

## Some Wonders from the West.

### XXV.—A ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.



Oft has it been stated that truth is stranger than fiction that the aphorism has become trite; yet it is an undeniable fact that every day there are enacted dramas that would make the fame of an author, and yet which are permitted to pass unnoticed.

Such a real life romance has been disclosed by the announcement that the Rev. Joseph Griffis, who for the past five years has been the pastor of the South Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, New York, would resign his pulpit and devote the rest of his life to missionary work among the Indians of the Western United States. Thus is added the dramatic climax to a life that has been replete with adventure.

Born in Texas, the hero of this chequered career was stolen at the age of two years by Indians, who massacred his mother. The child was raised as an Indian boy and knew no other life than that of the red men, nor did he learn that he was not one of them by birth until he was ten years old. When sixteen years of age he enlisted in the United States army, deserted for a fancied grievance, was captured and sentenced to death, but managed to escape. He was forced to flee, and from that time he has been by turns tramp, member of the Salvation Army, evangelist, theological student, minister, and missionary.

"Despite my youth spent as a savage," he remarked in a recent interview, "I have not a drop of Indian blood in my veins. This is a fact I find hard to realize when I recall the eagerness with which I went to the chase, followed the war-path, and exultingly returned to the wigwam with the scalp of my enemy dangling from my belt.

"In 1864 my father, a well-to-do American ranchman, moved to the south-western part of Oklahoma, bordering on Texas. At this time the West was the real Indian frontier; the war-cry of the Indian was a familiar

sound, and the massacre of the white men a horrible but frequent sight. My father was one of a little handful of hardy Americans who formed a small settlement on the site of what is now Gainesville.

"One day the Kiowa Indians, who were the least friendly of any of the tribes, and who were strong in numbers and skilled in warfare, made a raid on the settlement. The whites were taken completely by surprise, and with the exception of a few who were taken as captives were brutally massacred. My mother

fell in the fight, for these red men had no mercy on women or children, but an old Kiowa warrior, who is still alive and well remembers the scene, told me many times that she defended her life and mine with fierce courage; 'fought like red squaw,' he would exclaim, enthusiastically.

"My father had gone to a neighbouring town on the day of the massacre. When he returned to his home he found the settlement deserted, houses burned, and bodies of his neighbours and friends charred and mutilated.

"He searched long and earnestly for me, and offered a large ransom for

my return, but the Indians, fearing punishment, hid me safely and refused to give me up. Where I lived until the death of my parent I do not know, but when he died I was taken to the wigwam of Big Bow, the chief of the Kiowas.

"I can recall my life from that time very vividly. Big Bow was very kind to me, and his squaw cared for me with all the tenderness an Indian mother is capable of bestowing, and they are very fond of their children. I entered into all the sports of the Indian youth, trained myself in the handling of the bow and arrow, and could bring home game of which any huntsman might be proud.

"When I was about ten years old something occurred which changed my life and made me a wanderer. I was travelling with a small band of Indians under Big Bow, and just as we were about to pitch our tents we



THE REV. JOSEPH K. GRIFFIS (WHO WAS KIDNAPPED BY INDIANS).  
From a Photo. by A. Hillman.

were captured by a company of American infantry. A soldier, who seemed friendly towards us, called me to him and commenced questioning me. He asked if I were a Kiowa. I answered that I was, and that Big Bow and his squaw were my mother and father. The soldier seemed to doubt this statement, remarking that I did not look much like an Indian despite my togs, for I dressed in the regular Indian costume, paint, skins, feathers, and everything that marks the red man's clothes from those of the whites. I was just leaving my questioner when he called me back and asked to see my left arm. He had noticed the vaccination mark that proved me to be of white origin. The commanding officer then took me to Big Bow and asked him to tell my history. This he refused to do at first, denying indignantly that I was a white man's son, but, after much persuasion, he was finally induced to tell my history.

"The officer of the infantry took me in charge, and, with the aid of Big Bow, who thought it might be to my advantage to be thrown among my own people, got in communication with my uncle, who lived in Texas. When my identity was proved my uncle came for me and took me with him to Texas, where I was forced to put aside my Indian habits and live the life of a civilized white boy.

