

happy owner of a claim in Four Ace. The stranger was equally happy. "Uncle Josh has about as much chance of finding anything on that property as he has of being a light-weight jockey," was his communing. "No mineral's been found within two miles."

But a difficulty confronted the Warners. They must have implements, provisions and a tent. Sufficient money was lacking.

"I guess I'll jest write Ebenezer Brown to send along a little more money," said Si forthwith; "and meantime I'll kinder shove into a job or two around town."

The letter was sent, and in the following fortnight Si found employment at an outfitting store, at wages whose size amazed him. But he was impatient for the answer from Ebenezer.

"Kinder simpsy fer a money letter," thought Si, fingering the envelop suspiciously when at last it came. "But here goes!"

SI WARNER—We see you've got another hay-hoister. Anyhow, if you hev' or not, we don't want no more truck at all with yer gold minin'; but we'd be mighty glad to get them twenty each. Send 'em and it'll be quits. But we reckon you'll never do nothin', same's you did here. Yours

EBENEZER BROWN, fer all.

Si tore the letter across with much ceremony. "I'm mad clean through, Maria," he announced, "and they'll each want to choke 'emselves with it when they do get their twenty."

From Endville Si turned determinedly to the Four Ace outfitting depot for the money. Six weeks later, by close saving, they had enough to buy the necessary supplies. The Warners were ready to dig for their gold.

That was a great day when Si first struck his pick into the ground. As he turned over the earth they almost expected to see the gold shimmering. But not on that day, nor in many days after, did anything in the slightest resembling gold come to light.

Si went down through two feet of earth. Then he got into rock. "Can't see nothin' but or'nary stone here," said he disgustedly, as he peered at a bit of the rock after the first blast. "Looks mighty little like thet thar' gold ore them fellers showed me in Four Ace. I guess we'll hev' to go down further, Maria."

The work proved hard in the extreme. Continual blasting was the only means of progress; deeper—yet a little deeper—day by day a little deeper;—still the same rock.

Then one afternoon a cheerful "Hooray!" came to Maria's ears. She hurried from the tent. Si was standing by the shaft, with something in his hand.

"You ain't got the gold, hev' you, Si?"

Si laughed. "Not this time, Maria, I reckon. I'm only bollerin' because I'm mighty glad to get into different stone. Look!" and he showed her a sample of rock formation of a curious bluish tinge.

Maria examined it disappointedly. "Thar' ain't much glitter to thet, is thar', Si?"

"Well, no," and Si scratched his head; "but we're gettin' deeper anyhow. Perhaps the gold'll be below this new stuff," he added more cheerily.

He was now down nine feet. Each day saw a little gain in depth. The shaft was growing too deep to throw out the rock, and he was forced to install a windlass with bucket attachment to clear the shaft after blasts.

It was arduous, toilsome labor—hour after hour, twelve hours to the day, day after day; deeper, still deeper—fourteen feet, fifteen, sixteen. The pile of bluish rock kept growing—growing. And still the same bluish rock continued at the bottom of the shaft.

Would it never end? Si wondered.

Eighteen feet now.

"I guess thet thar' stuff goes clean through to Asiay," he would say smilingly to Maria.

But inwardly, as he drudged, sickening doubts began to assail his mind. Might not this rock continue indefinitely? Might it not be possible that no gold was there? An utterly new chain of ideas

began to force themselves upon him. Why had he thought gold would be anywhere in this country? Why was all this land around him lying undisturbed? Perhaps these Westerners had some way of telling whether there was gold under the ground. Si nearly dropped his shovel at the thought.

He stopped work and wiped off a cold perspiration. He kicked a bit of the hated bluish rock with his boot. Then he suddenly spat on his hands and began "mucking" again.

"Well, Si Warner," he said aloud, "you're down twenty-one feet in the airth, and you're goin' deeper. My belief's thet a man's gotter kinder keep on tryin'."

It was the day Si reached twenty-three feet that a man on horseback appeared. Seeing Si at the windlass, he rode over. "Hullo, old one! What you doing?" he asked.

Si turned. The stranger was staring piercingly at the bluish rock. As Si noticed it, his mind seemed suddenly to grow keener. The idea of a few days prior that Westerners might have some marvelous knowledge of rocks flashed before him. "Oh, I'm kinder diggin' a gold mine," said he.

"You are, are you?" said the horseman genially. He was a bluff man, with a hearty voice. "You don't mind my looking at your rock, do you?"

"Not by no means."

The stranger swung himself from the saddle to the rock dump and picked out samples here and there. He scrutinized them, holding them to the light. Si watched him with the corner of an eye.

The other went to the shaft and looked eagerly down.

"Still in the same rock, eh?" His eyes gleamed, and his face was redder than when he rode up.

"Same rock," echoed Si. He began to feel curiously excited.

"Well, so long!" said the horseman. "May see you again." And he galloped off in the direction of Four Ace, opposite to where he had been headed before, the samples clinking in his pocket.

The full force of an inspiration was on Si. He tore to the tent. "Maria, thar's a stranger been here!" he cried,

"and thet thar' blue rock's chock full of gold, though we can't see it!"

