

A LIFE TO HIS CREDIT

HENRY KIRK'S DARING CLIMB TO SAVE A PARALYTIC.

He is a Brooklyn Fireman—Twenty Families Have Narrow Escapes From a Tenement—Spectators View a Thrilling Scene. Two Lives Were Lost.

Henry Kirk, fireman—his name shall be first and last in this record—risked his life in the performance of his duty the other day and distinguished himself by an act of valor which deserves more glowing and more lasting chronicling than the columns of a newspaper can afford.

It was at a fire in a big double five story tenement house at 158 Prospect street, Brooklyn, in which two little girls lost their lives, and in which many other tenants saved theirs by a very narrow margin.

In the misery of that moment when the parents of the two children learned of their loss all else was forgotten. But when it was all over and the trucks and engines began to rattle back to their stations a mighty cheer went up from the throng of onlookers for the bravery of Fireman Kirk.

The tenement was occupied by 20 families, four on each floor, all poor and practically helpless, for the fire occurred at noon, when the albedoes of each family were away at their work, and only women, children and cripples were in the house.

The fire started in the rooms of William Hotchkiss, on the fourth floor. Hotchkiss was in his shop, and his wife had gone out of the house to pay a debt to a neighbor. Their children, Florence, aged 5, and Emily, 2½ years old, were playing in the kitchen.

It is probable that the dress of one of the children caught fire from the stove, and that to extinguish the flames they ran into their sleeping room, sprang upon the bed and drew the quilt over their heads, for it was in that position that they were found dead.

The smoke soon filled the hallway, and the janitor, who happened to be coming up the stairs at that moment, cried "Fire!"

By repeating this cry and pounding upon every door on his way down stairs, he soon had the whole house in commotion, and this, with the screams of the women and the crash of furniture overturned in hasty flight, warned the few who were sleeping that their lives were in danger.

So quickly did the alarm spread that before three-quarters of the tenants were out of the house the clangor of the fire engines could be heard, growing louder and louder, and before the first flame shot from the burning building with the falling snow, fell upon the sidewalk opposite the house.

Truck No. 3, on Concord street, is the nearest fire station to this house. Fireman Kirk belongs to Truck No. 3, of which Foreman Fitzgerald and all the other members are gallant men, as you shall presently see.

The burning tenement house rose several stories above all the surrounding buildings, so that the crowds in the side streets and on the corners could command a view of the upper windows upon all sides. Hardly had Truck No. 3 swung around the corner, with none but the driver on the wagon—for all the men had jumped down and run on ahead of the horses—when a great shout went up.

"He'll jump! He'll kill himself!" cried the crowd. "He's cut off by the fire!"

And truly there was a man in a terrible predicament—that is, it looked like a man, for all that could be seen was a face, pressed against the lowest pane of glass in a window upon the top floor, so high up that, through the falling snow, one could see only dimly. Then another cry went up.

"It's old Gallagher! He's paralyzed, and he's all alone."

The window was in the side of the house. A fire escape ran from a courtyard to the fifth story, but it ended three windows away from this face that was staring at the crowd.

"Five men!" shouted Foreman Fitzgerald. Almost before he had climbed half way to the first story, his whole company stood crowded below him. But five were quicker than the others turned their attention to the front of the house, leaving their six comrades climbing nimbly up the slender fire escape.

Upon the top landing they paused for breath. There were no more ladders and the roof was five feet above their heads. From the end of the landing they could look into Gallagher's room, and they saw why only a face had been visible from below.

An old man was on his knees, protesting against the window pane a countenance so ghastly, so full of mortal fear and anguish, that, involuntarily, the firemen clutched the hand rail of the landing to steady themselves.

The foreman measured the distance which Gallagher was from the window and a cat could not have traversed it. He glanced to the roof.

"If one of you will jump on my shoulder, we—steady! Easy, now! Up, up, up!"

Kirk had leaped upon the railing, and with one foot upon his foreman's left shoulder was groping along the cornice for a firm hold.

He found it, clutched it tightly, drew his other foot upon the foreman's right shoulder and then, like a performer in a circus ring, drew himself up. The other men had seized his legs and were helping him upward. Then came the critical moment.

