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they were engaged in building a store, and in course of time this was finished; but there was a degree of mystery about the ex-cowboy's proceedings which baffled investigation, and people did not like to press inquiry too far; for it was observed that all the men who had accompanied Crux were young and powerful fellows, well armed with rifle and revolver.

At last, however, the work was finished, and the mystery was cleared up, for, one fine morning, the new store was opened as a drinking and gambling saloon; and that same evening the place was in full swing—sending forth the shouts, songs, cursing and demoniac laughter for which such places are celebrated.

Consternation filled the hearts of the community, for it was not only the men brought there by Crux who kept up their revels in the new saloon, but a sprinkling of the spirited young fellows of the town also, who had never been very enthusiastic in the temperance cause, and were therefore prepared to fall before the first temptation.

At a conference of the chief men of the town it was resolved to try to induce Crux to quit quietly, and for this end to offer to buy up his stock-in-trade. Hunky Ben, being an old acquaintance, was requested to go to the store as a deputation.

But the ex-cowboy was inexorable. Neither the offer of money nor argument had any effect on him.

"Well, Crux," said the scout, at the conclusion of