

A LUMP OF GOLD.

The Largest Piece of Auriferous Metal Ever Found.

Its Discovery Cost Three Men Their Lives.

How many know where the largest single lump of native gold ever seen in America was found? In California? No. In Colorado? No. In the Black Hills, Cœur d'Alene, Nevada, New Mexico? No. In Old Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, in Potosi, in the Callao of Venezuela? No. Where then? In North Carolina. And its story is as weird and fateful as the Rhinegold's.

A poor and ignorant Irishman, living in the mountains, solitary and lonely, propped open the door of his cabin with a lump of metal. He had found it sticking out from a water-washed gully and carried it home as a curiosity. Though no larger than a small cyming, it was a weighty lug for a mile. It was a dull yellow, irregular in shape, and pieces of stone were imbedded in it. For over two years a fortune lay upon the floor of his hovel, while he toiled, early and late, making a little whiskey and digging ginseng root to earn a scanty living. A companion mountaineer, who had known more of the outside world, thought this strange stone might be sold at Asheville as a curiosity for a lot of money—ten dollars perhaps. This was in the flush days before the war. He had seen quartz crystals from Roan Mountain bring that much. A third mountaineer was called in consultation. Ten dollars was a lot of money. The third man had been a traveler, a regular globe trotter. He went to Asheville four times a year, and had been clear to Wilmington.

Walking around the dump he gazed at it from every side, touched it with his toe, spat upon it, and breathed heavily.

"Hit air with nuthin', er hit air a pile," said he. "Hit air nothin' but brass, er hit air——" He looked around on the other two with a queer expression—"good."

"Ef hit air brass"—he drew a clasp knife and scraped the dull metal till a new surface glittered—"vinegar'll rust hit. Ef hit air gold, hit won't."

He poured some vinegar from a jug which was brought to him, upon the fresh facing of the lump. The three men hung over it intently. Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed and still the metal shone clear and un tarnished.

"Hit's good!"

"And I've heard gold was wuth more'n two hundred dollars a pound!" said the second.

What a d—d fool I have been!" groaned the owner of the cabin. "For two years I've worked, an' wealth I never dreamed of kickin' undher my feet."

"I claims a third," broke in the assayer. "Ye'd never a knowed what hit war, but fer me."

"An' a third for me," said the other. The owner of the gold gave a sullen assent. They obtained a pair of steel-yards and weighed the gold. It turned the scales at over a hundred pounds avoirdupois and they roughly estimated it to be worth \$25,000, over \$8000 apiece. That night all three sat up and watched the treasure, unable to sleep from excitement and thoroughly suspicious of each other. The next day they rolled it securely in a cloth and started for Asheville afoot with the gold slung to a pole and carried between two.

It was the devil's gold. At the first halting place the Irishman and the second mountaineer conspired to kill the third and he was shot dead from behind. Hastily throwing his body into a clump of bushes, the murderers faced each other in the road. Suspicion roused in each guilty breast saw treachery in each other's glance.

"Here," said one, forcing an uneasy laugh. "There's only one way to settle this. Let's divide the gold and each go his way."

"Agreed," said the other.

The lump was laid in the roadway and chopped in two with a hatchet.

"Take your choice," said one. As the other bent to lift his half his companion split the head of the stooping man with his hatchet. The gold was his. With blinding fatuity he dragged the second victim to the side of the road, lifted the bloodstained treasure and went on. At Asheville he took it to the bank and had it shipped to the United States mint. In less than a week, and before any return could be had from the mint, the bodies of the two murdered men had been discovered and the crime traced directly home. The miserable wretch was thrust in jail, and there he died within a year. The witch gold fortune never crossed his hands, remaining in the Federal treasury for lack of ownership.

The region where the lump was found has been scoured foot by foot, but not another lump like that has ever been discovered in that or any other section of America. It is said that a few weeks ago an English company, which is working the Nacoochee mine in Georgia, took out a nugget weighing 1000 pennyweight, yet the North Carolina lump weighed over 1500 ounces.—*Washington Post.*

Concerning Cassava.