"This restraint soon became irksome, and I longed to go back to the wild, adventurous, roving life of the Kiowas. I loved the rough kindness of the Indians, their courage, and restless, roving ways. I detested the mean, hampering, little conventionalities of the whites, and I made up my mind to return to the life that was a part of me.

"After staying long enough with my uncle to gain his trust and confidence, and when the strict watch that had been kept over my comings and goings had been released, I slipped out of the town and ran away to join the Indians.

"I journeyed for days over the prairies and mountains, enduring all manner of hardships, but happy in the fact that I was free and on my way to the people I loved. I had lost track of Big Bow, and I doubt if he would have kept me with him had I returned, for he felt that I should be given back to my people. After travelling for several weeks without falling in with the Indians I finally struck through the forests to a camp that I had often heard of. There I met some straggling Utes and became one of them.

"This tribe met with reverses, and I joined the Cheyennes, and, later, a little band of Kiowas. For six years I led the roving life of these tribes, hunted, fought, and lived with them, and at times forgot that I was a 'pale face.'

"In 1878, although I was not more than sixteen, I enlisted in the United States Army. I was put in Company K 16th Infantry, and did scout duty for some time. I won an important horse-race, which attracted the attention of Captain Crews, of the 4th Cavalry, and thinking to do me a kindness he offered to engage me as scout and interpreter on soldier's pay. I accepted the commission and served two and a half years, when we were sent on the trail of a band of Cheyennes, who had left the reservation on a foraging expedition. Because of an insult I had received at the hands of the com-

manding officer I had several months been planning to desert. Two soldiers went with me on the trail, and when we met the Cheyennes we joined them, but were soon met by the soldiers, who were too strong for us and overthrew the band.

"The Indians, being mounted, fled, and we alone were captured and taken back to camp. I was given a drum-head court-martial and sentenced to be shot at retreat. Just before the execution was to take place Captain Crews said he had decided to postpone it for thirty days, during which time I



THE REV. JOSEPH K. GRIFFIS IN THE COSTUME OF HIS FOSTER FATHERS.  
From a Photograph.

was to be put in the guard-house at Fort Reno for safe keeping.

"In the guard-house with me was a young soldier known only by the name of 'Gee Wiz,' a daring chap and jolly comrade. We often talked together about our captivity and planned means of escape. One day when the vigilant watch was relaxed somewhat Gee Wiz cut a hole in the roof of the guard-house and, watching our chance, we crawled through the aperture out into the bright daylight, warm sunshine, and fresh air. In a few minutes the whole camp was roused, and a hot chase commenced. We had the start, and soon were lost to the pursuers. We went seventy-five miles south, nearly starving *en route*, but enjoying our freedom and chance to live. When we were at a safe distance from camp Gee Wiz and I separated, and I have never seen him since. For three years I roamed about the country, living the life of a tramp, and finally I drifted to London, Ontario.

"It was in this city that I first knew the Salvation Army. I was roaming around the streets in an aimless fashion when I was attracted by the service they were holding in

the open air, and stayed a while to listen. The sermon made a deep impression upon me, and I after that attended many meetings, until I became converted and joined the Army. While still in London I was sent to gaol for beating a drum in the street, contrary to the law, and during my imprisonment I studied the English language. After my release I joined the Salvation Army once more and remained with them for three years, when I became an evangelist, and ten years ago I was ordained minister and came to Buffalo.

"Not until four years ago did I secure immunity from the death sentence which was pronounced upon me for deserting. And now I am preparing for a missionary's life, and in a few days I shall be back to Oklahoma and the scenes of my boyhood to work among my red brothers. My knowledge of their language and character will help me greatly in my work. Having been one of them for so many years I know best how to appeal to them, and I shall consider my early years well spent if they assist me to civilize the red men and help them to a better life."

## XXVI.—A WHITTLER OF GENIUS.

By C. B. SMITH.

IN looking over my old numbers of THE STRAND, as I often do, I ran across the article on whittling in the June number of 1900 by Mr. J. W. Russell, which attracted my attention, which he calls wonderful, which I do not gainsay. But as you have possibly heard that the "Yankee" is a whittler of reputation the world over, and as I have a friend whom I think most wonderful, I thought I would call your attention to some of his work, which is done only for pastime as he has an idle opportunity.

