

CONSCIENCE OF OLD SOURDOUGH WAS FLEXIBLE

(Continued from page one)

bery. Please note the difference between that and the highgrading we did in the SP later, which was ILLEGAL. At the time I worked there, this mine had produced six million and a half dollars and was still going strong.

America being a most uninteresting place to live in for a man with so much money. Mr. Skinner, with his wife and two daughters, resided in Europe, in the various capitals that attracted their fancy, leaving operations at the mine in the hands of a superintendent who was supposed to know his stuff.

When I went to work in this mine I found everybody on the job was high-grading, even the mine bosses, ore sorters and stamp mill men, so I was not very hard to be persuaded that my best bet would be to play ball along with the rest of them, or to get fired off the job and have to hunt for something elsewhere. I hadn't been there long when we ran into about two tons of white antimony that assayed \$28,000 to the ton. These two tons vanished so quickly and completely that the superintendent never even heard of them. The ore sorters on the dump, whenever they found an extra rich chunk of specimen quartz would give it a sling over the bank, where in time all the chunks would be gathered up, spirited off to town where they would be converted into cash and everybody would get their little rake-off.

But the cleverest scheme for high-grading was as follows, and neither superintendent nor any of his bright sleuths ever got next to it. About a mile below the SP was a body of ore that resembled the ore we were shipping so closely that the two ores could be mixed together and not even an expert could tell which was which. But whereas our ore ran \$200 or better to the ton, the ore on the claim below only ran about \$5 per ton. One of the miners had located a claim on this ore and everybody chipped in and helped him buy a little three-stamp mill. All our ore was concentrated about six tons into one, which made \$1200 per ton to ship to the smelter. These concentrates were packed in strong canvas sacks which would hold a hundred pounds, or a trifle

more. Each morning the pack outfit, consisting of 16 picked Missouri mules, would load these sacks (four to the mule) and start for the railroad. These grand mules could handle 400 pounds apiece easily. And the packers were experts in their line. Two packers, one on each side, could load a mule much quicker than I am telling it. Well, the guy down the road had made a lot of concentrates in his little mill and had them all packed ready in the branded sacks of the SP mine that we had furnished him. Along would come the pack train and stop. Quickly two mules had their loads changed from sacks worth from \$60 to \$75 per each to sacks that were worth practically nothing much. In less than three minutes eight sacks had been changed and the outfit was on its way. When the returns came in he supe and the assayer would have fits. They knew how much the ore ought to run, because they had assayed it before it was loaded, but it never held out only in cases where something went wrong and the exchange could not be made. The leak was never discovered and it tickled us stiff to hear them cuss the smelter, who they were certain was robbing them. Now you can see (if you are a good church member) how very wicked it was on our part to steal the ore of a man who needed every million he could get hold of to bet on the bank at Monte Carlo, or something else in the line of pleasure and luxury.

But of course there was a reason why Mr. Skinner would wish to squander his millions in Europe and there was a reason why we should high-grade his ore while he was doing so. There is a reason for everything, small or great. For everything that occurs there is a cause. Nothing in the universe happens haphazardly. Every bit of good luck or bad, every so-called miracle, can be traced back to some force that set it in motion. Even such an insignificant thing as why a cat washes its face after eating, instead of before, indicates there must have been a good reason for such an act. It probably originated in some such a way as this:

After creating the earth, the Lord busied himself in making different kinds of animals, which he brought to Adam for him to name, as the Good Book tells us in Genesis 2:19. One day, experimenting with some peculiar looking dust, he moulded a new kind of animal which he endowed with four legs and a long tail, and to improve its appearance covered it with fur. Then, having blown the breath of

life into its nostrils, he brought it to Adam as per usual and inquired what name would be appropriate for the creature. Adam looked it over carefully, smelled of it, stroked its fur and lifted it by the tail. Finally he said, "Well, we'd better call it a cat." So a cat it was and always has been since.

Now it came to pass that the beast called "cat" waxed hungry in due time and, casting about for something to eat, did spy the bananas upon which Adam was wont to feed himself, and would fain have filled its belly with the luscious fruit. But after having tasted it, spat it forth in disgust and began to look for something more to its liking.

Now the Lord had, previously, out of some little dabs of left-over dust, fashioned a number of tiny creatures which he had covered with feathers and had made their front legs into wings so they might fly. These had been named birds by Adam and they made their abode in the Garden of Eden.

It was at this moment that a flock of these little songsters came flying by, with no thought of danger and the cat, with a quick spring, pulled one down. One sniff at the scent of the warm meat beneath the feathers convinced him that here was a morsel suitable for his appetite. But small as he was, the bird made up in cleverness what he lacked in size, and instantly realizing his danger, proceeded to try a bluff. (This was where the first bluff originated.)

So he opened his mouth and spake to the cat and said, "Sir! no gentleman would ever think of eating a meal without first washing his face." Then answered the cat and said, "Well, I don't know but what you are right at that," and setting the bird down carefully, began to wash his face, while the bird immediately took advantage of this opportunity to fly away, which caused Adam, who had been watching to laugh uproariously. (This was the first laugh that ever occurred on earth.)

Seeing how neatly he had been buncoed, the cat turned loose a flock of cuss words so vitriolic that the other animals fled in terror, and raising his right paw to the sky, swore a solemn oath that never again would he wash his face before eating, and that he would put all his descendants wise to such a rotten trick, so they would never be duped in the same way. (This was how profanity originated.)

And that is why every cat even unto the present day never washes its face until it has eaten. And this is the origin of the bluff, the laugh and the cuss words of the present day, and also of the bunco trick, all having originated from a tiny little bird in the Garden of Eden, who guilefully made a complete fool of the honest and respectable ancestor of all the cats.

The Jacksonville Miner says: "Speaking of columnists, Clark Wood, we believe a sense of humor is better than no sense at all." Which is the reason why we'd rather be Clark Wood than Olin Miller.—Weston Leader.

It may be Little America, but it's no place for little Americans.—Weston Leader.

"There is an alarming increase of reformers. Won't someone please step forward and save us from being saved?"—Olin Miller. With pleasure.—Clark Wood.

One feels impelled to regard stratosphere discoveries as on the up and up.—Weston Leader.

"Newton Baker can write with either hand." Perhaps, though, what he writes with his left he rights with his right.—Weston Leader.

Sometimes a battle-ax is seen driving Cadillacs.—Weston (Ore.) Leader.

One can indulge a superiority complex by thumbing his nose at Jupiter, which is 300 times as big as the earth.—Weston Leader.

The deportation of Hollywood's had actors who've been aiding and abetting the reds would be a reel relief.—Weston Leader.

"Returning confidence" is a phrase one could wish were as true as it is familiar.—Weston Leader.

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