

## Round the Mile Leg.

the golden Klondike and all these things would be added unto him. In the meantime he would ride over to Mike and warn him, if he had any desire to wallow in wealth, to be ready to start to-morrow afternoon, right after dinner which would have to be a big one, as it was a long way to the Klondike.

How did he intend to get there? Why, walk, of course!

### II.

"Don't you know wot a nuggit is? A nuggit's a piece o' rock made o' gold." Mike. They find 'em all over the Klondike!"

"And wot's the Klondike?"

"Don't you know? You'm a fly kid, you are! The Klondike's a—a kind of a wot-d'ye-call-'em—you know—a place where they finds gold. Anybody knows that."

"And wot do they find it with?"

"Wot do they find it with! Think they finds it with tallyscopes? They finds it with their heyes—h-i-e-s, heyes—wot yer sees yer way about with. You must be a hinfant in disguise."

"Who belongs to the Klondike?"

"Nobody; they've just found it, and there ain't been no war yet. That's why we got to go to-morrow. If the Rooshians annexates it, we'm done for; they won't let us in. They'll put a wall all round it and a reg'ment o' soldiers at every gate, and where'll we be?—out in the cold. Are you comin', or do I leave ye here in poverty an' procrashtination?"

Mike did not mind the poverty, but the "procrashtination" was full of nameless terrors for him. The "crash" in it had an ominous sound, suggestive of a youth smashed and pulverized beyond recognition. He would rather not go; but, in view of the consequences, he guessed he would meet him, with a full stomach, at the village at the hour of three in the afternoon of the morrow.

### III.

"Please can you tell us the way to the Klondike, sir?" said Bob, as, after a weary tramp of ten miles westward very much ho! he accosted a native who was driving into a village through which they had just passed.

The man looked at them in amazement, and went on his way with a laugh. On the question being repeated apparently in good faith, he pulled up and scanned them closely for other signs of insanity. Finding none, he exclaimed:

"Tell ye the way to the Klondike! Yer sure that's where ye want to go?"

"Oh, yes," replied Mike—"where the gold is found, that's the place."

"Heavens-above-and-the-earth-beneath-and-the-waters-under-the-earth! The way to the Klondike! Well, if that *ain't* a joke! Yes; I'll tell ye the way to the Klondike. That's where I was bred and born—just come from there this very minute! See them bags in the waggin? Mebbe ye think them's full o' common, ord'nary garding pertaters, eh? No, siree! Them bags is chuck full o' golding nuggits as big as yer fist which I picked up on the way."

Mike's eyes glistened with astonishment and eager expectancy. Fagged out with travel, hungry and sleepy as he was, he was wide awake in an instant and full of animation. Would the stranger tell them how to pick up a waggon-load of gold such as that? Would he perhaps give them a nugget, as he had so many? But Bob, disgusted with a man who would not answer a civil question civilly, nudged Mike and muttered:

"Ah, rats! The feller's on'y foolin'. Come on."

"Would ye be good enough to tell us the way, Mister? Can we get there to-night?" asked Mike.

"Well, hardly. I can't exactly tell—my memory ain't good—but it's either two thousand or two million miles away from here; I forget which."