THE KNIFE THROWERS

By FREDERIC VAN RENSSELAER DEY,
Author of "Not Like Other Men," Etc.

Copyright, 1901, by Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey.

The enthusiasm of this stranger, strangely enough, communicated itself to Pendleton. He began to believe that he would be successful. He knew perfectly well that Romero always shot to kill and that if the bullet touched him it would doubtless find a fatal spot. Until he was actually on the ground he had believed himself doomed, but now he remembered that he was himself a perfect marksman, and, aided by the suggestions of Pancho, he knew that he would have the advantage in weapon. It remained for him to touch the trigger the instant he heard the aspirated "t."

The necessary preliminaries were soon completed. As Pancho had prophesied, the case of pistols belonging to Romero was placed on the ground for Pendleton to make selection, and, stepping up carelessly, he pointed to the one on the farther side. Agramonte leaned forward and touched the one nearest him, but Pendleton said quietly:

"Not that one, captain; the other."

The weapons were quickly supplied with powder and ball, the principals were directed to their positions and the pistols placed in their hands. At the moment of selection Pendleton had glanced in the direction of his opponent. He saw an angry scowl flit across his face, and from that instant he believed the battle to be his. The sensation reminded him of a time long before when his favorite horse had taken the bit in his teeth and started at a mad pace along the boulevard in New York, at that time thronged with carriages; how hopeless he had felt for a moment and the reaction that came when suddenly the bit was freed and he regained control of the animal and perfect confidence in his power to master the incident. That quick glance at Romero accomplished the same result.

Coats, waistcoats and suspenders were removed. Pendleton and Romero stood facing each other. Agramonte asked if they were ready and gave them the stereotyped instructions, standing directly between them while he did so.

"I shall walk ten paces at a right angle from your positions," he said calmly. "I will then pause and turn. When I turn, I will say, 'Attencion!' and afterward the words, 'Uno, dos, tres.' At the word 'tres' you will fire. Beware lest either fire in advance of the word. If either principal is wounded and still desires to continue the combat, the privilege belongs to him, but no more than three shots each will be permitted. Are you ready?"

The seconds responded in the affirmative. Agramonte began his slow counting of ten paces; he turned; there was an instant of silence, and then sharply and clearly on the crisp morning air sounded the ominous words:

"Attencion! Uno! Dos! Tres!"

The reports of the two pistols sounded like one. There was a brief interval after that, during which both men stood like statues facing each other. Then, without warning, Romero's legs gave way beneath him, and he crashed to the ground on the very spot where he had stood. His own friends ran toward him, while Agramonte hurried to Pendleton's side.

"Romero is not dead," said the American, speaking rapidly. "I did not kill him, but he will not want a second shot. The bullet is through his hips.

Romero's legs gave way beneath him.

Let us depart as quickly as possible. Have the kindness to express to Captain Romero my regrets and assurances of my good will."

He remained firmly at his post until Romero's second approached and, extending his hand, said courteously:

"We are satisfied, Senor Pendleton My principal is seriously but not fatally wounded. I trust that you have escaped unharmed?"

"Thank you, yes; Captain Agramonte has already conveyed my regrets to you, I believe. May I hope that you, senor, will do me the honor to count me as a friend?"

"The honor will be mine, Senor Pendleton," was the reply. Then the two men grasped hands, bowed to each other and parted. A few moments later, having bidden adieu to Agramonte, Pendleton, escorted by his charro friend, Pancho, was again on the road returning to his place of imprisonment.

That they arrived without incident and therefore undiscovered was due doubtless to the management of the Mexican guide, but it was with mingled sensations of pleasure and regret that Pendleton composed himself to the luxury of rest when he was again alone in the room of his mysterious jailer, with the iron grating closed and locked and Pancho gone.

Whatever the events of the day might vouchsafe, he felt that he was prepared to meet them, having kept his engagement on the Passeo and having outwitted the designs of the woman whom once he had rescued from the ferocity of the very man who that morning had fallen before him, stricken by the very bullet which he had intended to place among the vitals of the American.

CHAPTER III.

THE OBLIGATION OF SILENCE.

INCIDENTS that are exceptionally portentous are frequently the least prolific of results. It was so in the case of Pendleton. Nothing happened. The day passed without once affording him the sight of a human being. He regretted his coffee, but there was native wine in abundance, with cold meats and luxuries sufficient to have provided a company of men with sustenance for several days. He passed the time in reading, in walking up and down the room and in various means of disposing of the seemingly interminable period between the return from the dueling ground and the darkness of the succeeding night. Never had a day seemed so long, but it came to an end at last, and never had the sun disappeared for Burr Pendleton so pleasantly. Still, there were more endless hours to wait, for it was not until 10 o'clock in the evening when he heard a voice at the grating and knew that the time for liberation was at hand.