He is Dr. J. H. Brown, of Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass., one of our noted dentists, a gentleman now about sixty-five years old, who enjoys probably the best practice of anyone in our city. I have prevailed on him to allow me to photograph an assortment of pincers from one to sixteen joints

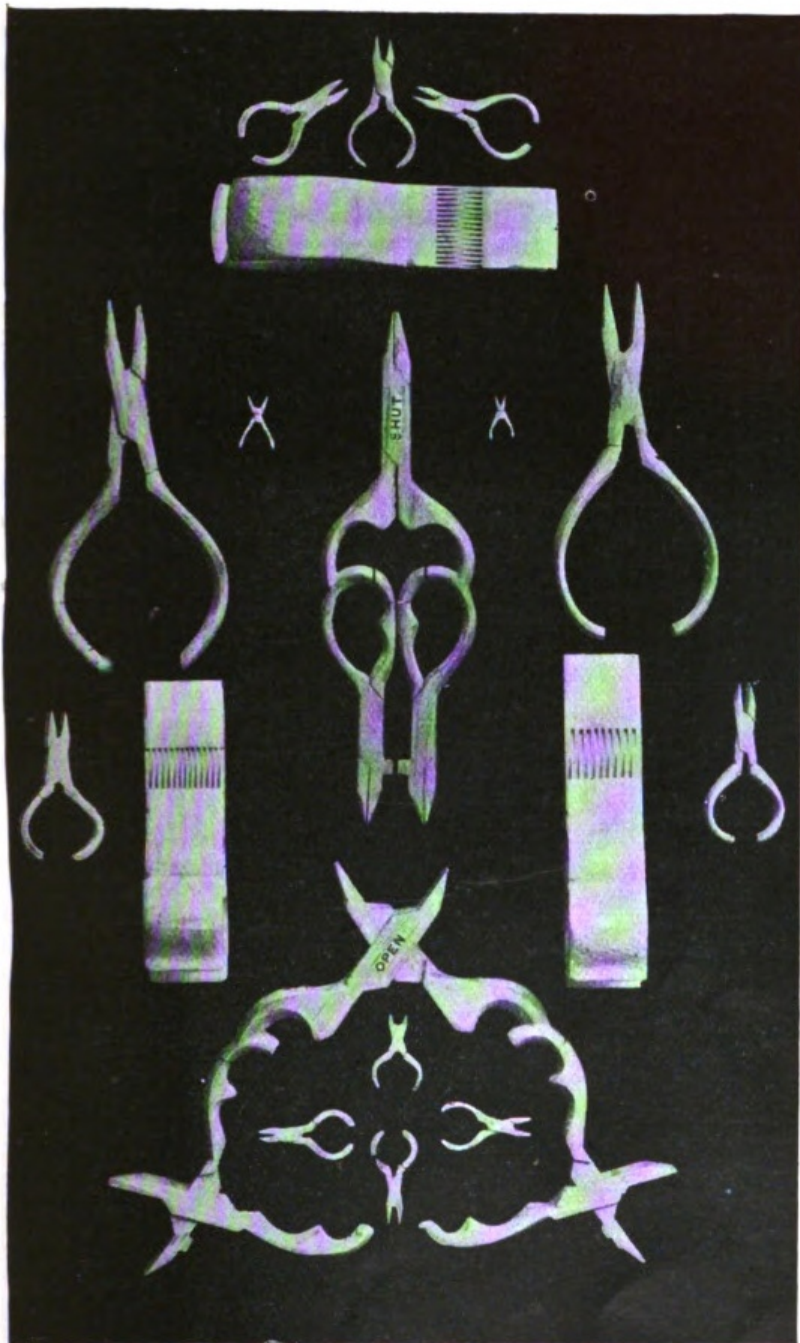
each; the smallest was made from one-quarter of a match, and less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. long, with a perfect joint, which I saw him make in 15 min. The largest one has sixteen joints, and is made from a piece of wood  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. thick. This one was made in four hours.

The wonderful part is the fact that there is no piecing or glueing, but all made from one piece of wood. He has many times offered to anyone 1,000 dols. who has not seen his to cut one like it in four days. In all his wood-work he uses a pocket-knife.

