The Man from Maui

by Joseph Alexander Altsheler, 1862-1919

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I stood for a moment, undecided, at the entrance to the grounds of the Hawaiian Hotel. My emotions that morning, as on the day before, when I landed, were those of disappointment. It was my first visit to the tropics, and I had expected to find the islands blazing with color, red, green, blue, yellow, and new tints that the languid temperate zone cannot furnish. My first view of Oahu was of cliffs, bare and dull red, against which the lonesome sea forever pounded. It was twilight when we drove through the streets of Honolulu to our hotel, and, in the obscurity, the city seemed to be veiled in sober brown. But tomorrow, I thought, when I am fresh and rested, and the film of travel is off my eyes, I will see all the glorious suffusion of color of which I have read so often.

The dawn and restored strength did not bring any change. The clipped cone of the Punchbowl was dead green here and pale red there, with patches of gray lava between. The tufts of the cocoanut trees drooped. A weakly sea—breeze moaned and moaned through the leaves of the umbrella palms. I had expected to see huge bushes covered with brilliant roses and trees a-bloom. There was none. The water palms thrust up gray-green blades. a pallid substitute. The wreaths of flowers that the Hawaiian natives carried around their necks for sale were dusty and drooping. Nothing glowed; there was no luster. All the colors were lifeless. Though so unlike it reminded me somehow of the dead world of the Nevada desert.

Illustration:
All the sights

„Carriage, sir! All the sights of the city! Take you to Diamond Head, Waikiki, up the Nuuanu Valley, or anywhere else you want to go on the island!“

He stood almost at my elbow when he made his bid for my patronage, and I looked rather curiously at him, be cause he was a white man. White men were plentiful in Honolulu, I knew, but it seemed to me to accord with the fitness of things that I should go riding in a carriage driven by a native, not by a white man. Certainly if ever I wrote a book of my travels it would be much more picturesque to say that I had a Hawaiian driver. So, it was my first intention to turn him away and hire one of the brown men who were plentiful about, but I concluded, on reflection, that I needed a guide and companion as well as a driver, and perhaps they could not speak English. I did not know Honolulu as well then as I knew it later.

„You know all the places of interest?“ Iasked.

„I guess I do,“ he said. „The island ain‘t so very big; you could walk across it in a day, and I‘ve lived here a long time. I could take you anywhere on Oahu, blindfolded.“

He laughed in a dry, hoarse way. He was a thin, little man, much humped about the shoulders, and his face was turned the leathery, yellowish-brown which seems to be the characteristic of old people in the Hawaiian Islands. I put him well beyond sixty.

„Do you know things? Can you talk?“ I asked, having in mind his usefulness as a guide and sort of comrade, for twenty-one hundred miles of blue water and thirty-five hundred miles of dry land between one and one‘s home brings the lonesome feeling.

He laughed his dry, hoarse little laugh again. „Can I talk?“ he said. „You make me laugh. I come from a talkin‘ country.“

I had been sure already that this man was an American, and his assertion decided me in his favor. It is pleasant to meet a countryman in a foreign land, unless he wants to borrow money from you, and my cabman did not appear to harbor any treacherous designs.

He took me about the city, and I found him to be all that I had hoped. He showed me the Kamehameha schools, the old palace, the Iolani palace, and the late king‘s bungalow, and he spun me tales of the doings at the early coronations

that matched the exploits of Haroun Al Raschid of glorious memory in his most gallant moments. When he finished his last story he shook his head and sighed.

„Why do you mourn?“ I asked.

„The good old days are gone,“ he replied. „The missionaries broke up the happy old customs. Confound ‘em for meddlers.“

„That‘s why all the travelers who write books about the Hawaiian Islands are so hard on the missionaries, isn‘t it?“ I asked.

