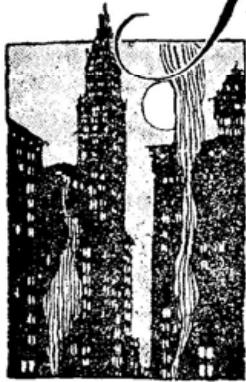


A Lesson in Geography



by

Frank Condon



ON a certain hour of the day a nameless Filipino sat in the sun on the corner of East Oau Avenue and Ollaouao Street, consuming the fried hind leg of what had once been a hairy, brown dog. His shining and ebony countenance betrayed the fact that his meal of canine propeller was giving him considerable inward pleasure.

At precisely the same moment a willowy chorus-girl with lampblack on her eyelashes, red paint on her cheeks, pink powder on her skin, diamonds around her throat, in her hair, and attached to her ears, entered Churchill's restaurant in New York, and ordered seven dollars worth of chicken *à la* Maryland and a short order of Cliquot, the whole to be charged to an automobile salesman on the row.

Nobody on Ollaouao Street stared in amazement at the Filipino as he nibbled off the remaining end of the dog's leg. Likewise, nobody in Churchill's stared at the chorus-girl as she inserted her pearly teeth into the chicken's innocent breast.

But if the chorus-girl had been sitting on the broken beer-case on Ollaouao Street with her chicken and her wine, the populace would undoubtedly have halted to comment and to

gaze; and if the Filipino had been rubbing his shining stomach against Mr. Churchill's tables and urged fried dog into his system, he would have attracted immediate attention of a highly unpleasant and violent character.

Therefore, it all depends upon your geographical surroundings. What is wholly permissible, natural, and of course in one community is a ticket to eternity in another. We are the creatures of our environs, and our feelings and beliefs are regulated by the things we see and hear and learn from contact with our fellow men. And as we come to form certain fixed notions about our own familiar affairs, so do we establish in our minds opinions concerning strange places that may or may not be correct.

If Cactus Cañon had happened to grow up a few miles farther west, it would have claimed California as its parent. Therefore it was in Arizona. It was not a town or a village, but rather a community, a district in which all men seemed to live but for one thing. Cactus Cañon was and is the center of a pop-eyed mining country. Its people live, eat, sleep, and dream of minerals, of fine fortunes to be dragged from the rocky entrails of the earth.

They discuss market quotations, new prospects, undeveloped territory, and the current price of copper, silver, gold, lead, and tungsten.

In Cactus Cañon you will find young men working for one hundred dollars a month, keeping books for the companies, and spending five hundred a month. The difference is obtained through the ownership of stocks. Now and then a company or a boom explodes with a loud crash, and a number of people find themselves penniless. Occasionally a little group becomes astoundingly rich within the space between two moons.

The miners wear brown overalls and chew tobacco, but they do not drink alcohol, because the State has relieved them of that privilege. Officials travel about in motor-cars. The railroads bring in supplies and auto-trucks carry the quartz to the smelters. The paymasters usually carry weapons.

So far, this narrative sounds a bit like a consular report. The facts are hereby written down so that you may form an accurate idea of Cactus Cañon and not see it through the eyes of Mr. Oscar Putney Peabody of New York City.

Mr. Peabody was an ordinary New Yorker. An ordinary New Yorker is a person who wears good-looking shoes and regards the rest of the United States as a low form of life that somehow has managed to hang onto the Empire State.

Mr. Peabody lived in a Riverside Drive apartment facing the river and costing two thousand dollars per annum. In his youth he sat on the park wall with other young men in tailored suits, sang in close harmony, and flirted with the wise-eyed, thin-waisted girls of the neighborhood. After he grew up he entered his father's office down-town and took to reading the *Evening Post*, because he was led to understand that the best people did

so.

His principal ideas about the West were obtained from a superficial reading of Bret Harte and "Frank in the Mountains." It was somewhere you went on the Pennsylvania Railroad and from which you were very glad to return to New York.

On the other hand, Mr. Oxenham Murk of Cactus Cañon did not wear patent-leather pumps, smoke cigarettes from a long, gold-tipped holder, or ride from place to place, as a matter of course, in taxicabs.

Mr. Murk was thirty, unmarried, husky, and the son of old Tyrus Murk, owner of the Three Forks Mining Company of Cactus Cañon. He had never carried a gun in his life. He had studied mining engineering at Stanford University and had joined his father upon leaving college. In a manner of speaking, Mr. Murk was an ordinary citizen of Cactus Cañon, just as Mr. Peabody was an ordinary New Yorker.