Kirk had drawn himself up so far that they had to release their hold upon his legs. His arms embraced the cornice. One leg was drawing toward the roof—nearer, nearer—only a few inches—the crowd held their breath.

"Hurrah!" A great cheer rang out, and Kirk, standing upon the roof, allowed himself one moment to draw a long breath and look down upon the people who, through the falling snow, seemed like small black specks.

Then he ran along the border of the roof until he stood directly over Gallagher's window. Foreman Fitzgerald leaned over the end of the landing to look into the room. Gallagher's face was no longer there.

"Up with you, boys! Up to the roof!" he cried.

One after another the men made the perilous ascent, seizing the cornice where Kirk had seized it and helping each other by pushing and pulling, until three stood on the roof.

"May God help Kirk!"

murmured the foreman, for Kirk was where no man could help him.

Falling upon his knees, with his back to the courtyard, he had slid downward until his body hung against the side of the house, with nothing but his grip on the cornice to support it, and nothing but the frail top of a loose shutter between his feet and the stone courtyard below.

With one foot he groped along the top of this shutter to find the spot that offered the greatest resistance, and finding this—although the shutter swung and trembled frightfully—he allowed his body to sink until it seemed as if he were holding on with his fingers' ends. Then with his other foot he kicked in the window.

His eye caught a projecting ridge of the cornice five or six inches below the top. Holding himself by one hand—the strain must have been terrific—he grasped this with the other, lowered himself a few inches more, kicked in another pane of glass, and found a footing upon the middle sash of the window.

He looked up and saw the anxious faces of his comrades. He looked down and saw the upturned faces of an enormous crowd. Then, "God save me!" he whispered and dropped.

A mighty roar burst from the crowd. He had seized the top of the shutter and, almost before it could tremble, had thrust his leg into the opening he had made in the window and climbed into the room. At that moment a volume of smoke burst through the opening, and Fireman Kirk was lost to view.

A rope was lowered, and in less than ten seconds the arm of Kirk was extended through the smoke, grasped the rope and drew it into the room. A few seconds later the gray head of Gallagher appeared at the window, then his shoulders, then his whole body, and the men on the roof—strong, heavy men—pulled away at the rope until Gallagher, blinking and spluttering from the effects of the smoke, lay at their feet.

The rope was hastily unfastened and lowered again, and a moment later Fireman Kirk swung out of the window and—how cheerfully those men drew their burden up—was raised to the roof.

"Kirk, old boy," cried the foreman, "you've—"

The words died on his lips. Kirk had fallen like a log and lay motionless at his feet. They rubbed him and chafed his skin, poured whiskey down his throat and had almost begun to fear that he had inhaled fire and was dead, when he opened his eyes. After looking around at the faces of his comrades he asked faintly:

"Is the old man—"

"Thank God!" said the foreman, whose face was white.

And now, what a wonderful thing is discipline! Kirk was safe, but the house was burning. Foreman Fitzgerald, a trained fireman, had a load of responsibility upon his shoulders, and in a twinkling all sentiment was forgotten.

"Down, boys!" cried the foreman. "Hurry now!"

By this time ladders had been raised to the roof upon every side, and it was an easy task to convey old man Gallagher to the roof of the adjoining house and from there to the street, where there was an ambulance in waiting, which took him to the hospital.

Within half an hour after the engines arrived the fire was extinguished and the crowd dispersed.

Then Fireman Kirk climbed to his place on Truck No. 3 a little more slowly than usual, and rode back to his station. And there he remained until 8 p. m., when his relief came and he was allowed to go home and rest until 4 a. m., when he must report for duty again.

For, whatever happens, the discipline and the routine of the fire department must be maintained.

A tall, broad shouldered man of heavy build—to be exact, he weighs 181 pounds—with a youthful, smooth shaven countenance, a massive chin, high forehead and sensitive lips and a modest disposition—there you have Henry Kirk.—New York World.

GREAT NEGRO UNIVERSITY.

Older Educational Institutions Will Be Combined by Statute.