„I guess it is,“ he replied, his hard, wrinkled countenance breaking into a faint grin, like a timid sun peeping through heavy clouds. We drove over a good road to Waikiki, passing yellow Chinamen toiling in the banana fields, and cocoanut groves so dense that it was twilight beneath the crests of the trees, though a bright sun shone above. But here, too, the vegetation was without luster and the mountain steeps were crinkled and gray, as if they had just cooled from God‘s furnace.

„I expected to find the earth in the tropics glowing with life, color and motion,“ I said to my cabman. „All the books, all the travelers, say so. Something is a fraud—the travelers are, or this is not the tropics. I have not seen anything that will compare in beauty and intensity of color with a peach tree in bloom in Kentucky.“

„Are you from Kentucky?“ he asked.

„I was born and grew to manhood there,“ I replied, „though I don‘t live there now.“

„It‘s a fine country,“ he said.

„Are you a Kentuckian, too?“ I asked, a brotherly feeling in me warming toward him.

„No,“ he replied, „I came from farther West, but I‘ve got a friend that comes from there. He talks to me about it often, and from what he says I guess it‘s God‘s country, sure enough. How Jim does go on about it, though I ain‘t seen him for some time now.“

„What‘s his other name?“ I asked. „Harkins, Jim Harkins,“ he replied. „He‘s down on Maui, helpin‘ to oversee on a sugar plantation, I guess. He don‘t come up to Honolulu often, and it‘s been over a year since I passed the time o‘ day with him. Did you ever know any of the Harkinses in Kentucky?“

„No-o,“ I answered, reflectively. „I knew plenty of Hawkinses and Hankinses, but I don‘t remember any Harkinses just now. Maybe there are some there, but I‘ve forgot ‘em.“

„I guess so,“ he replied, „for my friend Jim says there‘s lots of people by that name where he come from. But it‘s been a long time since Jim came away, and maybe they‘re all dead now or gone to Texas.“

„But Jim hasn‘t forgot his native State, has he?“ I asked.

„Not he,“ he replied. „It‘s a treat, sometimes, to see Jim‘s face light up and hear him talk about Kentucky, and the good times he had when he was a boy there, huntin‘ ‘coons and pawpaws, and ridin‘ twenty miles to meetin‘ on Sundays and thinkin‘ nothin‘ of it. But, my friend, Jim‘s gettin‘ old now, most nigh as old as I am, and I guess he‘ll never go back to Kentucky again, for it‘s a long way off, mister; it‘s a long way off.“

I admitted that it was a long way off, but not such a long way as it used to be, since railroads and steamboats had become plentiful.

„Maybe so," said my cabman, „but I don't think Jim will ever go, though he'd like it mighty well. Many's the time I've heard him tell how bright the sun shines there, how green the grass grows, and how fine lookin' the gals are, not brown and fat like these Kanakas, but straight and slim, like young saplin's, with faces all white and red roses."

„Yes," I said, „there are many very handsome girls in Kentucky. But you can find handsome girls in other States, too."

„So I reckon," he said, „but Jim never talks about any 'xcept those in Kentucky, and he's bragged so much about 'em that I'd like to sit up on that rock there and see one of 'em pass, so I would."

„If Jim's that much smitten," I said, „he ought to go back and marry one of them."

My cabman laughed his dryest and wheeziest laugh. „Good Lord!" he said; „Jim get married! Why, he's past sixty, if he's anythin', as old as I am, Mister, and I ain't any spring chicken, as you can see. No, Jim's stuck down there on the island of Maui, and he'll never get back to his old home. He may never get off of Maui. Poor Jim! I feel sorry for him."

„How long has Jim been down in these islands?" I asked, beginning to take some interest in the lonely exile.

„Nigh onto thirty years," said the cabman, „and that's a right smart spell, too, I can tell you—more years than you are old. Things was different when Jim came here to live. There wasn't so many white people, and the brown people didn't wear so many clothes as they do now. The whalin' ships used to sail into port by the dozen, and when the sailors came ashore they kept things as hot as a house a-fire, and Jim was right in it, too, for he was young then, and full of blood."

