

The Makers of the Coin

PETE Mellish, Sheriff of Sushwap county Alberta, and the hero of the Chinlac cattle rustling affair, just returned from landing Dave Sharran the dreaded gunman and all round bad man of Alberta behind the bars, would not impress one at that moment as a successful law officer returning from a difficult and important capture. The very opposite was the case. Seated in the luxurious swivel chair in his office, his feet propped against the roll-top desk, the stem of his much used bull-dog clenched tightly between his powerful teeth, the sheriff of Sushwap was evidently thinking. After continuing in this thoughtful posture for some time, he suddenly awoke with a start. Reaching over to the opposite side of the desk he caught up a telegram and commenced to read, as if he expected to find an answer to the problem in this innocent looking piece of paper. The telegram was from the Chief of Police at Winnipeg and read:

“Mr. P. Mellish, Sheriff of Sushwap County:

A gang of counterfeiters have been manufacturing and circulating false Union Bank of Canada notes in the province of Alberta for some time past. Their agent has been traced to Sushway and there lost. Their capture is important, and incidentally I may say that the bank is offering ten thousand dollars reward.”

Picking up a blank telegraph form from the desk the chief hastily scribbled the following message:

“Sorry to say that I cannot pick up the trail of counterfeiters. You had better shadow their circulation agent to Sushwap next time he appears and I will be on hand to relieve you. Wire me when and on what train you will follow him.

P. MELLISH, Sheriff.

After sending off this message the sheriff soon turned in.

Several days later he received the following message: “Am trailing the agent, will be in on the eight forty train.”

Among the passengers to descend from the eight forty train at the station of Sushwap were a sandy-haired individual carrying a black alligator skin valise, and a gray haired old gentleman looking somewhat like a retired professional man.

Pete Mellish standing behind one of the pillars in the waiting room in company with George Sandforth a Secret Service detective skillfully disguised as a tramp said, "I believe that sandy-haired chap is Blinky Morgan the Con. man we arrested three years ago in Windsor, charged with selling gold bricks to a back country rancher."

Sandforth after scrutinizing the fellow for a while replied. "Believe you are right sheriff, and if I don't mistake, that lawyer-like old gent is making the glad signs to you."

"Oh yes," replied Mellish, "that's Chief of Police Wisner of Winnipeg, and by the look of things he seems to be trailing our friend Blinky. You stay here till I speak to him and when I raise my hand hit Blinky's trail hot-foot and don't drop it till you've located his gang."

Mellish strode over to the Chief and tapping him on the shoulder said. "I see you've stuck to your man Chief."

"Yes," replied the other, "he is that fellow with the sandy hair and side whiskers. You'd better look lively and get someone on his trail, for he nearly slipped me at Winnipeg station. Oh he is as slippery as they make them, he is."

"Oh, he is being looked after," replied the sheriff raising his hand as if in protestation at the others concern. "You needn't worry about him. Come up to the office and let us have a cigar and a quiet talk over the matter."

Meanwhile George Sandforth, alias Softy, hobo and tramp, was trailing Blinky Morgan, quantum Con. man, card sharp, and convict, and no very easy time was he having. The pursued fully alive to the probability of his being shadowed resorted to all the tricks of his profession. He twisted and turned from one street to another, dove in disreputable back-alleys only to emerge in crowded thoroughfares he lost himself in

moving crowds, he slipped into convenient doorways and apparently another man came out, but throughout all the tramp clung to his trail like the minion of an inexorable fate, seeming to divine by a sort of unmistakable intuition in his every move.

Finally the criminal appeared to think that if anyone had followed him he had succeeded in eluding him. He had by this time arrived at the river front, and stopped in a quiet street before an old stone house. After a stealthy scrutiny of the neighborhood, during which our tramp effaced himself by stepping into a nearby doorway, he took a key from his pocket, opened the door, and entered. The house backed on the river front and was built of dark grey stone. It was apparently at one time a dwelling of aristocracy, but owing probably to the desertion of the neighborhood by the monied class, it had long been neglected, and now seemed to be unoccupied.

The tramp after examining the house from all sides determined to enter. This he succeeded in doing through a window in the back, upon which the lock had been broken. Raising the sash he stepped into a room about twenty feet square, which considering the outward appearance of the house seemed to be in a fair state of preservation. It had been fitted up as a card-room, and bore evidence of having been lately occupied. Several chairs were placed around a table in the centre of the room, on which lay a stack of poker chips and a newly opened pack of cards. Several cigar butts lay smouldering in the fire-place.

As the tramp was examining this room he heard voices and footsteps in the passage without. Looking around for some place in which to conceal himself, he discovered that the room was bare save for an old clothes-press which stood in one corner. Not seeing anything that offered a better chance of concealment he stepped into the clothes-press. It was fairly roomy, and he found that like most old pieces of furniture it possessed many cracks and knot-holes through which a good view could be had of the room.