And in the course of time old Tyrus called Oxenham into his office one afternoon and remarked:

"I'm going to send you to New York on business for the firm. Can you get ready to start by Tuesday?"

"New York," Oxenham repeated. "Why, of course I can get ready. This is a surprise, dad. What's to be done down there?"

The business was discussed, and the son of the firm began his preparations immediately. He walked down the street to the Ames Hardware Company and went in.

"I want a gun, Eddie," he said to Mr. Ames.

"You do!" retorted the young man. "What are you going to do with a gun?"

"I'm going to New York," answered Mr. Murk.

"You are?" Mr. Ames returned. "Well, you'll need a gun, and that's no lie. Did you see that in the paper yesterday? My great

Peter, but that must be one awful place!”

“It is,” Mr. Murk agreed, examining the automatic weapon Mr. Ames handed him, “but if they start anything with me, they’d better move fast.”

Mr. Murk made his purchase and left the store. Next day a large and uneasy portion of Cactus Cañon was aware that the younger Murk contemplated a sojourn amid the wickedness of the nation’s metropolis. Joe Riggs stopped Oxenham on the street and inquired.

“So you’re goin’ to New York, Oxy!” Joe said. “Better be careful. Anything’s liable to happen to a man in that town.”

Mr. Murk agreed that the trip might not be unattended with danger. Cactus Cañon is a long distance from New York, but it reads the Los Angeles papers carefully. Cactus Cañon knew what New York was. New York was a place where gunmen flourished. It was the home of thieves and robbers. Every fifteen minutes of the night some one was held up and robbed in New York. Statistics proved it. Every sixteen hours a human being was murdered.

Crime in the nation’s largest municipality was rampant and generally popular. You walked peacefully out of your home and down the street, and immediately some enterprising burglar tapped you on the head with a length of iron pipe, and an ambulance took you to the hospital, where the surgeons sent in a report stating you had delirium tremens. Cactus Cañon was not in the slightest doubt about New York. Every thirty minutes a house was robbed. Every fifty minutes a hold-up was recorded on the open streets. Once every hour a safe was cracked by nitro experts. Five times a day the Black Hand Society exploded one of its favorite bombs in front of a delicatessen store, maiming the proprietor, his wife, and all his children.

These, said Cactus Cañon, were the

established facts; New York might be a nice enough town, but you cannot deny official facts.

“Without a doubt in the world,” said Joe Riggs to Oxenham Murk, “that burg down there on the edge of the ocean is the champeen unsafest spot on top of God’s footstool. You’re as safe there as you’d be in the stomach of a thrashing-machine.”

“You don’t need to tell me,” Oxenham returned. “I read the papers. I’ve got the facts about New York, but when I get there I am going to be mighty cautious. I bought a gun from Eddie Ames.”

“You’ll need it,” Joe went on warningly. “You go into one of them fine hotels on Broadway, and a swell dresser asks you for a match, and the next thing they find your body in the river. Why, I was readin’ yesterday—”

And while Cactus Cañon was preparing to send a representative worthy of its best traditions into the land of the paper dollar and spittoonless hotels, something of importance was happening in New York. In Mr. Oscar Peabody’s private office a buzzer hummed, and Mr. Peabody arose languidly. The buzzer indicated that his father desired to hold converse.

“Oscar,” said his father as the young man entered, “by any chance did you ever hear of a place named Cactus Cañon?”

“No, sir,” Mr. Peabody answered. “It sounds as if it might be a Western village.”

“It is Western—about the dog-gonedest westernest community in a largely western nation. And you might as well begin looking it up, because you’re going out there to-morrow afternoon on the Western Express.”

Oscar looked pained. His father chuckled.

“I think that’s the place where a bunch of cowboys or miners or other savages had a party one night. They strung up fourteen men to one telegraph-pole. Old Charley Hoyt wrote a play about it—at least, if it wasn’t that place

it was some other just like it.”

“Would—would it not be possible to send some other employee of the company?” Oscar inquired politely. “I had plans which necessitated—”

“The Western Express leaves at four o’clock to-morrow,” said his father. “You’ll be on board, son.”

“Very well, sir,” Oscar answered resignedly.