„Your friend Jim doesn't seem to have had such a bad time, after all," I said.

„Not always, leastways not then, before he got old," said the cabman; „but sometimes he'd have the lonesomest feelin's, so I've heard him say. See Diamond Head up there?"

I looked up at the somber mass of Diamond Head, keeping its age-long watch upon the sea.

„The lookout station is up there," resumed the cabman. „From the top of Diamond Head you catch the first sight of the ships comin' from America and the last sight of 'em goin' out. Jim's told me that he's climbed up there often, skinnin' his ankles and cuttin' his knees on the sharp lava, just to get the longest and last sight of the ship that was goin' back home."

„If he became so homesick," I said. „why didn't he go back? You say he's not married. It would have been easy enough for him to go."

He looked doubtful, and flecked a little dust with the tip of his whip lash from the back of his horse, while he considered.

„I p'intedly can't tell nohow," he said, presently, „but it's a long jump to Kentucky, and Jim's a curious kind of fellow, mighty secret about himself sometimes, and I never rightly knowed why he stayed on."

Our road led through the palms now, and between their straight stems the sea showed in strips of blue-gray. The waves were rolling in on the beach of white sand at Waikiki, and some sleek brown natives were riding in catamarans on the highest crests. But barring the natives and the savage mass of Diamond Head,

Waikiki was as trim and civilized as New England. For the hand of the New England missionary had been laid upon it, and the neat little houses snuggling among the palms shed the odor of respectability, though here as at the bungalow in the palace yard, there were strange tales of the old kings and the old days.

But the sea showing through the trees was lonesome. The catamarans were dots upon its edge; all else was bare water down to the horizon‘s rim. and for many days‘ sailing beyond. I could understand the desolation of the man from Maui, when he looked upon it, in the days when no steamers came that way, and Hawaii was a spot on the moon.

„But your friend Jim was not lonely all the time?“ I said, wishing to be more cheerful myself. „You say there used to be high old times here.“

„Yes,“ said the old man, again meditatively flecking the dust from his horse‘s back, „but that was before the missionaries got so strong. They‘ve sp‘iled the sport of the South Seas. There was no God here before they came, and fun was always b‘ilin‘. But they‘ve stopped the hula-hula and broke up all the native customs that the sailors and travelers liked so well. No wonder they‘re so unpop‘lar. I never went in for them things myself, bein‘ kinder set against foreign ways and doin‘s, but I‘ve heard my friend, Jim, talk about ‘em often, and old as he is, he braces up now and gets gay at the recollection.“

Here we met a seventy-year—old Englishman, a fellow-voyager on the ship, who had amused us all by his great desire to be wicked. I have long since learned that no Englishman is good a hundred miles from home. He greeted me with great warmth and talked impressively about dusky Hawaiian beauties who had been making eyes at him. He had a native driver who knew my white driver, and so we proceeded together, the old gentleman rambling amiably on about his conquests.

In the presence of others my cabman seemed to forget for a while the woes of his friend Jim, and talked with a considerable degree of cheerfulness about the islands, telling us varied and fine tales, none the less fine because they may not have been true. We had a pleasant morning together, and when John Bull of the white hair and I returned to the hotel, my cabman said to me: „If you want to take another drive tomorrow, don‘t forget me, sir. Just ask for Tom Owens. Everybody knows him.“

I promised to do so. Then I went into the hotel to dinner and forgot him.

My dinner was another disappointment. I had expected to find the tables covered with bread fruit, and mangoes, and guava, and other products of the tropics which had made such a splendid exhibit on the pages of my early geography. Instead they had roast beef and chicken and canned meats and vegetables, brought from San Francisco, and when I asked for bread fruit, fresh from the tree, the waiter, who was two parts Hawaiian, one part American and one part Japanese, did not attempt to conceal his smile. „We don‘t eat those things here,“ he said. Then he brought me a slice of roast beef, which was very good and much more comforting than the bread fruit would have been.