A great university for colored men and women is to be established at Richmond. A bill to incorporate it was introduced in the legislature recently. The Richmond Theological seminary and Harshorn college of Richmond and the Colored seminary at Lynchburg will all be combined, and the school will be known as the Union University of Virginia.

A fine suburban tract of land has been purchased for the site. The three properties mentioned will be sold, and what other money is needed has nearly all been subscribed.

The Rev. Dr. C. H. Corey and the Rev. Dr. W. Lendrum are at the head of the movement.

Sound and Electricity.

A curious circumstance illustrating the difference in speed between sound and electricity, through wire as its guide and conductor, occurred in California. A certain powder works blew up in a town while a railway telegraph operator was telegraphing to another in a neighboring town. At the instant of the occurrence he telegraphed the news to the operator, who, 60 seconds afterward, heard the report of the explosion. He knew it had occurred by wire just one minute before he heard the report.

Sound travels at about the rate of 1,140 feet per second, while electricity accomplished 186,000 miles in the same short period of time.

Thought of It Himself.

A friend of the Saunterer has a decidedly original little daughter. One day the teacher discovered her in hand to hand combat with a child of her own age.

"Don't you know you are doing very wrong?" said the teacher rebukingly, "and that such evil actions are caused by the promptings of the devil?"

"Well," was her answer, "maybe the devil did tell me to pull her hair, but I thought of hitting her in her face all myself."—Boston Budget.

KONGO CANNIBALS.

DESCRIBED BY A MISSIONARY WHO KNOWS THEM WELL.

Their Appetite For Human Flesh Illustrated by Scenes That Father Allaire Has Witnessed—A Life That Is Constantly Lived With Dangers.

Father Allaire, missionary apostle to the French Congo, was recently in France to order a small iron steamboat to be used in visiting the mission stations, and was persuaded while there to contribute to Le Correspondant an account of his work and its field. The courageous fathers of the French Catholic missions in Africa visit regions hitherto scarcely known to white men, and living habitually far beyond the bounds of the new African civilization, have peculiar opportunities of studying unmodified savage life. Father Allaire has been for ten years in the French Congo, and for the last six years at Liranga.

His home station of Liranga is surrounded by cannibal tribes, and is not only a time and again declined hospitable invitations to take part in a cannibal feast, but more than once he has discerned among his neighbors a hankering after his own flesh.

"You are wrong," said a cannibal when the father turned in disgust from an offer of human flesh. "You should taste it, and after that you'd never turn away; it is so good."

A cannibal, bearing aloft a bloody human head, said to the father: "That is the head of one you know well. We ate him three days ago. He was delicious. You should have come earlier so as to have a taste."

Cannibalism is a veritable passion with some of the father's black neighbors. Rescued slaves tell him, and he believes it, that there are in the interior chiefs who eat no flesh save that of girls and boys from 10 to 16 years of age. He made a journey up the Congo to the land of the fierce Bondjoes, strangers to him, with the hope of buying children out of slavery and taking them back to the mission station. When he reached Ngomboc, an agglomeration of six or seven large cannibal villages, he was constantly saluted with the words:

"Sell us children. We will buy, but not sell them."

The cannibals had evidently heard of his mission, and the journey was in vain. When he was about to return, a chief invited him to anchor opposite a village, saying:

"Show your goods there, and my people will fetch down the slave children to sell."

The father accepted the invitation, climbed with difficulty the steep embankment, more than 30 feet high, upon which stood the fortified village, and entered the place with an interpreter and a few followers. Sixty savages surrounded the priest, and he and the chief went through the famous form of blood brotherhood, each making a slight wound in his arm and permitting the outflowing streams of blood to mingle. The father then discovered that there were no women or children in sight, and that the points of spears were trembling behind the houses. The chief suddenly demanded gifts for himself and all his men.

There was silence in the village, while the blacks babbled ceaselessly in the sun, and the lances peeped out here and there from behind the huts. The father answered that he would be glad to pay handsomely for any slaves that should be brought to the boat. At this the chief seized his left hand and bade him begone. When the father was ready to make the steep descent of the bank, he saw a stealthy giant just ready to lance one of the men from the steamboat. His left hand still grasped by the chief, the father aimed his uncharged rifle at the negro below, and the latter, dropping his weapon, drew back.

