened to see us coming. It was jist out of pure cussedness, too, 'cause they knowed well enough that we carried nothing they wanted—except jist our bare scalps. And mine was indeed a 'bare' scalp. My scalp wouldn't have pleased 'em much. I know how to spite them fellers. Jist out of pure meanness, do you know, all the time I was ridin' out in the Injun country I had my hair cut as close as scissors would do it, and I would have sand-papered my head if sich a thing as sand-paper could have been found at any of the stations. For about a month I wore a bladder on my head, drew it on green, and it shrank as tight as the scalp. My head looked as smooth as a tennis ball. What a joke it would have been on the reds when they pulled my cap off and started in to scalp me! But when my hair began to grow I couldn't stand the bladder, so left it off."

"It's a wonder they never got you, Bob."

"Yes, it is. I reckon they would have got me ef I'd stayed out there. They got a kind of grudge against me after a time all along the route. Do you see that bit out of the top of my right ear? Well, I got that out t'other side of Echo canyon. Three Injuns chased me about four miles that time. Yes, they had a kind of grudge against me out that way, and when I got a bullet in the thigh and another through the calf of my leg I concluded to push on out to this side of Salt Lake and near the end of the route, into the edge of civilisation."

"What grudge did they have against you, Bob? Had you cheated them at poker?"

"No; not that I know of. I'll tell you what it was about. It was about a little time I had with some of 'em when my home station was at Green River, and I was running out this way. It is a long story. One day I started from my station at this end of my route pretty early in the morning to go eastward to Green River. I had over seventy miles to ride, and three stations to pass. To the first it was twenty miles and to the next ten miles. Well, I made both these stations all right. It was twenty miles to the third station, and I'd got nearly half way—eight miles, at least—when, happenin' to look back, I saw an Injun comin' after me full split.

"I was jist risin' a little hill when I got sight of the critter, and at a glance saw that his was a faster hoss than the one I was on. So, as soon as I was out of sight over the hill, I thought my only chance was in givin' Mr. Injun the slip. At the foot of the hill was a little shallow creek that made a long sweep round the pint of the next hill. Turnin' into the creek, I dashed down it. That section is a kind of about half-and-half timbered country. Along the creek was a thick growth of alders and willer. When I'd got into these about five rods, and was out of sight, I halted, and waited to see what the Injun would do. As I had expected, he dashed across the creek and charged up the opposite hill better skeeter.

"That was pretty neatly done!" said I to myself. "That feller will think my boss is chain lightenin' on the run, before he gets sight of me again in that direction!" and I laughed as I thought of the red rascal peepin' over ridge after ridge to catch sight of me.

"After a bit I started on, concludin' to foiler along down the creek till I came to where it crossed the road again, round the point of the hill. I found it was nearly a mile round, and so rough and brushy that I couldn't go faster than a walk. But as long as I had given the Injun the slip I could afford to take it easy for a short distance.

"At last I came in sight of the road, and found the ground more open along the bank of the creek. Seem' all clear, I says to myself 'After all, an Injun ain't so cunning. A white man can put up a trick that—'

"Jist at that instant I ketched sight of Mr. Injun on foot about fifty yards away by the side of a big rock at the edge of the creek. As I looked he hauled the gun to the side of his face. I throwed myself off my hoss on the opposite side, and almost at the same instant the Injun blazed away. Down tumbled my hoss, dead as a mackerel:

"Here is a go!" said I. "Now it's a fight on foot!" I dropped behind the carcass of my hoss and got out my six-shooter, calculating to wait for the Injun to come after me. But as soon as I thought of that I remembered that his gun was a single-barrelled musket. I had noticed that when he raised it to his cheek.

"Soon as I thought of the Injun havin' only an empty gun I cocked my revolver and charged the big rock behind which he was forced up. As I dashed round the rock I came upon the Injun, not more than twenty feet away, in the act of reloading his gun. That it was his turn to rustle. In his haste he broke his ramrod when his bullet wasn't more'n half way down.

"When his ramrod snapped Mr. Injun gave an 'Ugh!' Then, grabbing the gun by the barrel and swingin' it above his head, he uttered a savage whoop and rushed at me.

"In an instant my pistol was up and levelled. The Injun stopped and glared at me like a wolf. As I didn't shoot at once the feller concluded my pistol wasn't loaded, and so came on again.

"I let him come within two yards, then, jist as he was about to bring the butt of his musket down on my head, I let him have it full in the breast. He made a lunge forward and struck at me, but I jumped aside, and the gun struck the ground. It broke off at the breech, and the Injun came to the ground. He still clung to the barrel of the gun, and graspin' it with both hands, like a staff, he