In the evening old John Bull came to me in a tremor. There was going to be a hula-hula dance, with elaborate trimmings, that night, and he wanted me to go to it with him. But I decided that I had seen worse things in the name of art on the New York stage, and stayed at the hotel, where I heard a native band play sweet

music and sing under the night of the tropics in a manner that made us all think of home over on another slope of the world.

In the morning I remembered my friend Tom Owens, the cabman, and found him waiting for me. He seemed glad to see me. His chum, my fellow Kentuckian, the man from Maui, formed a sort of bond between us.

He took me this time up the Nuuanu Valley and to the Pali, the great precipice of Oahu. The grandeur of the place was sufficient to inspire a less skillful guide than mine with volubility, but for some reason he said little. I rallied him upon his silence, and asked him if he were ill.

„No; I‘m as well as ever,“ he said, „but I‘ve had a letter from Jim, down on Maui, and it‘s troublin‘ me.“

„What‘s the matter with Jim?“ I asked. „Has he tumbled over a precipice or has a coolie slugged him?“

„Neither,“ he said. „Jim‘s all right in body; it‘s his mind. Jim‘s awful homesick; I never knowed him to be so homesick before. He wants to get back to Kentucky before he dies. It ‘pears kinder foolish of Jim, like a weak gal, but so it is, and he can‘t help it, I guess. His letter is just full of it, and I‘m awful sorry for him; I am, I tell you.“

„If Jim is in such a state as you describe,“ I said, „he ought to scrape together a little money somehow and go back. He could work his way up to San Francisco, and maybe get an excursion ticket across the plains.“

Owens was standing beside his horse, adjusting the gear. He fastened a buckle, then brushed the dust off his horse, which I think he must have done not less than a hundred times a day. It was evident, from the man‘s manner, that he was hesitating about something, and I waited to see which way his hesitation would take him.

„I ain‘t told you the whole trouble about Jim,“ he said, at length. There is something I‘ve held back, and may be I ought to keep on holdin‘ it back. But Jim needs advice powerful bad. I‘d give it to him myself, for I think a heap of Jim, but I ain‘t a—fittin‘ sort of man to be givin‘ advice to anybody. You‘re from the State that Jim is, and he says all Kentuckians has got to be brothers, ‘specially in foreign lands. Maybe you‘d give him good advice.“

„If there‘s anything I can do for Jim,“ I said, „I‘d be glad to do it, on your account.“

„It‘s powerful kind of you,“ he said. „and you‘ve never seen Jim, either: but this trouble of Jim‘s that I‘ve been keepin‘ back is somethin‘ that you must never tell, because it might do Jim harm, awful harm. You don‘t know how much harm it could do Jim, for it‘s the reason he don‘t go back to Kentucky. You‘d never tell on an other Kentuckian that never done nothin‘ to you, would you?“

„I see no reason why I should injure your friend,“ I said. „Whatever he may have done, it is nothing to me.“

I was becoming really much interested. Here was a common cabman in Honolulu, carrying the kernel of a fine mystery around in his pocket. I was about to become a trusted custodian of that mystery.

„Jim can‘t go back to Kentucky,“ said the cabman, „because he killed a man there.“

„What, a murderer!“ I exclaimed, not anticipating anything quite so bad.

„I wouldn‘t use such a hard word about him,“ said Owens, apologetically, „‘cause he‘s suffered a terrible lot over it, and for years and years, too. I think he‘s suffered most nigh enough to wipe it out.“

„But a murder is a murder, and you can‘t make it anything else,“ I said.

„I know that,“ he replied, the apology in his voice, shading into an appeal, „but maybe there are excuses for Jim. Jim ain‘t so terrible bad. You‘d say so, too, if you only knowed him.“

„Tell me about it,“ I said.