The next instant the chief had pushed the father over the bank. He lay stunned for a second, but rose unharmed to find the savage lancers attacking his own men, and the latter casting themselves into the river for safety. Quickly loading his rifle, he turned upon the attacking party, but at sight of the loaded weapon the negroes fled. Once on the boat the father found that none of his men was wounded. One, the black interpreter, was missing, and he was soon discovered making ready to storm the village. He declared that with two rifles the missionary party could sack the place, and was disgusted when the father refused to undertake the task.

"It is curious," said the interpreter, "that when these people were making ready to eat you you are unwilling to be revenged on them."

He then explained that as the missionary party clambered up to the town the negroes were vowing to have the gods as presents or by force, and that when the cannibal chief told the priest's hand the savage said significantly to his men:

"It is well; he has no skin and his hand is fat."

Father Allaire says that slavery in his part of Africa is not a thing of constant blows. Its worst feature is the possibility of human sacrifice at the death of a slave owner. The slave at or daily times may go and come as he will, subject only to the possibility of being sold or of being called to be sacrificed in order that a dead master may have slave company in another world. Slavery is worse for children than for adults, and in parts of the French Congo children are used as money. A pig-rogue is spoken of as worth so many slaves. Slave children pass through the hands of as many as 20 chiefs. A native law makes a thief caught in the act of the slave of his captor, and it is not unusual for men to expose valuable things, and then lie in ambush to capture and thus enslave any one that yields to the temptation to steal the article exposed. Young children are seized and enslaved when found alone, and African mothers, who are most tender of their little ones, guard them with great care.

A Rare Postage Stamp.

A postage stamp which is pronounced the rarest in the world has just been brought to light in Louisville. A collector there asked permission to rummage among the correspondence of an old lawyer, with the result that he found one Baltimore postmaster's stamp (30 cents) on original cover; five New York 5-cent stamps, 150 United States 5-cent stamps of 1847, 110 United States 10-cent stamps of 1847. The value of these is said to be worth \$5,000, the value of the others in the aggregate is \$200.

STORIES OF THE DAY.

Some of the Early and Little Known Work of Bill Nye.

Although Bill Nye's letters and lectures are familiar to all people who appreciate honor of the true sort, his first and best writing, done while he was editor of the Laramie Boomerang, has not had that wide circulation it deserves. Much of that excellent work he collected and published in book form, and it is from those unpretentious volumes, "Baled Hay," "Forty Liars" (W. B. Conkey) and "Cheernuts," that the following characteristic excerpts are made:

The True American.

The true American would rather work himself into luxury or the lunatic asylum than to hang like a great wart upon the face of nature.

Sudden Fame.

A man works 20 years to become known as a scholar, a newspaper man and a gentleman, while the illiterate murderer springs into immediate notoriety in a day, and the widow of his victim cannot even get her life insurance. These things are what make people misanthropic and tenacious of their belief in a hell.

Dignity.

Dignity does not draw. It answers in place of intellectual tone for 20 minutes, but after awhile it fails to get there. Dignity works all right in a wooden Indian or a drum major, but the man who desires to draw a salary through life and to be sure of a visible means of support will do well to make some other provision than a hangly look and the air of patronage.

The Right Sort of Boy.

I am always sorry to see a youth get irritated and pack up his clothes in the heat of debate and leave the home nest. His future is a little doubtful, and it is hard to prognosticate whether he will fracture limestone for the streets of a great city or become president of the United States, but there is a beautiful and luminous life ahead of him in comparison with the boy who obstinately refuses to leave the nest. The boy who cannot summon the moral courage some day to uncoil the tendrils of his heart from the clustering idols of the household to grapple with outrageous fortune ought to be taken by the ear and led away out into the great untried realm of space.

Pugilist or Statesman?

