KHAMSIN.

Oh, the wind from the desert blew in! Khamsin,
The wind from the desert blew in!
[illegible]
The wind from the desert blew in!

[illegible]

The wind from the desert blew in.

[illegible]

The wind from the desert blew in!
—Clinton Scollard in Century.

ANTRIM'S DEATH.

There is an intoxication in the drinking of human blood that is fortunately given to but few men to know. Some men are more susceptible to it than others—just as some men degenerate more rapidly into drunkards by the drinking of wine than others. This blood drunkenness is not war. Soldiers seldom know it. In war when you feel your bayonet sink to the shank in the soft yielding breast of another, or drop a man with a bullet, you lose interest in the man you have killed and jerk out your bayonet or load your rifle for another. Blood drunkenness is simply killing for the sake of killing.

A hundred years ago this blood drunkenness was recognized by the law prohibiting butchers from serving as jurymen. It is still recognized on our frontier, where the restraints of law are not so rigorous as in populous communities. A half score years ago it was more common than at present. There were but few section then but had their blood dipsomaniacs.

New Mexico had one, and his name was Billy Antrim. Had he been an ancient Greek instead of being an American, mythology would have made his cruel ferocity immortal. He was only a boy when he got his first taste of blood. When death overtook him he was but twenty-five, yet he was known to have killed more men than there were years to his age. All but his mother rejoiced at his death as if a pestilence had been staid.

There was another woman, though, that rejoiced to see his body [illegible] and swell and blacken. Still, the dead man had loved her, and she had lived with him as a wife lives with a husband, yet it was not for jealousy she killed him. Before she had met him she had loved another man. His name was Charley Clancy. He was foreman of the H-B Cattle company, on the Rio Grande, near Valencia. The people along the river called it the H bar B outfit. He, too, was a young man just from the east, with no more business to be in New Mexico at that time than a preacher has in purgatory.

When he had first met the girl it was in Las Cruces—that strange little town near the Mexican line whose history runs back to the Spanish conquest. He was young and green, and perhaps homesick, and it was not long before he was in love with this girl of alien race, for she was a Mexican. After that he found the ranch more and more lonesome and Las Cruces more and more pleasant. Home could not have been more desirable. When a man is in love and his love is returned by a beautiful girl, with her presence any place is heaven. It was so in this case, and Clancy's visits to Las Cruces became very frequent.

One day while he was there there was a prisoner brought into town whose presence created more excitement than if he had been the governor of the territory, for it was this man Billy Antrim. Every one crowded to see the desperado, and with them went Clancy, for no man was ever more feared or more noted for his ferocity. So great was the terror inspired by his deeds that when his trial came there were few men who would serve as jurors. Among those who did serve was Charley Clancy. He was young and green, and they made him foreman of the jury. When the girl—you need not know her name, for it is that of a good family, as good as your own perhaps, and besides she, too, is dead now and it would avail you nothing —well, when she learned this she implored Clancy, in her terror, to withdraw, but he only smiled at her fears and answered her tears with kisses. She was a native of the country and he a stranger, but, boylike, he thought he knew it all.

When the trial was ended and the death sentence imposed, for that was the only verdict possible, Clancy returned to his ranch and his cattle, promising the girl not to be long absent. While he was gone the man whose death he had voted for escaped prison. The judge who had presided at the trial in his terror left the country and went to Santa Fe to be safe, and the girl wrote to Clancy to be on his guard and come to her at once. Meanwhile, she thought that while with her no danger could reach him. He received the letter, [illegible] thought it would not do to leave his ranch as if in fear. The judge who went to Santa Fe was old enough to be his grandfather. At any other time Clancy would have been only too glad to have gone to the girl at Las Cruces.

While he waited and debated when it would do to go to her, one morning there rode up to his door two men, and one of them was Antrim. When he saw them it was too late for Clancy to attempt to arm himself. All he could do was to answer their questions and submit to becoming their prisoner. The men took their horses and tied him in front of his door to a post, and then Antrim told him that he intended to kill him. Clancy knew the man too well to ask for mercy. If he was to be killed he would meet death like a man. It was hard, though, to leave the girl without one word of parting. If he had only heeded her letter.

When he was tied so that he could not move hand or foot, Antrim walked off twenty or thirty paces, and drawing his revolver called Clancy's attention to his right wrist and fired. Clancy could no longer feel that below that wrist he had a hand. When he tried to move his fingers the muscles seemed to have grown suddenly numb.

Antrim laughed and asked him what he thought of such marksmanship. The boy did not answer. A new hope, though, had come into his breast. They would not kill him outright, merely maim him, and with the girl to help him he would not mind that. Anything but separation from her.

Then Antrim spoke to him again and fired, and the same numb feeling came into his left hand below the wrist, where he had felt the second pistol ball crash through the bone and sinew. But he did not wince. Surely this man who looked so boyish and innocent would be satisfied with this much in revenge and now show him mercy.

If Charley Clancy had not been fresh from the east he would know that this was "pointing" a man to death—an old method of torture caught from the Indians. But now a white man was doing it. There are but few instances where white men have tried their hands at it, though it is very simple. All that there is to do is to shoot a man as many times as possible without killing him, until you are tired of the sport and willing that he should die.