„It was a long, long time ago,“ he replied, growing warm and zealous in defense of his friend, „and the times were mighty unsettled then. Jim had just come out of the war, and the other fellow had been a soldier, too, on the other side. They had a dispute, and one of ‘em—it wasn‘t Jim—got killed. The other fellow tried to shoot first. Jim always said so, an‘ you can‘t blame a man for defendin‘ his own life, can you?“

„Whereabouts did all this happen? Did Jim ever tell you?“ I asked.

„I‘ve heard him go over it so many times that I remember every name,“ he said. „It was in Metcalfe County, on the Glasgow road, not three miles from Eddyville—no, Edmonton—which last was the county seat, Jim said.“

I began to have a dim recollection. I had heard of this tragedy, of the atrocious circumstances connected with it, and the disappearance of the murderer. I shook my head.

„I think your friend Jim would better stay away,“ I said. „Murder is perhaps not the worst of crimes in Kentucky. but if what I‘ve heard is true, this was a very bad one.“

His face fell, but in a minute he seemed to take renewed courage.

„But it was so long ago,“ he repeated, going over his old phrase. „Why, I think they must have forgot all about it by this time in Kentucky. And Jim is an old man, and so anxious to go back there once more. He lived on the Glasgow road close to the place where he killed the man. You cross a little stream. I‘ve heard Jim say, and then you come to a hillside, and on top of that hill Jim used to live. Lord love you, sir, but I‘ve heard Jim talk by the hour about that place—how rich the soil was, what a pretty spring of water runs out of the hillside, nothin‘ like it, nothin‘ within a mile of it, down here in these islands, Jim says.“

I knew the place well, a sterile hill, from which all the soil had been washed, long ago, by summer rains; a thicket of red sassafras bushes, a decaying log cabin, a prospect wholly bleak and cheerless. But when I saw how the man from Maui had invested it with charm, some of my repugnance toward him passed away.

„I can‘t hold out much encouragement to your friend,“ I said. „The Governor of Kentucky might pardon him, considering his long exile, but he‘d be taking a big risk if he went back there without having the way prepared for him beforehand. I‘d like to see your friend. Can‘t you bring him down here where I can talk it over with him?“

He thought for a long time. He fiecked the dust off his horse, and then dropped pieces of the soft Hawaiian stone over the cliff, watching it crush to fragments like clods of earth when it struck.

„I don‘t think you‘d tell on Jim,“ he said, after a while, „but Jim is mighty skeery about comin‘ down to Honolulu. You see, it ain‘t like it was in the old days; this place is comin‘ into the world, and who knows but what Jim might meet somebody right down there in the streets of the town what knowed him more‘n thirty years ago?“

„It‘s not possible,“ I said. „His own brother, if he had one, wouldn‘t know him after thirty years.“

„You think so?“ he said, brightening up. „I don‘t know but what you‘re right. I‘ll write Jim by the next steamer for Maui to come down here right away an‘ see you. He‘ll do it, sure, if I tell him to, for Jim an‘ me have been pardners a long time.“

He seemed to be much relieved by this decision, which he had arrived at so slowly, and talked with great cheerfulness as he pointed out the historical and interesting spots around the Pali.

„It‘s twelve hundred foot sheer down the cliff here,“ he said, „an‘ this is where the great fight took place. That was before the curvin‘ road was cut down the mountain side into the valley over yonder, an‘ there was nothin‘ but a jump off. The Kanakas are as peaceful as lambs now, but they were devils in them days before the missionaries come. Old Kamehameha, first of the name, undertook to run all the islands, and he done it, too. The last fight took place here. Old Kamehameha was the strongest, but the other side wouldn‘t give up, an‘ they was all pushed over the cliff right here. Years ago Jim and me used to go down to the foot of the cliff an‘ pick up the skulls an‘ bones of the warriors.“

„It‘s a terrible fall down there,“ I said.