Thousands of our own boys, who today are spearing frogs or bathing in the rivers of their native land and parading on the shingly beach with no clothes on but a pair of pants, are left to choose between such a career of usefulness and greatness of brow and the humdrum life of a bilious student and pale, sad congressman. Will you rise to the proud pinnacle of fame as a pugilist, boys, or will you plow along as a sorrowing, overworked statesman? Now, in the spring-time of your lives, choose between the two and abide the consequences.

A Child's Foes.

During a big thunder shower awhile ago little Willie, who slept up stairs alone, got scared and called his mother, who came up and asked him what he was frightened about. Willie frankly admitted that the thunder was a little too much for a little boy who slept alone.

"Well, if you're afraid," said his mother, passing back the curls from his forehead, "you should pray for courage."

"All right, ma," said Willie, an idea coming into his head; "suppose you stay up here and pray while I go down stairs and sleep with paw."

The Codfish.

This tropical bird seldom wings his way so far west as Wyoming. He loves the sea breezes and humid atmosphere of the Atlantic ocean, and when isolated in this mountain climate pines for his native home.

The codfish cannot sing, but is prized for his beautiful plumage and seductive odor.

The codfish of commerce is devoid of digestive apparatus and is more or less permeated with salt.

Codfish on toast is not as expensive as quail on toast.

The codfish is made of the shattered remains of the adult codfish, mixed with the tropical Irish potato of commerce.

The codfish has a great wealth of glad, unfettered smiles. When he laughs at anything, he has that same wide wave of mirth and back teeth that Mr. Talmage has. The Wyoming codfish is generally dead. Death, in most cases, is the result of exposure and loss of appetite.

The Relentless Garden Hose.

It is now the proper time for the cross-eyed woman to fool with the garden hose. I have faced death in almost every form, and I do not know what fear is, but when a woman with one eye gazes into the zodiac and the other peering into the middle of next week and wearing one of those floppy sun-bonnets picks up the nozzle of the garden hose and turns on the full force of the institution I fly wildly to the mountains of Hepsidam.

Water won't hurt any one, of course, if care is used not to forget and drink any of it, but it is this horrible suspense and uncertainty about facing the nozzle of a garden hose in the hands of a cross-eyed woman that unnerve me and paralyze me.

Instantaneous death is nothing to me. I am as cool and collected where leaden rain and iron hail are thickest as I would be in my own office writing the obituary of the man who steals my jokes. At I hate to be drowned slowly in my good clothes and on dry land and have my dying gaze rest on a woman whose ravishing beauty would drive a narrow gauge mule into convulsions and make him hate himself to death.

A Gentlemenly Judge.

In a conversation the other day District Attorney Graham told of his 25 years' experience at the bar with the late Judge Allison, and incidentally paid a sterling compliment to the dead jurist. "He was," said Mr. Graham, "a splendid judge, with a stock of patience that was inexhaustible. No lawyer can say that he was ever turned away from Judge Allison's bar without a kindly, courteous, complete hearing. His bearing both on and off the bench reminded me always of a passage in 'David Copperfield,' where Dickens writes in effect that 'a man might assume a gentlemanly demeanor for an occasion, but it is only nature's true nobility that never lays it aside.'"

HEATING BY HOT AIR.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS METHOD OF WARMING HOUSES.

Furnaces Offer Convenient Means of Communicating Warmth to a Dwelling of Almost Any Dimensions—No System Is More Satisfactory.

How to Heat a House.

When a man starts out to build a house, after having settled the question of location, size, price and general style, the most important matter that remains to be decided is the method of heating. The larger proportion of dwellings make use of the hot air system, and, all things considered, there is none that is more satisfactory. Hot air furnaces offer very convenient means of communicating warmth to a dwelling of almost any dimensions—its special advantage being that if it is properly arranged it constantly brings into the house a large body of fresh air, and so contributes most materially to the ventilation of the building.

This is effected by a furnace placed in the lower portion of the house, which being duly provided with flues and registers, heats and distributes through all parts of the establishment a quantity of fresh air in proportion to the dimensions and capacity of the air chamber in which it is placed. A fundamental point of this system is the supply of pure air to this air chamber, which should be provided by a duct or air passage from that side of the house on which the air is likely to be the most pure. But the objections cited against stoves when made with thin plates of metal without any lining to protect them from becoming red-hot apply with equal force to a vast majority of hot air furnaces now in use. Air delivered from a furnace should never exceed the temperature indicated by 120 degrees Fahrenheit; where the heat reaches 150 degrees to 180 degrees at the point of delivery, the effects are undoubtedly pernicious.