Dr. Brown is a genius in many ways mechanical, and can make almost anything that comes into his head, either with metal or wood. He once had in his house a miniature landscape, made by himself, 3 ft. by 5 ft., with a fountain in the centre made of shell, playing



From a photograph of DR. J. H. BROWN.



ARTICLES WHITTLED WITH A PENKNIFE FROM SOLID WOOD BY DR. J. H. BROWN.  
From a Photograph.

water a foot high, the overflow of which supplied a little river winding through the flowers (representing trees). At one side was a water-wheel running, the other side a windmill. Drinking from the fountain was a bird, which would raise its head as if swallowing, very natural to life.

In front of the fountain was a little white mouse on apparently a solid rock, eating a kernel of corn; through a hole in the rock on which he sat ran the wires that turned his head to look at you and raised his paws to his mouth. All worked at the same time and

ran by the water from the main pipes in his house, and could be shut off at will. Above all this were seventy-five pots of flowers filling the bow-window.

It was a grand sight and was the talk of the town for years. He was obliged to pack it away owing to the large number of visitors who called to see it.

## XXVII. — THE SKIPPING CHAMPION OF THE WORLD.

BY FRED A. TALBOT.

THE record-breaker is inseparable from America. Be it either in work or play, an astonishing feat must be accomplished. The results of these efforts to attain priority and notoriety have been the creation of some unique records, and in some instances the feats have gained widespread notice as remarkable achievements of physical endurance. Notwithstanding this curious tendency in the States it is doubtful whether one would have thought it possible to establish a record in connection with the young lady's favourite pastime of skipping. Yet this is the case, and the record is not held by any member of the fair sex, but by Mr. Fred Connor, of New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Curiously enough, the idea of establishing a skipping record appears to have originated in this country; at any rate, an Englishman was the first man to gain publicity in this direction. The holder of this unique championship was no other than William Plimmer, the well-known English pugilist. Some six or seven years ago he decided to ascertain how long he could skip without once stopping or pausing. He enlisted the assistance of some friends to witness the event. Owing to the curious nature of the competition considerable interest was

manifested, an effect due to a great extent, no doubt, to the fame he had accomplished in connection with his pugilistic encounters. An ordinary rope was provided, and Plimmer commenced his task. He



FRED CONNOR, THE CHAMPION SKIPPER—STARTING POSITION.  
From a Photograph.

had to turn the rope himself, that is to say, he did not skip while assistants placed at either end turned the rope for him. Plimmer succeeded in making 3,926 consecutive jumps without a single miss or pause. It was considered a magnificent performance, and Plimmer was fêted accordingly.

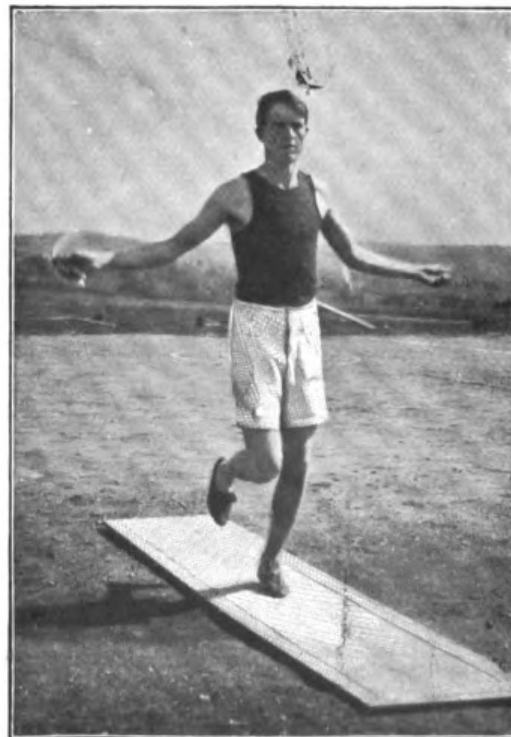
But the glory of the achievement of the English pugilist was short-lived. A challenger appeared on the scene in the person of Mr. Connor, who stated that he would excel Plimmer's record. The conditions were to be exactly the same, and the *venue* of the contest was to be Oil City, Pennsylvania. So eminently successful was Connor in this attempt that Plimmer's record was lowered by 109 jumps, Connor having accomplished 4,035 skips. The new champion's achievement was somewhat more noteworthy than that of Plimmer, since he had used the backward lope or step, which made the task much more difficult.