„Yes,“ he replied, „it smashed up a whole army once.“

We drove back slowly down the narrow Nuuanu Valley, between half mile high mountains rising up so straight and so narrow that they looked like gigantic sword blades set on edge. Little rills tumbled down the steep sides, and the grass at the base of the ridges had touches of pink and yellow and blue, as the refracted sunlight fell upon it. Far down at the end of the valley lay Honolulu. half hidden in the palms, and beyond was the blue Pacific, which sometimes so ill deserves its name.

„Fine, ain‘t it?“ said Owens; „but a man can get mighty tired of it after a while. A world that‘s only ten miles across is pretty narrow, I say, ‘specially when its twenty-one hundred miles to San Francisco, your next door neighbor on one side, an‘ the same to Samoa, your next neighbor on the other side.“

I awaited with interest the result of the letter to the man in Maui. Owens took a party on a carriage trip around Oahu, and I did not see him again for several days. When he returned he came to me and said that the steamer from Maui was due late that afternoon. He asked me to meet him and Jim at 10 o‘clock the next morning at a spot he named in the Portuguese settlement on the slope of the Punchbowl.

„If a Portugee sees us,“ he said, „he won‘t pay any attention; they‘re simple kind of creatures.“

I agreed readily, for I was anxious to see the man from Maui. His crime was atrocious; nothing could change that, but one must remember also that thirty years of exile is a punishment not to be laughed it.

I was up early the next morning to take a walk in the fresh, revivifying air. I strolled past the Iolani palace, and on my may I was subjected to that Hawaiian phenomenon, a shower of rain out of a perfectly clear sky; but the sun dried it up in five minutes, and I climbed the slope of the Punchbowl to keep my appointment. I was first at the spot, and sat down on a heap of lava to wait for Owens and Jim.

Some thin, weazened little Portuguese from the east coast of Africa, the negro blood showing strongly in them, passed me, but paid no attention to me. In all the troubles of the islands, these alone of Hawaii‘s many races took no part, but attended strictly to the business of acquiring dollars, careless who ruled them.

In the harbor, a Japanese iron-clad lay lazily in the water. But I could see the Japanese manikins on her deck, polishing the guns and the brass work. as proud of their warship as a boy of his first toy gun and as anxious to use it. A British and two American war ships were anchored near her. but nothing was conspicuous on their decks save the week‘s washing, which hung in gallant profusion from many ropes. A tumbling line of white and a transfixed Australian liner showed where the reefs lay. The background was the Pacific, the father of oceans. It was a sight to set one dreaming, but I did not dream long, for the footsteps of Owens brought me back to reality.

The man was alone and shamefaced.

„Where is your friend, Jim?“ I asked. „What has become of the man from Maui?“

„I‘m awful sorry, sir,“ he said, in a very humble tone. „I didn‘t mean to fool you this way, and put you to so much trouble, but the truth is, Jim‘s courage petered out when it came to the pinch. He was just naturally afraid that if he came up here to Honolulu he‘d meet somebody that knowed him back in Kentucky. He sent me a letter, pitiful like, sayin‘ he didn‘t dare do it. He‘s afraid he might be took back home and hanged, an‘ him livin‘ a respectable life, too, for thirty years. Now, don‘t you be too hard on Jim. Just think if you was in his place!“

I was annoyed at the trouble, to which I had been put, but here was such a Damon-and-Pythias sort of an affair that I had no heart then to scold the old man, especially as he was not to blame.

„It doesn‘t matter,“ I said. „I‘ve had a very pleasant morning climb, anyway; but you mustn‘t expect me to attempt anything more for your friend Jim.“

„I won‘t,“ he said. „But Jim‘s mighty thankful for what you‘ve done, anyhow. He told me in his letter to tell you so. You won‘t say anything to anybody about Jim, will you?“

I assured him that I would not, and returned to the hotel for luncheon, with an appetite very much sharpened by my climb up the slope of the Punchbowl. Despite myself, I felt a little ruffled over the somewhat ignominious end of my adventure, and thought it rather dastardly of this man, Jim, to fail me at the critical juncture because of a lingering fear for his neck. I showed some coolness toward his friend, Owens, who had failed to bring him up from Maui, and the cabman was more sensitive about it than I had expected. He tried to regain favor with me in various ways, until I began to feel as if I were a personage. I rode in his cab sometimes, but we did not talk as much as before, and he never mentioned the name of his friend Jim.