The principle to be attended to in construction of all hot-air furnaces is to

generate and communicate the greatest amount of heat with a given quantity of fuel, without producing any change in the breathing property of the air. A common fault is that the water pan is allowed to become empty, so that the heated air has that dry and stuffy quality of which many people justly complain. But with water constantly evaporating in the furnace, with cold air drawn from outdoors, and with such an arrangement of pipes that every room will receive its due proportion of heat, there is no system more satisfactory for ordinary houses, nor is it any more economical—an important consideration.

Many householders urge objections to the hot-air system that at first glance seem to be well founded. They, themselves, have these furnaces and they never tire of recounting their tribulations with them. They say that there are certain rooms in their houses that never get a particle of heat, although they force the furnace so that it eats up coal by the ton and makes the rest of the house unbearable; and often an impression exists that certain pipes and registers will always be favored, and that one or more (generally the one to the north) is bound to go without heat. Such people will at once dispute the assertion that each pipe can be made to draw as well as its fellows, and that every register, properly managed, will throw out its quota of heat.

The one prime fault with most hot air heaters is that the cold air box is very much too small. The size of this is generally left to the judgment of the carpenter and builder, and is made small so as not to be in the way. It is simply a physical fact that no more hot air can be sent out of the furnace than cold air goes in. If the cold box has an aperture of five square feet and the hot air pipes aggregate ten square feet, it stands to reason that half of the hot air pipes will be starved. An easy test of the matter is this: Wait until you have a hot fire in your



HOUSE HEATED BY HOT AIR.

Monument to Be Erected in the National Capital.

Representative Evans of Kentucky, who was commissioner of internal revenue during the Harrison administration, has undertaken the task of providing for the erection of a monument to Abraham Lincoln at the national capital. With this end in view he has introduced a bill constituting a commission to be known as the Lincoln monument commission, comprising the president and vice president of the United States, the speaker of the house of representatives and the secretaries of state and of the treasury.

This commission is to have power and authority to cause to be erected at some suitable place in that city on ground owned by the United States a monument that may appropriately express the gratitude of the nation for the illustrious and patriotic services of Abraham Lincoln.

An appropriation of \$500,000, or so much as may be necessary, is to be set aside for this purpose, to be expended under the direction of the commission, and for the improvement and preparation of a site for the proposed monument. Furthermore, it is provided that the amount appropriated shall be available at all times until the monument is completed.—Chicago Tribune.

DRAMA FROM REAL LIFE.

Distraught Father and Wayward Daughter the Chief Characters.

Act I.—Time 1893.—Scene, the happy home of Henry Stevens, a railroad engineer at Quarryville, N. J. Stevens finds his wife unfaithful, kills her lover, Patrick Quirk, and becomes a fugitive from justice.

Act II.—Time 1894.—Scene, New Orleans and New Jersey. Stevens meets his daughter, Mrs. William Duryea, in New Orleans. She has been driven to a wayward life by the ill treatment of her husband. She induces her father to return with her to New Jersey, saying that the shooting had been forgotten.

Act III.—Three months later. Stevens and his daughter return, she to live with William Van Vleet and he to seek for work. A policeman is invited to Van Vleet's house, where Stevens is arrested and sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

Act IV.—Time, the present. Police headquarters, New York. Stevens, who had served his sentence, is pleading with the police to search for his wayward daughter, who is in New York. He says he will continue his search until he finds the girl and induces her to return to an upright life.—New York World.

Candidate For the Wickedest Town.

The Rev. William Gill, who has just completed a two weeks' revival in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., resulting in the conversion of nearly 1,000 persons, says Poughkeepsie is the wickedest place in which he has ever conducted meetings. He received for his work more than \$600 in contributions, but it is said he expected \$1,000. During the services 250 hymnbooks belonging to Mr. Gill were stolen. The committee paid him \$60 for them.