It was Pancho who came, but he did not speak. He only unlocked the grating and stood respectfully aside while the American passed out. He made no remark when he dexterously threw a serape over Pendleton's head. Beyond that there was no attempt at coercion. The lasso was not used again, and it was only through an expressive pressure upon his arm as it was grasped by the Mexican that Pendleton knew that he was to be treated with every courtesy and consideration. Upon the friendship of this unknown Mexican he knew from the experiences of the past night he could rely, and he permitted himself to be led again along the graveled paths, among the shrubbery and finally found himself the occupant of a carriage which was driven rapidly away as soon as he had entered it. The serape was removed from Pendleton's head as soon as they were safely within the carriage and the curtains had been drawn.

When at last it came to a halt and the American was informed that he could alight, Pendleton said:

"Pancho, I shall not forget your kindnesses to me. I am sorry that you will not permit me to offer you some substantial reward, but I feel that I would offend you if I should insist upon it. You already know much about me, more than I am aware of, doubtless. I have written on this card an address in the city of New York, where a communication will reach me or from where one will be forwarded to me at any time. If the time should ever come when I can render you a service, consider it done. Say to the senorita that I forgive her for preventing me from engaging in the duel with Captain Romero; say that I am informed that a friend acted for me in my absence. Where are we? At the bronze statue?"

"Si, senor," replied Pancho.

"Good night, then. I will walk the remainder of the distance. Adios, my friend."

"Adios, senor."

Pendleton had walked nearly to the upper end of the Alameda before he remembered that he had left his case of pistols in the carriage, but with the thought that Pancho might derive pleasure from the possession of the weapons as souvenir of the occasion, he shrugged his shoulders and hurried onward. He was surprised to discover James placidly engaged in packing.

"Even after Captain Agramonte called and told me about the meeting, sir," he explained in reply to his master's look of surprised inquiry, "I was troubled until I received your message an hour ago."

"My message an hour ago? What was it, James?"

"The man said that you had directed him to tell me that you would leave on the early train on the National road in the morning and to have everything packed and in readiness. That was correct, was it not?"

"Oh, entirely so, entirely so!" And he thought to himself, "Surely this woman meddles strangely in my affairs."

It was not until the following evening, however, that he did leave Mexico, but he was not sorry when the train bore him away and he was homeward bound.

* * * * * * *

When Burr Pendleton was in the act of ascending the steps to the entrance of his favorite club in New York, he encountered a gentleman who was just taking his departure. They paused mutually and agreeably surprised, and after having exchanged greetings which gave evidence that they were more than ordinary friends, Pendleton drew the other back into the house, where they sought a quiet corner by themselves.

"Yes, I have returned, Craig. It is really I," was Pendleton's smiling reply to a question asked by his friend.

"Do you realize, old fellow," returned his friend, "that you are more than two weeks overdue and that not a word has been heard from you in that time?"

"Certainly. Circumstances over which I had no control—unavoidable delays, unintentional negligence and all that, you know. The fact is, Wyndham, I had a duel on my hands, and I did not care to let you know about it. You see, I made all arrangements in case I should not be able to return at all, which, I confess, seemed at one time more than likely, and I thought if I did not come back it would be time enough to tell you when I arrived, as it is."

Craig Wyndham calmly lighted a fresh cigar before he ventured a comment on the statement of his friend; then, rather to Pendleton's surprise, he did not refer directly to the subject. Instead he asked quietly:

"Had it to do with the business that took you there?"

"Not at all, not at all, I assure you."

"Then won't you tell me about the business. The duel can wait."

"I can tell you about the business in two words—I succeeded."

"Then you are glad you went?"

"Most certainly. The fact is, Craig, I should have gone there long ago or sent you, as I talked of doing. I think the trip has been good for me in more ways than one. It surely has performed one miracle, for I have discovered that I still have left sufficient energy to do things if I only work myself up to the proper pitch. I left this Mexican business altogether too long. I should have attended to it immediately after the death of the gov'nor. It would have been easier and better, and I think the people down there would have understood things better. However, I fancy it is all right now."

"You fancy? I thought you said you had succeeded."

"So I have—perfectly, entirely, utterly, in every way but one, and that one is apparently unimportant. I have brought back a mystery, and I hate mysteries, as you know."

"Is the mystery connected with the business?"

"Yes and no.

"That reply is ambiguous, Burr. Of course I possess ordinary curiosity. Naturally I would like to hear all about all that you will tell me, but you must remember that I was left in ignorance of many points in this affair of yours, and I do not like to ask questions."

