

"Look, it's a man! There's a man——"

Already Ared had plunged through the cataract of oil. In a moment he emerged again, bearing the body of old Solomon Heiskell in his arms.

They stretched him upon the ground, a few rods from the well, and Jane Sloane wiped the oil from his face. Ared was feeling for a heart-beat, for the body was warm and limp, as if he had been stricken but a few minutes before their arrival.

But Solomon Heiskell's troubled heart was still. There was no music for his ears in the sound of that mighty geyser, no triumph for his eyes in its towering column of wealth.

Ared understood how Solomon had brought in the well. Intent on his determination to destroy the derrick, and thus remove one monument at least of his disappointed years, he had lowered the string of tools into the well and cut the rope. The heavy implement had plunged down like a cannon-shot, down for an unobstructed half mile, to the last remaining shell of rock between the bottom of the bore and the pent-up treasure of oil. It had burst through, like a nail through tissue paper, and old Solomon's dream had come true in one quick stroke.

Whether the gas issuing from the long-pent well had smothered him as he leaned over it, listening for the drill to strike, or whether his heart had swelled and broken when he heard the oil gushing in the tube, none could ever know. Neither would it ever be known whether his weary, longing old eyes had