That evening he telephoned the sad tidings to his sweetheart and future wife, Miss Honora Wilmington, who shuddered.

“I’ll be terribly busy to-night, dear,” Oscar said, “but I’ll see you to-morrow before I go. I must hurry out now and buy a revolver.”

“A revolver!” Honora echoed in horrified tones.

“Certainly,” said Oscar with pride. “I’m going to Cactus Cañon, and if you know anything about the West you know what that country is like.”

Miss Wilmington, being a New Yorker also, did have a conception of Cactus Cañon. She regarded it as Oscar regarded it. The savage population of such a places, as is well known in New York, goes about clad in long hair, bowie knives, and leather pants with sideburns down the edges. Ever and anon the wild Indians break over the stone walls of the reservation after tanking up on government-supplied whisky and begin burning women and children at whatever stakes are at hand.

Furthermore, as all Gothamites knew full well, mounted desperadoes will ride through a community, shooting up the populace without let or hinder, and if a stranger wanders in a saloon for a glass of water he is forced by some large assassin in a sombrero hat to drink half a pint of thirty-eight horse-power whisky, which incapacitates him from serious purposes during the remainder of his life. Wherefore, Honora shuddered at the thought of whatever might overtake Oscar Peabody and advised

him to be careful about irritating strangers.

Mr. Peabody left New York on the following day. In his bag was a large metal instrument for shooting leaden bullets into fellow beings who seem about to interfere with one’s happiness.

On the same day, Mr. Oxenham Murk departed from Cactus Cañon, taking the Overland Flier, and for a couple of days Time went along down the right-hand side of the clock and up the left until some seventy hours had fled their way thitherward.

You probably do not know anything about Maricopa Junction. Not many people do. It consists of some confused railway tracks, an eating-house, and a small shack in which sits a telegraph-operator. Outside is plenty of flat world upon which to walk. The earth is covered with desert and mesquite, and that’s all. It is at Maricopa Junction that the time changes. Coming east, you lose one hour and set your watch ahead.

From a west-bound train descended Mr. Oscar Peabody, carrying the very latest in leather bags and smoking a cigarette in a gold-tipped holder. Another train arrived from the Southwest four minutes later, and from an end car stepped Mr. Oxenham Murk of Cactus Cañon. For the time being East and West were breathing the same air.

To the north a single-track railroad curled away to another main-line junction, and in the course of the evening a local train would start from Maricopa Junction. On board this train Mr. Peabody of New York and Mr. Murk of Cactus would be forced to pass an hour or more in each other’s presence. Fifty miles up the line they would again disembark and connect with main-line limited trains, one of them going East and the other West. But for the time being they were without occupation, and when you find yourself in Maricopa Junction waiting for the north-bound local to start you are in a forlorn condition and nothing

can help you. There is no place to walk except out on the desert, where you will scratch your legs against incipient cactus. You can see for miles in any direction, but you can't see anything but atmosphere, which, after a time, becomes tolerably monotonous gazing. There is nothing to do except to pace up and down beside the railway tracks, with your hands behind your back, wishing you were somewhere else and that the United States of America was not so pestilentially large and commodious.

Fifty or more desolated passengers ambled back and forth, staring at each other and cursing the railroad company. Among them was Mr. Peabody, and almost from the time Mr. Murk stepped from the train the New York man gazed at him with suspicion. There was a certain ungainly bulge about Mr. Murk's back that fascinated the Easterner.

And Mr. Murk, having deposited his meager traveling equipment under the lunch-counter in the eating-room, essayed to pass the time by smoking cigarettes, which he rolled himself, and staring with interest at his fellow victims. Among those whom he saw first was Mr. Peabody.

"One of those New Yorkers," commented Mr. Murk thoughtfully. "You can tell 'em a mile. I'll keep an eye on this lad just for luck."

On an upended barrel in the light thrown from the eating-house lamps sat a middle-aged man with gray hair and an ascetic countenance. He sat with one leg curled over the other, and in his hand was a book, which, as Mr. Peabody discovered by stopping near him, was entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire."

The eccentricities of trains and railway companies irked the gentleman not at all. He was calm and placid to the eye, and the uneasy saunterings of the waiting passengers left him undisturbed and even unnoticed. He glanced up inquiringly after a time and caught the

fixed gaze of Mr. Peabody.

"Desolate hole!" Peabody stated.

"It is rather lonely," agreed the calm man.