Although beaten, Plimmer made no attempt to retrieve the "blue ribbon," but another rival, Mr. Mullen, eclipsed Connor's record by skipping against time. This latest

opponent made 5,000 skips in one hour. The forward lope was utilized throughout, and the feat was regarded as being remarkable, since the strain of skipping incessantly for such a length of time and at such a speed is tremendous. Skipping is one of the most healthy forms of exercise, and at the same time one of the most fatiguing.

This achievement by Mullen stimulated Connor to further effort. He soon announced that he would further increase the record, and on March 1st, 1896, the attempt was made. Mullen's record on this occasion was hopelessly broken, for Connor carried off fresh laurels by making 7,000 skips in 1hr. 45min. Although on the average for the hour this aggregate does not equal that of Mullen, since Connor only made 4,000 skips in the sixty minutes as against the former's 5,000 in the same time, yet the feat was far more important, and is still the record for skipping for the longest time without a pause or miss. As with the case of the competitor he vanquished, Connor availed himself of the forward lope entirely. Great difficulty was at times experienced by the umpires in recording the skips, owing to the rapidity with which the competitor turned the rope.

By this wonderful exhibition, which was not only a remarkable skipping performance but also a splendid physical feat, Connor



SKIPPING 120 TIMES A MINUTE.

From a Photograph.

firmly established his claim to the championship, and since then no other challengers have succeeded in wresting it from him. Connor has since devoted his energies mainly to pace instead of to staying power, and in this direction he has also achieved some startling successes.

Shortly after his disposal of Mullen he had a sharp spurt of 500 jumps in 2min. 22sec., an average of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  skips per second. This was a rapid piece of work, but continued practice has enabled him to increase his speed enormously. Occasionally he attains such a pace that the camera fails to record the rope distinctly, but simply gives a confused blur showing the rope whizzing through the air. Some difficulty was experienced in obtaining the photographs illustrating this article, and it was not until after several attempts had been made that successful photographs were obtained.

On December 24th, 1897, Connor succeeded in lowering the last remaining record in connection with skipping. This latter was



SKIPPING 300 TIMES A MINUTE—FORWARD MOVEMENT.  
From a Photograph.

established some little time previously by Mr. Frank Nucle, of Auburn, New York State, who accomplished 2,000 skips in 14min. 30sec. This averages a speed for the hour of about 8,000 jumps, so that it will be recognised that Connor set himself a formidable task in attempting to eclipse this feat. The contest was decided at the Young

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Men's Christian Association, Oil City, and Connor gained another gigantic success. He lowered Nucle's record by 2min. 51sec., because he accomplished the 2,000 jumps in 11min. 39sec., an hourly speed of over 10,300 jumps—truly a magnificent performance.



SKIPPING 300 TIMES A MINUTE—CROSS-ROPE MOVEMENT.  
From a Photograph.

It might be naturally supposed that to watch Connor skipping, especially in the longer contests, was a tedious process and devoid of interest. Such is far from being the case, however. Connor is a typical athlete, and he can introduce considerable variety into his steps that relieves the monotony of the spectacle. There is the forward lope, ordinary running style, which is the easiest and speediest step; back lope, which is both difficult and fatiguing; double jump, front hop, cross arm hop, and so forth. With such a variety of movements, when one continual action becomes tiring, he can obtain relief by adopting some other step. Then, again, he is continually altering his pace. At one moment he is proceeding along in an easy, regular step, while at another he is turning the rope so quickly that his feet do not appear to touch the ground, and the revolving rope makes a peculiar and fascinating hiss in its progress.

Three days after his defeat of Nucle's exploit he created another fast record by making 7,000 skips in 47min. 45sec., at the Oil City Athletic Club. The following

week he completed an even finer performance by making 10,111 steps in 1 hr. 18 min., which still ranks as one of his finest and fastest performances. His last exhibition was given at Warren, Pennsylvania, some time ago, when he made 1,000 jumps in 5 min. 17 sec. Since that time Connor has been resting upon his triumphs, awaiting patiently the arrival of the next challenger to the skipping-rope championship, but apparently other athletes are content to allow Connor to remain in undisputed possession of his unique record.

