

story to which I had just listened had so impressed me that for hours I lay awake, thinking how curiously the man's early history coincided with my own. The mania for gold, the incentive to treasure hunting—love for a beautiful woman—the exile to the mountains, all were the same; only in my case the woman loved was bound by no ties. Years ago I had vowed that I would never ask Agnes to be my wife until I had made a fitting home for her, and it had been this apparently hopeless ambition that had sent me away to the mountains where I determined to remain until either death or fortune cured me of my mania.

Just as I sank into a light slumber a lusty halloo shook my drowsy senses, then voices and the tramping of horses broke irregularly into the softer monotony of the rising wind, and presently my host entered with someone, who, like myself, spread his blankets upon the floor, and then, lulled by the wind, I fell fast asleep.

When I woke the sun was streaming in at the open door of the cabin. Leisurely dressing myself, I went outside to look after my horses, and met the stranger, a prospector, like myself. As we exchanged words of greeting, my eyes travelled carelessly across the plain until they were arrested by an object lying at the foot of a giant shrub, an object so like the figure of a man that I broke off with what I was saying and ran swiftly toward it, with a strange fear tugging at my heart—a fear soon justified. Lying on his back, his white face upturned to the smiling sky, I found my old host, his madness cured at last. Grasped firmly in both hands, and lying partly across his dead body, was the steel-shod pole, and the point thrust deeply into the loose sand. Together the stranger and I carried him to the cabin, and then I went to bring the coroner from the settlement across the mountain, leaving the stranger to keep vigil. As the last rays of the setting sun slanted across the fateful plain, we buried him close by his cabin door, with the crumpled, time-seared letter from his sweetheart hidden over his peaceful heart. The coroner took possession of his effects, among which we found the broken jar and beads. The next morning we separated and went our several ways. For two days I traveled, and then a thought, which had haunted me ever since I found the old man lying dead, caused me to retrace my steps: my suspicion proved correct. I found that the point of his staff had touched a rock, the entrance of his long sought treasure-house, and the shock of joy had killed him. The interior of the grave was as he had described it to me, and—but why go into details? Fortune, not death, cured my mania and satisfied my ambitions. A month later I was married to Agnes.

Brandon Winter Fair.

The Manitoba Winter Fair and Fat Stock Show and annual convention of the live stock associations of Manitoba will be held in Brandon from March 9th to 12th inclusive. A fine catalogue has been issued by the fair management relative to this fair and may be had for the asking. For catalogue write Charles Fraser, secretary, Brandon, Man. Please mention this paper when writing.

To Horse Owners.

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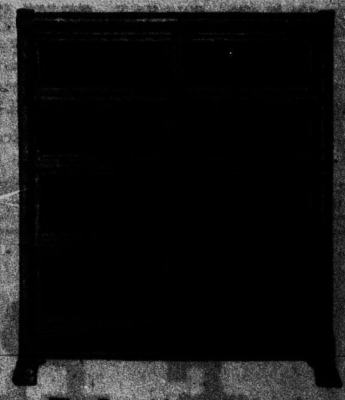
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