"Notice the big fellow over there?" Mr. Peabody continued. "I'm not a man who looks for trouble, but I've got an eye on that chap. He looks as if he might take this crowd of passengers and stand them on their heads. But not me. I'm ready for any little game he begins."

The literary gentleman glanced with interest toward the tall figure of Mr. Oxenham Murk and laughed.

"Oh, I guess not," he said quietly. "Don't you go and be too quick about anything." Whereupon he resumed his reading.

The man from New York decided not to be too quick, but he likewise determined to be quick enough. Maricopa Junction struck him as about the sort of place that would appeal tremendously to the outlawry innate in such a man as the object of his suspicions seemed to be. And, while cold distrust found lodgment in the mind of Peabody, Mr. Murk eyed the man from Riverside Drive with equal distaste. He saw in the Easterner such a one as he had often read about—outwardly a citizen smartly clad, but inwardly a wolf waiting for whatever might turn up.

Therefore, as the darkness increased, the suspicious ones ambled slowly about the desolate patch of desert and watched each other. It was Mr. Peabody who first pulled his gun. His fretful misgivings and his nervousness finally mastered him. Mr. Murk, apparently skulking in the shadow, reached for a handkerchief, and simultaneously Peabody grasped his own weapon and went into action. That is, he started into action, and there is no telling where his somewhat overflustered condition would have led him, but intervention appeared in the person of the calm and history-reading citizen who had hitherto adorned the barrel. He leaped

suddenly into the air and grasped the hand of Oscar Peabody before that wrought-up individual could do murder or whatever other fancy lurked within him.

Meanwhile, Mr. Murk was not entirely idle. He observed the sudden action of the Easterner, and his own weapon was in the air and with the business end pointed directly at Mr. Peabody's person, when the neutral person interfered.

"Put up those guns," ordered the man, shoving Oscar's hand down beside his leg. "There's some sort of misunderstanding here. I don't know exactly what it is, but I know there's no occasion for fireworks. What's the matter with you two, anyhow? Who are you, both of you?"

"I," said Peabody, "am Oscar Putney Peabody of New York, and I don't mind saying that this—this man's actions have been mighty suspicious. Whatever he was going to do, I intended to stop him. I don't know him, but I know his—"

"I am Oxenham Murk of Cactus Cañon," said that individual in a puzzled manner. "This New York man looks bad to me. I knew he was from New York the minute I laid eyes on him."

"I am from New York," Oscar said; "but I want you to know that I'm a respectable citizen—"

"Who carries a gun," amended Mr. Murk.

"Because I feared I should run across the likes of you."

"Of me!" Mr. Murk chuckled. "My Lord! I'm going to New York myself, and that's the only reason for my weapon. Out home in Cactus I'd as soon think of carrying a pocketful of rattlesnakes. But no New Yorker is going to bat me on the head. Nobody's going to get me into a hotel room and slip a needle into me. Not Oxenham Murk. I'm a wise guy."

The gentleman who had prevented

bloodshed shoved his "Fall of Rome" into his pocket and laughed. He surveyed the two still somewhat hostile belligerent apostles of preparedness and said:

"It appears to me, as an outsider, that it's up to you two gentlemen to fold away your animosities and shake hands. Seems to be a misunderstanding."

Mr. Murk contemplated Mr. Peabody, who returned his glance. Each smiled.

"The drinks are on us," Oxenham Murk said, advancing. Mr. Peabody took his hand and grinned with him.

"On me," he corrected. "I think that offhand I'm a bigger booby than you. Let's go and get a drink."

"Sure; a drink of milk," Murk laughed. "This country is prohibition."

The two new acquaintances wandered off, discussing the peculiar nature of their mutual error, and entirely forgetful of the calm man who had brought about their friendly meeting and prevented hostilities.

Twenty minutes later the local train north began to manifest signs of life. The bell rang; the fireman climbed up into the cab, and the engineer ceased his apparently endless job of pouring oil on the wheels.

In the smoking-room of the last coach Mr. Murk and Mr. Peabody chuckled anew. Opposite them reclined the bookworm. The three men were the only occupants of the compartment, and the local rattled along northward into the night.

"You were dead wrong about New York," said Mr. Peabody in an explanatory manner. "New York isn't at all what you think. True, there are some disorderly people there and crime does exist. But it exists also in every large city, and New York is no worse than Buffalo or Pittsburgh or Cincinnati. In fact, I believe the criminal records will show the metropolis to have a higher percentage of law-abiding citizens than most cities in America."