#### XXVIII.—A WONDERFUL CLOCK.

AFTER two and a half years of steady labour William Jankowsky, a young carriage-builder of Brooklyn, U.S.A., has completed the most

remarkable timepiece known to the annals of the craft. Not only does this clock keep correct time, but it has several sets of chimes, electric lights, a phonograph, a music-box, a procession of ecclesiastical figures, a couple of miniature breech-loading cannon, a gas warming device, an electric fan, and an alarm. It took Mr. Jankowsky just one year to collect the materials desired, to draft the design, and cut out with a scroll-saw the hundreds of pieces of wood used in the construction.

The whole affair stands 8 ft. high and 4 ft. in width and 3 ft. deep. The woods used in making it are ebony, white maple, oak, mahogany, and walnut.

In the winter time the clock is connected with a gas stove, and automatically warms up the room in the morning, while during the hot summer days it operates an electric fan.

When the clock is wound up and its various devices put into operation it affords an amusing entertainment, for this wonderful timepiece does practically everything but talk, and when the phonograph is started it even seems to have the power of speech.

When visited by a representative of this magazine Mr. Jankowsky ushered his guest into the drawing-room and promptly exhibited the clock.

"There she stands; a pretty ornament, is it not?" he smilingly asked, pointing to the unique time-teller; "that represents two and a half years of hard labour and thought.

"I am a carriage-maker by trade, and am kept busily employed during the day, so I had only my evenings to work on my clock. Many and many a time I sat up until the wee small hours perfecting my design or finishing some delicate bit of carving. Two batteries are employed in producing the force necessary to operate all the devices pertaining to this timepiece. I will set it going.

"As you will notice, first



From a

WILLIAM JANKOWSKY AND HIS WONDERFUL CLOCK.

[Photograph.

one hears the tinkling of a fine set of chimes in the twin tower. Those towers represent hours of hard labour, and are, to my thinking, the crowning glory of the clock. The scrollwork and intricate design of the woodwork of these towers called forth all my ingenuity.

"The soldier guarding the towers suggested to me the cannons underneath. As the hours strike these four cannon go off with a bang, produced by an ordinary powder cap. I have been told that the firing of the cannon combined with the martial airs which the phonograph and organ send forth, together with the beating of the drums, give the impression of the waging of a fierce war.

"The clock is lighted by forty small electric bulbs, and when these tiny lights flash out here and there the procession of

figures in the balcony of the clock slowly starts in motion and passes in review.

"Taking the working of the different devices in order, after a brief pause the melody of the chimes is succeeded by a familiar air evoked from the music-box concealed in the centre of the clock body. When this has ceased the phonograph in the lower half of the structure begins in crescendo tones Sousa's march. At the climax the twin cannon are fired by electricity.

"In cold weather I set a battery by my clock, and at the desired hour half-a-dozen gas-jets in a stove are ignited, and the room is warmed before I have finished breakfast. In warm weather I attach an electric fan, which is similarly regulated; thus in winter my clock keeps me warm, while in summer it cools me."

#### XXIX.—BEATING TIME BY SEARCH-LIGHT.

UPON the occasion of one of the elections in New York City a short while ago it was decided to give a massed band selection in the Madison Square one evening. A difficulty however arose, which threatened to prevent the realization of the scheme. How were the various bands to be kept in time? It was obviously impossible for a man to conduct the mammoth orchestra, owing to the darkness. How the dilemma was successfully surmounted may be seen from our

illustration. At the summit of the tall tower, crowning the building known as the Madison Square Gardens Building, a huge electric search-light was erected, and the brilliant ray of light emanating from this search-light served as the bâton. It was manipulated up and down in steady, regular beats, and the bands were thus enabled to keep time. The upward and downward movements of this unique bâton may be distinctly observed by the flashes of the light.



From a

THE SEARCH-LIGHT BEATING TIME TO THE MAMMOTH ORCHESTRA.

[Photograph.]