Pendleton waited a moment before replying. Then he tossed away his cigar and took a turn up and down the room. Reseating himself, he said slowly:

"Briefly, then, I will say this, for the present—the duel, as you say, can wait; in fact, it came mighty near waiting anyhow: You know, ever since the gov'nor died I have felt that I ought to take this trip, and you also know that the only reason why I did not do so was my own consummate laziness. I wanted you to go there for me, and you consented to do so. But, Craig, I could not bring myself to tell you all that was necessary for you to know. If you had undertaken the trip simply because I asked it, I would have felt that I was not keeping faith with my dead father. You knew or ought to have known, and, I believe, did know, that my hesitation did not arise from any reluctance to take you into my confidence."

"Assuredly, Burr."

"The written injunctions that the gov'nor left for me—you remember that I did not get home until three days after his death—imposed the obligation of silence upon me with considerable emphasis; that is, silence up to a certain point, after which I could, of course, exercise my own discretion. That point could not be reached until I had made a personal investigation, a thing that he practically ordered me to do. Well, I have made it. The obligation of silence is upon me no longer. I can see no reason for keeping still now. In fact, the time has come when I must tell somebody, and naturally you are the one whom I have selected for a confidant. More than that, I feel the need of advice and help, and you are the only one I know to whom I am willing to apply. There is not time and this is no place for me to go into details, but if you will give up this evening to me in my rooms—well, we'll have it out to the end. It is a mighty strange thing, Craig, that a man can leave behind him when he dies a tangle which involves two families and which may yet involve two nations in trouble, but that is precisely what my father did. Not only that, but I have permitted these years since his death to roll past, never dreaming that the matter could take the serious shape it has. I regard myself as rather a guilty party as things are situated now, for I cannot help believing if I had attended to matters at once much that is now unavoidable might have been prevented. I believed the old man was deceived—that he imagined a great deal, but I found—well, wait until tonight, and I will tell you what I discovered."

"I think, old man," said Wyndham deliberately, while he drummed the burning end of his cigar upon the ash receiver—"I think that perhaps, having returned from a long trip and being naturally delighted upon meeting an old friend, you may be inclined to place too much confidence in him. Let us revert to the part of the business that I understood before you went away, which, as I remember, related only to property. Did you find the property that your father directed you to recover? Have you brought back the title to it, so that it is undeniably yours? Have you fulfilled that part of the obligation that rested upon you?"

"Entirely, yes."

"Then it seems to me that ends it."

"How so, Craig?"

"Why, that is all that I supposed I had anything to do with."

"You are right. It is." Pendleton made this last remark between the intermittent flaming of a cigar which at that moment he was engaged in lighting. When he cast the match aside, he left the table with some haste and intercepted a gentleman who was at that moment passing. They talked together several moments and then disappeared in the direction of the club cafe, and Wyndham, supposing he would soon return, waited, but when an hour had passed and he was still alone his patience was exhausted.

He summoned the waiter and, having signed the necessary check, asked the name of the man whom Pendleton had intercepted, for he remembered that the waiter had been standing near them at the moment.

"He is a club guest, sir," replied the waiter. "I do not remember his name. I think, sir, that he presented his card only yesterday."

Wyndham strolled through several parts of the club after that, believing that he might encounter Pendleton, and at last, convinced that he was no longer in the house, he applied at the desk, only to be told that Mr. Pendleton had gone out more than an hour before and had left no word.

"Tell him when he returns," said Wyndham, "that I found it impossible to wait longer, but that I will keep the appointment for tonight."

He stood near until the clerk made the memorandum, and then, with knitted brows and thoughtful mien, he took his departure.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WINTER

Millinery

Beautiful Creations.

Any One and All Suitable for a Present.

OUR STOCK

is large, varied and beautiful. A thousand different articles suitable for a Christmas offering to wife, daughter or mother. Nothing could add more to the pleasure of the joyous holiday season than a pretty specimen of the milliner's art.

Open early and late until after the holiday.

MISSES CORA & HATTIE REED,
High Street, Chestertown.

Geo. K. McGaw & Co.,

Family Grocers,

220 and 222 N. Charles Sts., Balt., Md.

Lowest Prices, Purest and Best Goods.

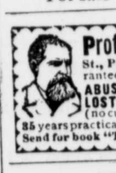
Orders of $10 and over, freight paid, with exception of sugars.

When in the city, call to see us and be convinced.

Mail orders promptly attended to. Write for prices.

THE Cheapest LAMP CHIMNEYS are those that last Macbeth's.

For sale by WM. R. ALDRIDGE.



Prof. G. F. THEEL, M.D. 327 N. Sixth St., Philadelphia, Pa. Ein deutscher Arzt. Guarantees to cure PRIVATE DISEASES, EXCESSES ABUSES, BLOOD POISON, NERVOUS DEBILITY, LOST MANHOOD, VARICOCELE & STRICTURE (no cutting). Undevelopment, Shrunken Organs. 35 years practical & 6 years hospital experience in Germany. Send for book "Truth" exposing medical & electrical fraud.