"You may be right," returned Mr. Murk, "but wherever you got your impressions about Cactus Cañon, somebody slipped you a lot of nonsense."

Peabody laughed and lighted another cigarette, which he inserted in the gold-tipped holder. He leaned back against the cushions and leisurely recounted to Mr. Murk his previous ideas concerning the West. When he finished Murk laughed long and loudly.

"That's a good joke on you," he chuckled, "but wait till I tell you what I thought New York was like. You've opened my eyes. What you tell me about personal safety in New York is astonishing. Why, I thought—"

The Cactus Cañon man revealed his beliefs and the theories of other Cactus citizens. Mr. Peabody laughed with equal length and loudness.

"It's on both of us," they said together.

The calm man across the smoking-room laid down his "Rise and Fall of Rome" and looked up.

"You gentlemen pardon me," he said with a slight bow, "but I have overheard your conversation, and it's mighty interestin'. Of course, I didn't mean to eavesdrop, but you know how it is on a train, and anyhow I sort of seem to have an interest in you both, seein' I stopped one of you from takin' a pot shot at the other."

Murk and Peabody indicated by slight inclination of their heads that the placid man was welcome to have words with them. He continued:

"It was amusin' to hear how each one of you made a mistake about the other man's home town, and it was lucky you discovered the truth before you began borin' each other with lead. One of you thought New York was the toughest community atop the civilized world, and the other held equally fallacious views concernin' Cactus Cañon. Now, I know both them towns, and they're all right. You

were both wrong. But did you ever happen to hear of a little place called Millersville?"

Neither Murk nor Peabody had previous knowledge of it.

"It ain't much of a town for size," went on the calm man thoughtfully, "and I reckon it ain't of much importance in the affairs of the world. But we're comin' to it soon, and you gentlemen will change trains just one stop beyond. The only reason I mention Millersville is because we're talkin' about our home towns, and that's mine, the same as yours is New York and yours is Cactus Cañon.

"I come from Millersville, though I haven't had much to do with the old place of late years. But I was born there and grew up in the shadow of its peaceful church steeples. Let me inform you, for its size Millersville has more churches than any town in the world. And Sunday-schools—say, there's a Sunday-school on every block.

"I suppose Millersville is the most God-fearing, quiet, peaceful, law-abiding village that ever did business. There ain't a jail in the place. Nobody ever was arrested for anything. Crime is unknown, and everybody loves his neighbor. I'm surprised that you gentlemen never heard of Millersville."

The listeners shook their heads.

"Must be a nice place to live," hazarded Mr. Peabody politely.

"It is, if you like peaceful ways and goin' to church, because if you don't go to church every little while you ain't popular. The Golden Rule probably started right here in Millersville. Peace on earth and good will to men—that's Millersville. And that's my town, gentlemen—the most law-abidin', God-fearin', peaceful community that ever laid out a town site."

The calm man stopped speaking and glanced reflectively out of the window. Mr. Murk stared up at a corner of the ceiling, as though wondering whether to pursue the

conversation further. Mr. Peabody turned to the match-safe in the corner to light a fresh cigar. And when the two travelers again glanced toward the calm man, they started.

He was still sitting on the black leather divan seat, but over his eyes was a neat black rag, with two holes through which his eyes were peering, and now those quiet eyes were snapping brightly. When he spoke his voice had altered. It resembled the filing of chilled steel. And in his hands which had so lately clasped the edges of "The Fall of Rome," there lay clutched two large, black automatic pistols, either one of which looked capable of blowing a one-inch hole through a steam boiler.

"Sit perfectly still," said the calm man from Millersville, "and don't let your hands come down from above your heads. Up! Up! There."

He rose from his seat and stepped to the entrance.

"Now stand up and turn around."

The stunned ones did so. The Millersville man deftly removed the two weapons from Murk and Peabody. The change that had come over him was astounding, and from that minute forward Messrs. Peabody and Murk were privileged to look upon and participate in one of the fastest and completest one-man hold-ups that the profession regards with such pride.

With amazing deftness and speed the train-robber removed from the two passengers their money and valuables.

"Now walk out ahead of me and stop when I tell you to," he ordered. The big automatics nodded toward the entrance. Murk and Peabody obeyed. So far, they had said nothing, because there was nothing to be said.