The door opened and four men walked into the room, one of whom was our acquaintance of the night, Blinky Morgan. Two of the others although their faces

would almost have sufficed to secure them a ten year sentence, our detective did not recognize, but the fourth a man of exceptionally large stature, and a complexion almost approaching the darkness of a negro, he recognized as Black Roger, reputed to be the most dangerous and ingenious criminal in the entire North West. This villainous quartette walked over to the table and seated themselves. Then one of them suggested that they should have some stimulant to make the talk agreeable. Black Roger arose and made his way directly towards the clothes-press, to the great confusion of the concealed tramp. However he did not turn his attention towards the compartment in which the tramp had secreted himself, but, stooping down he unlocked a drawer beneath, from which he took a suggestive looking black bottle. Returning to the table he first applied the bottle to his lips and then passed it around. This over, the four commenced their conversation.

"Well Blinky?" inquired Black Roger, "how did you get along with the last bunch of bills?"

"Oh, I distributed them all right," replied Blinky. "But I tell you Roger, you will have to send out another man because I think the coppers are getting wise to me."

"Oh, bosh," ejaculated Roger, "you have the worst case of cold feet it has ever been my lot to observe. No sooner does anyone look crosswise at you than you want to seek a tree. Either you or Charley," indicating one of the others, "has to go, because Max and I have to stay here and run the press. Now, as Charley doesn't want to go and you have taken cold feet, I move that you take a toss for it."

"Done," said Blinky and Charley together.

"I'll take heads," said the latter.

Black Roger took a coin from his pocket and spun it through the air. "Tails it is, he announced looking at it when it landed, "and Charley goes out with the stuff day after to-morrow."

Charley took his defeat philosophically, and after a while proposed that they should have a nightcap and turn in.

After they had gone, the tramp emerged from the

clothes-press, got out of the window, and made his way to the sheriff's office. He found Mellish about to go home, made his report, and the two parted.

The next night at nine, o'clock strange doings might have been observed at the old stone house by the river. Sheriff Mellish accompanied by detective Sandforth and three deputies, could be seen standing by the window through which our old acquaintance the tramp had entered the night before. Leaving a man on guard at the window the others entered the room. Mellish, with Sandforth and one of the deputies placed themselves in the clothes-press, while the remaining two retired into the passage without and concealed themselves in the darkness.

After a wait of five or ten minutes the four counterfeiters entered the room, and as before seated themselves at the table.

"Well boys," began Black Roger, "we've been doing famously, and Charley will carry about two hundred thousand away with him tomorrow."

"Not so fast Roger," said Mellish stepping from the clothes-press and at the same time blowing a soft call on his police whistle.

Immediately the two deputies appeared at the door with revolvers in their hands. At the first sound of the sheriff's voice the criminals had jumped to their feet in consternation, and seeing the weapons of the officers, all but the leader became completely cowed. Black Roger observing the open window, imagined he saw an unguarded loop-hole, and braving their revolvers he leaped for it, only to meet the steely gleam of the deputy's Colt. Realizing that he was beaten, Roger returned to the middle of the room and as the deputies hand-cuffed him said: "Well, sheriff, I guess you have me foul this time, but you'll find it a different proposition to hold me."

"I'll risk that part of it, Roger," returned the sheriff, "and now, before we put you behind the bars you might as well show us your plant."

Roger signifying assent led the way to the cellar, and there they saw the printing press similar to those used in newspaper offices, but much finer. Mellish

examined this machine and inquired. "How do you run it Roger? I don't see any engine around here."

"Well," replied Roger, "I figured that the noise of an engine might lead to detection so I tapped the river by a tunnel and ran it by water power. The water when it has done its work returns to the river by another pipe which comes out at the back of the house. The water comes down with the whole weight of the river behind it, turns a small turbine, and forces itself up and out into the river again."

"Well Roger," said the sheriff, "that ingenious brain of yours has probably increased the value of this property for factory purposes but it will do you no good for you are surely due for a good long term in the pen."

The prisoners were all sentenced to ten years, and Pete Mellish received the ten thousand reward from the bank, which he divided with detective George Sandforth, maintaining that the capture was in great part due to the latter's skill and exertion.

Thus ended one of the notable incidents in the career of Pete Mellish the sheriff of Sushwap county, appropriately nicknamed by criminals "The Sleuthhound of the North West."

O. C. TRAINOR, '14.



Some people are always grumbling. If they don't go to heaven when they die they will make things very uncomfortable for the devil.



Our enemies in their judgment of us, come nearer to the truth than we do ourselves.



Never write a letter that will cause irritation. If you are in doubt about one you write, keep it in your desk until the next morning, and remember it may be read to a judge in court. Commit yourself to a call, if you can, rather than a letter.