With regard to the new bread plant, which has attracted so much attention of late from the milling journals, a newspaper in Florida has this to say: "The cassava thrives and produces splendidly. The eatable portion of the cassava is the roots or tubers. When the roots are grated or mixed in equal proportion with flour, nice dishes can be made of it, fit to be set before a king. In custard, pudding, pies and fritters it can not be beat, while mixed with equal quantity of corn meal and made into fritters it will deceive an old oysterman. It is enormously productive, producing many tons per acre. It is fine feed for hogs, cattle, sheep and poultry; hogs will quit corn for it, and thrive and grow fat on it. I candidly believe there is no single article of food on the globe that will produce more to the acre. It succeeds well on good light soil that is well drained. It resembles in growth the castor bean, and is an ornament to any garden. It should be planted on wide ranges (six feet) and set four feet apart on the ridge. First cut your stalks in pieces four inches long, with two or three good eyes, and set them perpendicularly, just deep enough so the end may be even with the ground. Cultivate as you would sweet potatoes, except in the latter part of the season give shallow culture, so as not to cut the roots, which usually extend four or five feet around the plants in all directions. The tubes will not keep a week in the open air. We dig them as we want them, or turn our hogs on them. The roots or tubers will keep all winter in the ground when planted on well-drained soil. We keep the stalks through winter by sawing them close to the ground and banking them up with sand, a layer of sand and a layer of cassava stalks, until it is made steep; then put a shed over that so as to shed off the rain. It will stand a certain amount of moisture, but no water-soaked soil. It stands drouth well, without wilting a leaf. Cassava, no doubt, will be largely planted in the South when better known."

Why They Married.

In an old book written by a Western Congressman, a contemporary of Clay and Webster, containing reminiscences of his times a story is told of one of his friends, a farmer in Kentucky named Payne, who had six daughters, none of whom was blessed with beauty. The Congressman knew them in their homely youth, and when he returned a few years later found them all married to good, influential men. So great was his surprise that he ventured to ask their father why they all had been so sought when other girls remained neglected. The old farmer chuckled.

"Yes, and you may say, when they had neither dower nor good looks. Well, I'll tell you. When I want my cattle to eat buckwheat stubble, instead of grass, I don't drive them into that field. I fence it off from them. They are so contrary that they always want the thing they can't get. They break down the fence: I drive them out and put it up. By the time they fight for it once or twice they think they like the stubble."

"Well, I saw my girls weren't the most attractive kind, and—I fenced them in!"

"You never found them in the hotels dancin', or keepin' stalls at county fairs. Young men to know them had to come to their father's house. When the neighbors saw how the Payne girls were kept apart from the crowd they thought their value must be high. Young men came to break down the fence."

The story was coarsely told, perhaps, adds the old narrator, but there is more in it than meets the eye."—*Youth's Companion.*

A Kiss Brings a Fortune.

Through inadvertently kissing a pretty customer, George Winch, a butcher at Sydney, New South Wales, has come into a fortune. The girl objected to the attention, and had Winch taken up before the magistrates, who fined him. The local newspapers improved the occasion by preaching several leading articles on human depravity in general and the misconduct of George Winch in particular. He woke next morning and found himself famous, and it was then discovered, owing to the publicity given to his name, that he was a missing heir.

A DANGEROUS SPOT.

Where the United States Navy Stores Its Gunpowder.

Big Magazines on Ellis Island in New York Bay.

More than one hundred tons of gunpowder are stored in three magazines on a small island in the bay but two miles from New York City and within eight hundred yards of the Communipaw docks at Jersey City. The island is known as Ellis Island, and is three acres and a half in size, with a rough, rocky back on all sides.

It has been in use as a powder depot for the Navy Department for nearly thirty years, and all the buildings on the island, of which there are eleven, are of plain, old-fashioned appearance, although they are said to be still sound and good for many years' future service. The main building is circular in form and is built close to the water's edge on the northern extremity, facing New York. It is a somewhat straggling-looking building from the outside, being irregular in height and painted a bright yellow; but inside the greater portion of the 100 tons of powder now on the island is housed and inspected daily.

There are two kinds of powder in the magazines. The prismatic powder, of which there is 130,000 pounds, or about 65 tons, is packed in small square boxes, and the common cannon powder, of which there is 200 barrels, or about 42 tons, is stored away in barrels, as there is less danger from combustion in this grade of powder than from the other. Inside the magazines, where the powder is kept, the cases and barrels are carefully arranged in rows along the walls, and a daily examination of the condition of the combustibles is made. On fair days the magazines are opened and aired, but great care is taken to exclude the damp.

No one is allowed to enter the powder magazines without having first removed his shoes, and even then he is cautioned not to handle anything during his inspection of the great storerooms, while a vigilant watch is kept to see that he observes the commands properly.