Maria's eyes bulged. "Whatever do you mean, Si Warner?"

"Maria," he declared slowly, "it's my belief thet thar's rock thet don't show gold, but has it jest the same. I know I'm right! It ain't all like thet sparklin' stuff, and I'm goin' slap into town to one of them fellers that scrunches up rock and tells you how many dollars of gold you've got."

With a result next morning from the assayer showing more than nine hundred dollars to the ton for two samples, and nearly sixteen hundred for a third, Si was not surprised in the afternoon to see the horseman of yesterday and a companion ride up.

"I guess we might as well come right to the point," said the stranger. "I don't know what you're expecting for your claim; but we want to make an offer anyhow. We'll give you a hundred thousand dollars for her as she stands. Come—what do you think?"

Si caught a long breath. But he did not hesitate. "By gum, mister," said he, "I kinder guess thet thar' mine's a mighty rich affair; but I reckon I don't want to work on her no more. She's yours, all right, fer a hundred thousand." Here Si's tongue stumbled a little. "And," he added, "I'll throw in thet thar' windlass fer you to use yourself."

\*

A letter inclosing six twenty-dollar bills reached Endville soon afterward. Since then it is understood that Ebenezer Brown dislikes discussions on gold mining.

Two weeks later, as a Pullman from the West rolled into the Grand Central Station in New-York, Si Warner turned to his wife. "Well, Maria," he said, "if you jest keep on a-goin' you find that one of these days you've kinder got thar'. I never did see a hoss race won yet by a hoss that quit runnin'."

\* \* \*

Little Elmer, a thoughtful lad: "Papa, what is the rest of the old saying about money making something go? What is it that money makes go?"

Professor Broadhead: "Well, in many cases, my son, money makes the ego."

## "OLD MILISH"

(Continued from page 6)

first man that dares advance on either side. The Lord of Warrior Joshua will uphold our arms in the cause of the recht."

Now that was a bran-new phase of the situation for both parties to consider. Parson Davison was a Scotchman, with bristling gray hair, whiskers like a window brush, arms like flail handles, and fists twice as big as the knob on Seth Burkett's bass drumstick. Moreover, he was more than six feet tall, and his great-grandfather was a chief "among the McGregors," and you could see by his eye that all the hot Scotch in him was boiling.

"I honestly believe the old boy is glad of the excuse to mix in," declared Reuel Smart, who stood next to me. "He has to punch shadows when he is licking the Devil, and he hasn't had a real, good, soul-satisfying fight since he was ordained."

"And I will deal blows valiantly on this side, faith if I don't!" agreed Parson Wormell, who had Irish in him in some kind of a strain and was built like a Percheron, and at the Merriman barn-raising had carried up the big beam alone after two grunting men had dropped it.

"And now there's old Brian Boru snuffing the battle and saying 'Aha!'" growled Reuel.

"We hae axhausted moral suasion, military authority, appeal to reason, strong arm o' the law," roared Parson Davison, "an' hoo we as your speeritual counsellors say ye shall no, an' ye shall no!" Every hair in his whiskers stuck out like a wire, and his forehead worked till his eyebrows looked as though they were caterpillars crawling around.

Parson Wormell had shrugged down his neck and pushed out his lower jaw bull-dog style, and he looked savage.

Captain Mose Britt and Captain Sile Cole stared at the ministers long and hard, and then they snapped their eyes away and glared at each other.

"I respect the cloth," yelled Sile at last; "but I insist that this ain't the place for a Starks parson. Music, there!"

"Bought 'Em in Byron, Hooray-Hoorah!" clattered drums and shrieked life.

Over the noise sounded that tremendous voice of Captain Mose Britt below: "Nor for a Byron parson, either! Music!"

"Here We Come From Old Stark's Lighthouse," squealed Liberty Evans's life—and pur-r-r, boom!—the drums joined him.

But at the first step the two Captains made, the parsons lighted on 'em—Davison for Britt and Wormell for Cole. It was only human nature for both companies to stand stock-still and see what happened. We couldn't have moved for our lives just then. Neither Captain was any slouch of an antagonist, and it was really worth looking at.

It was a wrestling match on both sides. Elder Wormell caught his man arm's length, and as Cole was running the parson just kept him going, but around and around in a circle until he had snapped both the Captain's feet off the ground. As for the stubby, stocky parson, he seemed to be rooted into the soil. When he had Cole circulating just about right he tossed him into the brook and hopped on top of him.

In the case of Parson Davison it was a side-holt clinch, and he wrapped his long arms around Britt like tying cord around a bundle. Then he pinned him like a trussed calf, leaned over backward and derricked him up. I never saw a man squirm harder than did our gallant Captain; but he couldn't find any purchase. He went into the brook too, the parson straddling him. And we all stood still and gaped.

This may sound foolish now—I hope it doesn't sound irreverent—but to have rescued either just then would have seemed like interrupting a baptism. We had seen our parsons in the river with converts so often that the spectacle inter-

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