

THE GOLDEN HOPE
By George Elmer Cobb

"Where did you get me?"

"Outside of the Dew Drop, tossing your money to a crowd of loafers and bragging that you had come back to Oreville to show people how to mine."

"That's me!" observed Rufe Glidden, sitting up in bed and string curiously about the dainty, orderly room he was in. "And you took me in, the Good Samaritan, eh?"

"I was sorry for you, Rufe, and I didn't forget that you gave me my grub stake five years ago, when you left Oreville."

"Forget that!"

"I never have. The claim, low grade as it is, has enabled me to send a living back to the family in the east, and when my wife died I brought my daughter and the little ones out here. I've saved \$2,000. When I double that I'm going back to the old home town, buy out a modest little business and educate the kids. Breakfast is ready."

"I've not got much appetite," said Rufe, and he looked around as he said it. Then, left to himself, he got up and dressed. His first move was to search his coat. Yes, there was a flask "for the morning swig." He regarded the fiery stuff gloatingly. Then his eye chanced to rest upon the bureau cover. A dozen dainty female toilet accessories showed. A delicately embroidered sachet sent out a sweet perfume. Beyond the closet door a light, pretty dress showed. The man observed. An odor of sanctity seemed to appeal to his maunliness.

"His daughter's room," he muttered. "She gave it up to me! Bah! They ought to have stowed me in some dog kennel! Through!"

He gave the liquor flask a violent fling through the open window. He watched it shatter to pieces on the ground. Then he went down stairs.

John Ward was reading a newspaper. "See here, old friend, give me a scrap of paper and a pencil, will you?"

"After breakfast, yes."

"No, now," insisted Rufe peremptorily. His hand was shaking, as the articles provided, he dashed off a rapid scrawl.

"There," he said, signing his name to the pledge, "the first I ever gave,



Rufe and Ward Visited the Abandoned Diggings

and the last, for it shall last for all time. Two witnesses, you and—"

"My daughter, Mr. Glidden," interrupted Ward, courteously and gravely, as a charming young girl entered the room. "Rose, you have heard me speak of my best friend."

"Maany a time, father," was the earnest reply, and the glance of her grateful, welcoming eyes sent a thrill through the object of her interest, and as well made him shamefaced.