Besides the circular storeroom there are two others, standing near the centre of the island, which contain powder. Then there is a large building, half workshop and half storeroom, for cartridges and gun cotton. In this building a force of three men is employed in preparing the ammunition for war ships. In this workshop there are half a dozen kinds of gun charges. These are the one, three and six pound shells for the Hotchkiss breech-loading gun, and the five, six and eight pound shells for larger cannon. Some of these shells are plain, while others have steel tips, and their shapes vary according to the make of the gun to which they belong.

One of the most interesting of these charges is for the six-inch rifle bore. The charge is composed of numerous small pieces of compressed powder of a peculiar, six-sided shape. The man employed in making the charge begins by placing a round piece of board before him on which are painted figures exactly resembling the bits of compressed powder used. He then inserts an iron rod in the center of the board, after which he attaches the powder to it by round holes bored through the centre of each piece. When the first pile is made he begins to build the blocks up around it until he has a column of a circular form about five inches in thickness. A common bag is then placed over the charge to keep it in place, the iron rod is removed and the bag is encased in a copper cylinder until used. This is the most complex and difficult charge used in the Navy department.

Two of the buildings on the island are residences, and the remainder are used as workshops and magazines. All are painted a bright yellow. Near the main magazine stands an engine house, containing a stationary engine capable of throwing water to any part of the island. A hose and reel are attached to the engine house, and the flow of water can be conducted to any part of the island with little delay. Owing to the close proximity of Jersey City, a close lookout is kept for sparks coming from that place.

The regular force of watchmen in charge of the magazines numbers four. Every facility for hastening the work of loading a ship is to be found on this island. There is a small railway leading from all the principal buildings to the wharf, on which the powder and shells can be conveyed more quickly and safely than by hand. A small pier, projecting into the sea, affords landing for the smaller steamers and sailing vessels.—*New York Times.*

Mr. Boas are to be worn again

What Women Can Do.

Every wife or daughter living near a village or large market, can make many dollars each year raising eggs. Just as surely as that a woman can tend a baby better than a man, just so certainly can she care for any animal better. For example, Mrs. Runice Goodwin, East Livermore, Me., says: "In four weeks, last autumn, my thirty hens laid 181 eggs. I then fed them Sheridan's Condition Powder, advertised to make hens lay; and in eight weeks they laid 478. Having sold twelve, the remainder laid 815 eggs in eight weeks, by feeding Sheridan's Powder. I sold the eggs for \$15.93, making clear \$15.38 from only five hens in eight weeks. One of my Polish hens which I could not buy for \$2.00 would have died but for Sheridan's Powder. I. S. Johnson & Co., 22 Custom House Street, Boston, Mass. (the only makers of Sheridan's Condition Powder), will send, postpaid, two 25 cent packs of Powder and a Poultry Guide, for 60 cents. For \$1.00, five packs and a book; for \$1.50, a large 2 1/2 pound can and book; for \$3.00, \$5.00, express prepaid. Send stamps or cash. Interesting testimonials free. For five cents a copy of the best Poultry paper sent."

Things Are Seldom What They Seem.

Half a dozen school boys were worrying their brains in a sidewalk congress the other day over a difficult problem in quadratics. When they had fairly given it up a battered old individual who was shoveling coal a door or two away and who had overheard the boys' dispute came up and asked leave to try. Then picking up a bit of coal he soon spread the values of X, Y and Z on the flagging before the astonished boys.

Again, a party in a hotel not long ago were drawn to watch the emotion of a dirty and half-drunken tramp who sat in the barroom while the sound of the piano came from an adjacent room. As the music ceased the vagabond rose slowly as if in a dream, walked into the parlor, and seating himself played for half an hour the choicest classical music with an exquisite and marvellous touch. These incidents show that things are seldom what they seem.—*New York Sun.*

A New Kind of Insurance.

Has been put in operation by the manufacturers of Dr. Pierce's medicines. His "Golden Medical Discovery" "Favorite Prescription" are sold by druggists under the name of "Pierce's Positive Guarantee." Either benefit of a complete cure is thus attained, or money paid for these medicines is returned. The certificate of guarantee given in connection with sale of these medicines is equivalent to a policy of insurance. The "Golden Medical Discovery" cures all humors and blood taints, from whatever cause arising, skin and scalp diseases, scrofulous sores and swellings. The "Favorite Prescription" cures all those derangements and weaknesses peculiar to women.

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