A fresh lot of tourists landed, and all were to go up the Nuuanu Valley and see the Pali. Old John Bull was again in a great state of mind, and said we must go

along, too. „There are two of the prettiest girls in the party that you ever saw," he said, winking his ancient eye, „and they ain't bashful a bit."

We were numerous enough to make a procession of a half-dozen carriages. I did not ride with Owens this time, but he was just ahead of me with the two girls the Englishman spoke of in his carriage. When we stopped to rest at the steepest slope, he flecked the dust off his horse with a gentle whip lash, and looked back at me, a bit of reproach in his eye, as if to say I ought not to upbraid his friend Jim for failing to come from Maui.

We were a lively party. The two pretty girls were from California, and they talked with an energy and freedom that was highly delightful to the old Englishman. From the Pali the view was unusually fine. The skies were blue and gold, and the valley between the cliff and the sea was bathed in light. Everybody admired it; some with prodigious exclamations and others in silence. While the visitors were engrossed in the scene, Owens left his horse for a moment and came to me.

„I hope you ain't so terrible hard-set against Jim," he said, „because he'd hate for a man from his own state, away off in these islands, to be down on him."

„Oh, no," I said, wishing to put the subject out of mind. „When you write to Jim again, tell him I have no hard feelings against him. I have no cause for any; it was but a trifle."

„Jim will be mighty glad to hear it," he said, as he went back to his horse.

One grows tired, in time, of the most splendid scenery, and we turned away from the Pali presently, most of the party thinking of dinner.

Just before the road from Honolulu reaches the crest of the Pali, it curves around a rock fifteen or twenty feet high. When you turn this curve, the wind from the other side of the mountain strikes you with tremendous force, though you may not feel a breath of air before. Everybody who has been to the Pali will remember it. and many there are who mourn the loss of new hats swept off their heads here and sent to the bottom of the cliff.

Owen's carriage took the lead on the return journey. The girls were chattering about the splendors of the Pali and the prospects for dinner, and forgot the curve around the rock. The sharp wind lifted the hats from their heads. One, with a black feather in it, sailed gracefully over the cliff. The other, caught by a counter current, was blown with its mass of feathers and ribbons directly into the horse's eyes. He, blinded and frightened, reared, and dashed the carriage against the low stone wall which a provident Hawaiian king built at the edge of the cliff. The light wall gave way under the force of the impact, and the stones rolled over the edge, crashing among the bushes and tearing their way to the base. One of the hind wheels of the carriage slid over also, and we thought that carriage, horse, occupants and all would go the next instant.

Illustration:
At the edge

Most of us cried aloud at the sudden tragedy. A few were dumb. Owens, from his position on the front seat, sprang lightly into the road, and seized the bridle bit with both hands. But the frightened horse reared and plunged, and continued to back the carriage over. Terror seemed to have deprived the two girls of the power

of motion. Owens shouted to them repeatedly to jump out while it was yet time. The plunging horse suddenly struck him in the chest with both feet, and I saw the blood appear on his lips, but he held to the maddened animal‘s head and continued to shout to the occupants to jump.

Some of us ran forward and dragged the girls out of the carriage and into safety. Owens released his hold and fell in a limp lump on the ground. Then horse and carriage went over the cliff, the horse uttering a cry like that of a human being.

We put Owens on a bed of horse blankets in one of the carriages, and he revived a little, but it was evident to us all that the blow in the chest was mortal.

He did not live to return to the city. Just before he died he beckoned to me, and when I bent over him he said: „I want to thank you for what you tried to do for my friend Jim; but I ain‘t told you all about Jim. He‘s started home, an‘ he‘ll get there—before you will.“