General Agnus as an Editor.

General Felix Agnus, editor of the Baltimore American, read before the Army and Navy club of Washington the other evening his novelle entitled "A Woman of War," a southern war sketch founded on an incident which occurred when General Agnus was one of Major General Banks' famous "forlorn hope" before Port Hudson. The story has been dramatized, and is now in rehearsal for the legitimate stage.

The Sooner the Better.

The day is not far distant when prize fights will have to be "pulled off" on some isolated and unclaimed coral reef in the middle of the Pacific ocean.—Chicago Tribune.

THE GOLDEN HAND.

LEGEND OF HIDDEN TREASURE IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

Two Venturesome Men Hear the Story From an Old Indian, and With Him as Guide They Seek Out the Place—Only Two of the Party Return.

"You're counting too much on the word of an Indian. Old Zapet is a noted liar—like all these Spanish speaking aborigines."

"Ah, Jack, you do him injustice. He's a deeper liar than you give him credit for. It's ridiculous to believe that the ancients had enough mechanical knowledge to contrive a machine that could prevent one from getting at the gold."

This last speech was from my old comrade, Tom French. We were in the interior of Central America when the foregoing conversation took place. It was the end of many a long debate, we had had on the subject of a search for a treasure.

The legend was briefly that deep in the center of a crater of a worn-out volcano the ancient Indians of that country had excavated a vault where they had piled up countless bars of virgin gold. There was above this vault a boulder, the only indication of the hiding place. The peculiarity of the crater was that it was four square, half a mile each way, and from the summit to the floor, a distance of 500 feet. To reach the floor there was a hidden path and this was guarded by a mysterious golden hand. Tradition, the Indians said, made it possible to locate the mountain in only one way. That was by climbing the peaks in the barren region far above us to the southeastward until we should be found from whose lofty crests there were three other peaks forming a straight line. In the central mountain was the treasure.

Few burdens could be carried with us in that high, rare atmosphere, and we were soon on our way with old Zapet shaking his head, as if in prediction of disaster. Hardened as we were by our out of door life, the strain was terrible. We lost our way repeatedly and found ourselves confronted by vast crevices in our pathway up the mountain side. Wide detours, costing us half a day and sometimes a day of valuable time, were performed, only to find ourselves at the top of a precipice that barred our progress. We had with infinite trouble climbed two lofty mountains, only to find ourselves at the summit out of range of other mountain towns, as demanded by the legend, when I finally refused to go farther. It was suicidal. Half our provisions and water were gone. But Tom pleaded for one more chance. "Do you see that long range?" he cried. "It's in one of those. Let's make one more attempt." In mistake for him I yielded.

As we reached the summit, behold there were three mountain peaks in a row. Tom sprang forward and after another struggle we were at the top of the central mountain. As we approached the top it could be seen that there had been volcanic action in ages past. Zapet's eyes were rolling in every direction, on the lookout for some supernatural phenomenon. Suddenly bursting through, dense fringe of bushes we found ourselves on the very edge of a vast crater. As with common impulse we looked to the center, and there was an immense boulder. "At last," cried Tom, "at last!" Then he ran his eye along the verge, scanning it foot by foot. "He's stashed," he almost screamed, and he stumbled along at a pace that, exhausted as we were, would scarce have maintained. "Take care, Tom," I managed to ejaculate, though I was nearly as wild as he. But Tom apparently heard nothing. He had eyes and ears only for the one goal.

The path along the side of the precipice, we could see, led upward from the wide floor of the arena far below us, but the top was concealed from our intent gaze by a dense mass of shrubbery. Around the sides of the crater we half stumbled, half ran. When we reached the spot where we thought it possible to strike upon the opening, we made dashes here and there into the greenery. After many disappointments a cry from Tom told me the path had been found. Zapet by this time was in a state of collapse through fear and fatigue. Agnus I warned Tom to exercise caution, but he plunged ahead, and I followed as slowly as I could. The path downward was not more than a foot in width, and it required all my strength and dexterity to keep my footing. Suddenly on rounding a sharp angle in the face of the precip