The first time it was ever tried by one white man on another was on the Union Pacific railroad. They still point out the station to you. It is Julesburg. Clancy, though, was not long enough in the west to have even heard of it. Before the day was done he learned it all, though. Shot after shot Antrim put into his arms and legs until you could have twisted them like a piece of rubber hose in any direction you desired. Between the shots he and his companion would smoke their cigarettes and rest and divide the plunder they had taken from the house. And Clancy would faint with pain and weakness as the hot sun beat down on him. Sometimes he would not regain consciousness until Antrim had fired two or three shots in succession into his body. He never showed the white feather, though. When he found out that it was too late to beg for life, even if the best surgeons in christendom stood ready to care for his wounds he simply thought of the girl and cursed in his soul the cowardice of the man who was murdering him.

Everything must have an end, though. So it is with "pointing." When the day had nearly passed away and the sun was sinking in the west, leaving the lonely house on the unbroken mesa in darkness, Antrim grew tired of the sport and told Clancy so, and while telling it he emptied his revolver into the stomach and bowels of the man tied to the stake. Then he and his comrade saddled their horses, and Clancy, dying as he was, wondered if they were going to leave him to the night and darkness, when the coyotes, attracted by his blood, would come to continue the work that day had seen begun. His mind was still clear, and when Antrim walked toward him he tried to curse him for the coward he was, until Antrim, placing his pistol against Clancy's teeth, forced the muzzle into his mouth and pulled the trigger; and then the day's work was over.

There was no concealment about it. Every one in New Mexico knew what Charley Clancy had died for, but few men spoke of it above their breath. The judge who went to Santa Fe staid there. No man cared to meet Antrim. There was only one officer in the territory who had the courage to make the attempt to apprehend him, but so well did the murderer conceal his movements that it was impossible to follow him. Reward after reward was offered, yet no one cared to earn them.

When Clancy's body was found it was taken into Las Cruces and buried in the little graveyard where the girl's forefathers for generations back had been buried. Through it all the girl did not break down as most women would. People said she was cold, though at evening she would come with her beads and pray by the new made grave until darkness came.

One day she was missing; no one knew whither she had gone. Soon, though, rumors returned that she was in the different frontier towns among the Americans as one of the public dancing girls. She was beautiful and had no lack of lovers. She seemed to be without fear, and no matter how desperate the men with whom her lot was cast, she never quailed. The Americans called her la loma—the lioness.

Where men squandered the money gained by thievery and murder—wild orgies, in which men fought and killed each other like mad animals, she was always cool and unexcited. The wilder the crowd, the worse the men who composed it, apparently the more she enjoyed it. Her beauty was so great that many men, even among the Americans, offered to make her a wife, but she only smiled and refused all with a gentleness that made them wonder that one in her position could display it. When she was at the height of her popularity she disappeared. No one knew whither, although some said she had left to join a band of desperadoes near the Arizona line.

Wherever it was, nothing was seen of her for months, and then one day she returned home, but only a shadow of her former self. At first her father would not permit her to enter the house, while her mother cried and embraced her as if she had returned from the dead. Then the father, too, relented. Perhaps, he thought, it would after all be for but a short time, and it would be better that it [illegible] at home than as an outcast. She seemed unaware and indifferent to all. When night came she went to the little graveyard and prayed over the grave that still was the nearest.

Where she had spent the months of her absence she never told. To all questions she gave an evasive answer. It was said by some that her return home was due to the breaking up and scattering by the authorities of the band of desperadoes with whom it was rumored she had consorted. Stung by the rumor, her mother had one day asked her to deny it, but the girl had only dropped her head on her mother's breast and sobbed as she had never done since the day she had seen Clancy's body consigned to the earth.

Several times she had received messages, but from whom no one knew. Even to her mother, who alone spoke to her, she declined to tell. One day she received one of these messages, and that night after she had gone to her lover's grave she went to the house of the sheriff, who was the only officer that dared to follow Clancy's murderer. When she returned he was with her, and passing through the dimly lighted patio she led him to her room and placed him where he could not be seen in the darkness, and then she lay down on her bed and waited in the darkness as the hours passed until there was a tap at the window. The house was so quiet that it seemed to echo like a pistol shot, but she arose and going to the window opened it and let a man enter, who threw his arms about her and kissed her passionately and spoke regretfully of the time they had been separated.

The room was very dark, and as she led him from the window toward the bed where the other man crouched [illegible] she could almost feel her heart beat. The man whose arm was around her waist noticed her trouble and drew her more closely to him. When they reached the bed she drew herself gently from his arm and lay down. She fancied that she could hear the man who was concealed breathing as she lay between him and the man who had just entered. The air of the room seemed to stifle her, as if laden with death.

Then she turned and spoke to the man who had entered, telling him to light a match, so that he would not make any noise by striking the furniture, and when he demurred that it might not be safe she answered him that as the village was asleep no one could see him. For a moment he hesitated, and then he struck a match and the tiny spark grew into a blaze, showing the room plain and distinct. Only for an instant, though, for then there leaped out across the bed on which the girl lay a jet of fire, and the man who held the match fell to the ground without a groan.

The air of the room grew thick with the smell of powder, and through the house could be heard voices calling in affright, but in the room no one stirred or uttered a word. The girl was wondering if the man who had fallen was dead or only wounded, and the man who had shot him remained quiet, fearing that after all his shot might have failed him. It was only when the door of the room was opened from without and the light showed a dead outstretched figure on the ground that he came forth, and then the girl rose from the bed and gazed coolly down on the body of the man who had murdered her lover.—San Francisco Argonaut.

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