

wrote your wife on the day you made your strike in the tunnel that is now my shaft. He gave the letter to Mrs. Mulrady ; but he has kept a copy.'

Unheeding the frightened gesture of entreaty from Slinn, equally with the unfeigned astonishment of Don Cæsar, who was entirely unprepared for this revelation of Mulrady's and Slinn's confidences, he continued :

'He has brought the copy with him. I reckon it would only be square for you to compare it with what you remember of the original.'

In obedience to a gesture from Mulrady, Don Cæsar mechanically took from his pocket a folded paper, and handed it to the paralytic. But Slinn's trembling fingers could scarcely unfold the paper ; and as his eyes fell upon its contents, his convulsive lips could not articulate a word.

'P'raps I'd better read it for you,' said Mulrady gently. 'You kin follow me and stop me when I go wrong.'

He took the paper, and, in a dead silence, read as follows :

'DEAR WIFE,—I've just struck gold in my tunnel, and you must get ready to come here with the children at once. It was after six months' hard work ; and I'm so weak I . . . It's a fortune for us all. We should be rich even if it were only a branch vein dipping west towards the next tunnel, instead of dipping east, according to my theory—'

'Stop!' said Slinn, in a voice that shook the room.