

a teaspoonful of coarse yellow nuggets were shining among the black sand. It was a grand prospect, and with the exception of Gentleman Dick, whose exultation was of a very mild and reserved order, the proprietors of the Chihuahua Claim behaved in a very undignified and unseemly way; Thompson and Jones organizing an impromptu sparring-match, and Old Platte standing indecorously on his head in a neighbouring clump of bushes. Sundry war-whoops and divers indications of activity showed that work of a very lively and energetic character was being prosecuted that afternoon on the bar; and when the sun sunk to rest behind the purple mountains, and the blue mists of evening rose in the valley, they had their sluice-boxes and "riffles" in order, and were ready to commence washing at sunrise.

It did not take very long to clean the ledge, and early in the afternoon the water was shut off. When it was found that the "riffles" yielded thirteen ounces of gold that would coin eighteen dollars and a half to the ounce, a firm conviction seemed to settle upon the camp that this was an occasion which it would be improper to pass over without a thorough and practical acknowledgement of its importance in the shape of a regular celebration. The gold was weighed and divided, all sitting in a circle in the middle of the cabin floor, while Old Platte officiated at the scales with all the gravity and dignity which the responsible position called for.

Mr. McNab's grocery and post-office at Blue Bar was the scene of much excitement and noisy revelry that evening and all the next day while the gold lasted. Miners who had heard of the Chihuahua "streak" flocked up to Blue Bar to get the particulars, and naturally joined in the general feeling of exultation and hilarity that seemed to pervade that community. Old Platte got terribly drunk, and Thompson and Jones developed the strangest eccentricities of gait, manner and speech, and finally subsided into a deep slumber in the dust and sand of the main thoroughfare of the Bar. Gentleman Dick's absence from the festivities was not noticed that evening, but the next day Thompson, who seemed to feel aggrieved on the subject, announced his intention of going up to Chihuahua to fetch him down. He left Mr. McNab's on his charitable mission armed with a bottle of rum, and proceeded up the creek in a moderate state of intoxication. That he was somewhat sobered on his arrival at the cabin was perhaps due to the fact that the cork was fixed very firmly in the neck of his bottle: at any rate, he did not ask his friend to drink when he found him.

Gentleman Dick had just directed and sealed a letter, and was about to start for the settlement of Gold Dirt, when Thompson loomed up unsteadily in the doorway, surveyed him inquiringly for a moment and asked undecidedly and apologetically, "Wass' up? W're you goin'?"

Gentleman Dick, apparently overlooking his somewhat dubious condition, told him that he had been writing a letter to some one who lived in the States: he was going to Gold Dirt to mail it, and a ring of Blue Creek Gold was to accompany it to its destination. Thompson said no more, but stood there in the doorway with McNab's rum under his arm. He did not stir, nor did he seem to notice the "good-bye" that came down the winding trail through the pines, but remained there stolid and immovable, gazing vacantly at the writing-paper on the rough table. Suddenly he straightened himself up to his full height, and taking the