

THE NEW MAYOR

By Victor Radcliffe

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The mayor of Tolliver Gulch drew up his horse as a piercing scream rang out beyond the belt of timber lining the lonely mountain road he was traversing. Then noting a cloud of smoke through the trees he diverged from the trail, got beyond the barrier and made out the little town of Golconda in the distance, and nearer at hand on its outskirts a lonely hut, ablaze below and a woman outside, wringing her hands and shrieking helplessly.

New mayoralty honors clustered thick and newly about John Griffiths at Tolliver Gulch, but here at a distance from his home town, and ever chivalrous and helpful, he forgot dignity. He dashed up to the side of distracted woman within three minutes, brought his steed to its haunches, summarily leaped to the ground and shouted forth:

"Any one in the building?"

"No! No!" cried the woman, "but all my papers are. They will be lost; we will be ruined—oh, save them! Save them!"

She was a tiny bit of humanity, peppery and active. Griffiths saw that, but she had evidently not been able to lift a heavy ladder that she had dragged to the spot.

"Where are the papers?" inquired Griffiths.

"Up in the little, low attic. Beyond that window," and she pointed upward. "They are in a box on top of a big chest. 'No! No!'" she added frantically, as Griffiths made a movement to rush in through the open lower door. "It's all ablaze in there. The ladder. Oh, quick! quick! Never mind anything but the papers."

John Griffiths had the ladder speedily in place. He was not even smudged, so promptly and deftly did he reach the attic, secure the wooden box described and place it in the pos-

session of its anxious, trembling and grateful woman.

"The old hut is gone, and I'm glad of it!" she exclaimed. "It was not fit to live in and hasn't been for a long time. That lazy, roving husband of mine will have a startler when he comes back, and I'm glad of that, too! The papers—they're saved, thank goodness! They mean a good deal to me, for they are deeds and mine



Calmly Griffith Regarded the Mouthy Demagogue

claims and all that. Mister, if a ten-dollar bill—"

"Thank you, but I've done a simple duty and glad to be a help to you," interrupted Griffiths. "Can I be of any further assistance?"

"No, mister, but I'll never forget your kindness. I've a sister in town who will take me in until my husband shows up—the worthless, wandering critter!"

The mayor of Tolliver Gulch