PARKER'S GINGER TONIC abates Lung Troubles, Debility, distressing stomach and female ills, and is noted for making cures when all other treatment fails. Every mother and invalid should have it.

PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM Cleanses and beautifies the hair. Promotes a luxuriant growth. Never Fails to Restore Gray Hair to its Youthful Color. Cures scalp diseases & hair falling. 50c, and $1.00 at Druggists

HINDERCORNS The only sure Cure for Corns. Stops all pain. Makes walking easy. 15c. at Druggists.

CHICHESTER'S ENGLISH PENNYROYAL PILLS Original and Only Genuine. SAFE. Always reliable. Ladies, ask Druggist for CHICHESTER'S ENGLISH in RED and Gold metallic boxes, sealed with blue ribbon. Take no other. Refuse Dangerous Substitutions and Imitations. Buy of your Druggist, or send 4c. in stamps for Particulars, Testimonials and "Relief for Ladies," in letter, by return Mail. 10,000 Testimonials. Sold by all Druggists. Chichester Chemical Co. Mention this paper. Madison Park, PHILA., PA.

PARKER'S HAIR BALSAM Cleanses and beautifies the hair. Promotes a luxuriant growth. Never Fails to Restore Gray Hair to its Youthful Color. Cures scalp diseases & hair falling. 50c, and $1.00 at Druggists

50 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

PATENTS

TRADE MARKS
DESIGNS
COPYRIGHTS &C.

Anyone sending a sketch and description may quickly ascertain our opinion free whether an invention is probably patentable. Communications strictly confidential. Handbook on Patents sent free. Oldest agency for securing patents.

Patents taken through Munn & Co. receive *special notice*, without charge, in the

Scientific American.

A handsomely illustrated weekly. Largest circulation of any scientific journal. Terms, $3 a year; four months, $1. Sold by all newsdealers.

MUNN & Co. 361 Broadway, New York

Branch Office, 625 F St., Washington, D. C.

Great Reduction Sale

—OF—

Dry Goods, Notions, Coats and Capes and Millinery.

33⅓ per Cent.

Off from

RegularPrice

AT R. BERGEN'S.

GO TO

THE SHOE STORE!

For FALL and WINTER GOODS!

I CARRY the largest and best selected stock of BOOTS, SHOES and RUBBERS, that can be found in Kent County, and I think I know where to look for the goods, and by paying the spot cash for them, believe I can do better for you than the man who carries a mixed stock, and who may pay on long time.

All the Newest Styles can be found in my stock for Men, Ladies and Children. Can show you a line of

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL SHOES

that cannot be found elsewhere in this county.

Men's Shoes, from	- -	$1.00 to $5.00
Ladies' Shoes, from	- -	75c to $4.00
Children's Shoes, from	- -	25c to $2.00

Your money back in every case when the customer is not pleased.
All goods as represented and at one price to all.

I sell the Stout SNAG-PROOF RUBBER BOOTS. The only genuine Snag-Proof Boot that will wear.

Sample Shoes sent to responsible people anywhere in Kent or Queen Anne Counties to compare with goods bought in the city.

Remember that we carry all widths—
B. C. D. & E.
and we can fit the foot as it should be fitted.
No half-way business about it.

All I ask is a fair trial. The goods will do the rest.

T. G. WROTH, the Shoe Man.

Under Stam's Hall. 20 years in business. 12 years one line (SHOES).

SEASONABLE GOODS!

All kinds of Farm Supplies.

BAUM'S STOCK FOOD.

The greatest assimilator and conditioning food known for all kinds of Stock and Poultry. Approved by dairymen and livery stable keepers. Baum's Poultry Food cures and prevents disease and makes hens lay in winter.

Lime! Lime! Lime!

I am agent for the Celebrated LeGore Lime. The large sales of this lime have proved it to be just what the soil needs for plant food.

The Enterprise Sausage Cutters and Lard Presses, and Butcher Knives.
Fodder Yarn of the best quality—Price right.
Tarred Roofing Felt at reasonable prices.

Ready-Made Harness A SPECIALTY

Bridles and Collars, Traces and Strap work.

Horse Blankets and Robes in Great variety, and all kinds of Horse Goods

Belting of any Size and Lace Leather,

in any quantities. Oils of all kinds. If in need of a good Pocket Knife, step in, we guarantee you will be satisfied in quality and price. Also, the best make of CORN BASKETS, all at low prices. Call and see us.

GEO. W. SMITH,

Ellison Building, Chestertown, Maryland

©Maryland State Archives msa_sc3326_scm8213-0016