The coach was the last one on the train, which was as the bandit had intended it to be. When robbing a train, single-handed, always choose the last car, for obvious reasons. And

when the passengers in the car looked up, on sharp command, they beheld a queer procession.

Two passengers walked side by side, their shoulders bumping ludicrously as they crowded through the narrow aisle, and behind them came a masked man, bearing two weapons that looked and acted like sudden death.

In one second every man and woman in the car was standing. Over each standing figure two trembling hands pawed the air feebly. Enough cold chills were running through that one car to supply a wholesale butcher market with two weeks' frigidity. At the words "Hands up," those members rose, and when they faltered, through weariness and fright, a word from behind the mask shot them up stiff again.

The brakeman was among those present who had nothing to offer in the way of suggestion, and whose hands were rigid as pokers. Trainmen obey first. They are more obedient than the passengers under such strained conditions, because they are more experienced. The conductor was somewhere ahead and might return at any moment, but when he did return he would simply join the little crowd of hand-thrusters.

With incredible speed the bandit went through the car-load of passengers. His movements were pantherlike. His shoulders moved from side to side, and seemingly he had eyes in the back of his head as well as on both sides.

He saw every movement made by every passenger during the time he was in the coach, whether he was looking in the direction of the moving passenger or not. He transferred valuables swiftly from the outstretched hands, broke open handbags, and abstracted revolvers and automatics from pockets.

When he was finished he had nine pistols in addition to his own. Half-way through his

task of transfer, the door behind him opened, and a fat, unsuspecting man walked in upon the scene. For an instant he failed to comprehend it. He stared, trying to grasp it all. The outlaw spoke sharply to him.

"Hold up your hands!" he said crisply.

The fat man hesitated. Seemingly, the bandit had not looked back toward the newcomer. Slowly the situation drifted into the fat one's intellect. He realized that this was a hold up and that he was being commanded to thrust his hands into the air.

Slowly he raised his left hand. His right was following it haltingly into the air, not because the victim was thinking of harming the bandit, but because his mind was working slowly.

At that momentary pause of the right hand ended a man's life. The bandit's right-hand gun spoke. The fat man's legs gave under him. He sank to the car floor, still staring in bewildered incomprehension. Immediately thereafter the robber went on through the aisle, and those who had seen a man shot down stood perfectly still and prayed for strength to keep their weary arms up.

At the end of the aisle the robber spoke to the brakeman.

"Give him the two bells," he said.

The brakeman obeyed. A grinding of brakes answered, and the train began to stop. With his eyes on the crowd, the man from Millersville backed through the door to the rear platform and the brakeman followed him slowly, staring down in fascination at the two weapons. The highwayman backed down the steps to the gravel as the train stopped.

"Now the one bell," he said.

The brakeman reached up and pulled the leather cord. In a moment the train started again. And the silent, motionless figure on the right-of-way faded into the blackness.

Inside the car the body of the bandit's

victim rolled back and forth where it had fallen. Messrs. Murk and Peabody drew down their hands and gasped a breath of relief.

"Next stop, Millersville," shouted the conductor, coming suddenly upon the scene of the tragedy.

Then he stopped and stared.

"Millersville," said Mr. Peabody faintly to Mr. Murk.

The two men stepped down from the train as it pulled into the station. Presently a sheriff's posse would start. The station was already filling with excited officials and passengers. The story was jumping rapidly from mouth to mouth. Mr. Peabody lighted a cigarette and glanced at the confusion in the station.

"You know," said Murk at his side, "you were wrong about Cactus Cañon, and I was wrong about New York. What we made was a mistake in geography. We both meant Millersville, that's what we meant. If we'd got ready for Millersville like we got ready for each other's town, say—would that book-guy have got away with this? Would he?"

"No," replied Peabody, "he would not. But who would expect a thing like that in a place like this? It only goes to show you that there's a pile to be learned from traveling around your own country. I wonder if a man could get a drink of brandy in this town while the train is waiting. My nerves are a bit shaken."

"In Millersville?" demanded Mr. Murk, with a grim chuckle. "Not on your life. This is the most God-fearin' town in—"

"Come on, then, we'll have a cup of hot coffee. I'm not accustomed to train hold-ups," Peabody answered.

Together they walked slowly away through the flickering shadows cast by the kerosene-lamps that swung down from the rickety station.