

Fancy me having a lunatic for a partner! I laughed, and just to please him said it was a go. But when he took me into the mill, and showed me round, I quit laughing right there. The thing he made me his partner in was no asylum game. The lunatic wasn't on the premises, unless it was me; and when I thought of all I'd said and felt, it made me sick.

"Look here," said Looney, taking me outside. "What do you call these mountains?"

"Granite," says I, straight out.

"Both?"

"Both!"

"The experts of Amber Gulch don't know granite from syenite."

I was nettled—some. "There may be a sight of difference," I argued. "On the one side the granite is gray, and on the other it has a shade or so of pink; but what odds?" We're mining men here, thank the Lord, and not Freiberg experts.

"I," said Looney, quite quietlike, "am a Freiberg expert."

"The devil!"

"No, only an expert. These ridges on either side of the Gulch are of different ages, and different chemical structure. Both rocks are nearly friable, as it happens, but there seems to have been a line of depression on the line of contact. The water has carved out that valley along that line. Why, man!"—he pointed down the Gulch—"don't you see?"

I did see as if I had just left off being blind: one side of the trench was twice as steep as the other.

"And the contact?" said I.

"I have found it under thirty feet of alluvium. Moreover, I had seen the like in another country, in a tin district. Why, man, the whole country is stained with stannic acid!"

"That may be—we western men don't know tin—we have none."

"What is the contact like?"

"Ten to fifteen feet of the richest oxides of tin ever discovered."

"Why, tin ranks next to silver."

"My friend, it is worth untold millions, and to us all the wealth we can conceive. But to be able to leave this place with some sense of security, I wanted to find an honest man popular enough, strong enough to hold the ground during my absence, to stave off officious inquiries—to keep the secret. So far I have been protected by my presumed lunacy. Now, I have found you,

my watch dog, while I rake up capital in New York."

I did not believe a word. It was all too good to be true; but Looney was saner than I was anyway. That night he left for New York.

Six months I held down that property, giving myself out as Looney's hired man. Then came a letter—I have it here:—

"Dear Watchdog,—The Great Western Railroad is in doubt whether to cross the Bitter-root Range by the Dead Mule Pass or the Amber. The Dead Mule people offer a bonus of one hundred thousand dollars. Go to your Vigilance Committee, and tell them that if they can get Amber to put up that amount, you will double it. The enclosure is your warrant. —Yours, The Lunatic."

Enclosed I found a check—one hundred thousand dollars!

Another six months I held down the property, and whether I believed or not, I can't make out. Anyway, some one must have believed in my partner, to the extent of the amount of the check—for the check was honored, and fool or not, he had treated me like a white man. One or two parties would come along from time to time with orders from Looney to show them around the claim.

But they said nothing. The railroad was graded half-way over the pass; the Lunatic was almost forgotten in Amber; the Gulch was booming to such an extent that the population doubled every three months, regular as clockwork; and the wild cat claims I had never thought worth my assessments, sold at fancy prices to a casual tenderfoot. But still I waited—never budged an inch. Meanwhile I held for Looney his mortgage on the city waterworks, for a hundred thousand, at 8 per cent, invested all my own money in real estate, lived on the rents, and began to put on fat.

Well, one muggy day late in the fall, I strolled down to Amber for a square meal and a smoke with Dan McPhail, but halfway along the road, all slush and mire, I had to stand aside for a carriage. Of course, there was only one in the Gulch, kept by the livery people for elections and funerals.

"Whose procession?" said I to Spotty Joe, the driver.

"Job lot of tourists," says Joe, spitting over his shoulder, just clear of a shiny silk hat.

"Stop!" said someone, out of the carriage: "Is that Jim Ballantyne?"

WHAT WINS

By Edgar A. Guest

IT'S the everlasting climbing that gets you to the top,
And the everlasting sticking to the task you'd like to drop,
It's the grit and vim and muscle

In the rough and tumble tussle
That will bring you home to victory and the distant goal you seek;
It's the ever up and working,
Never lying down and shirking,
That eventually will land you on the mountain's sunny peak.

It's the patient perseverance to the plan which you have made,
That will bring you through the dangers and the pitfalls which are laid;
It's the steady constant driving
To the goal for which you're striving,
Not the speed with which you travel, that will make your victory sure;
It's the everlasting gaining,
Without whimpering or complaining
Of the burdens you are bearing or the woes you must endure.

It's the holding to a purpose, and the never giving in,
It's in cutting down the distance by the little that you win;
It's the sure and firm endeavor,
Not the brilliant stroke and clever,
That shall bring you home to gladness and to days of joy and song,
It's the iron will to do it,
And the steady sticking to it,
So whate'er your task, go to it! Keep your grit and plug along!



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