

# OLD SOURDOUGH MISSES FRISCO QUAKE BY WEEK

## Stormy Pacific Stands on End While Frisco Quake Topples and Burns City, Tells Applegate Miner

By J. C. REYNOLDS

It seems to be the fashion whenever anyone mentions anything that has to do with psychic phenomena for a lot of wise folks to sit right up and yell "fake!" I will admit that a lot of it is fake. But can you show me a business, profession, or religion that is wholly free of fake? So it is poor policy to denounce anything entirely as a fake, just because a certain percent of fake has been found in it.

However, I do not care to argue about it, so will simply relate certain things that happened to me.

About 10 days before the earthquake, I was strolling around the streets of San Francisco with a friend when we noticed a sign which set forth that Ismar the Gypsy could be found within. This Ismar was one of the most celebrated clairvoyants in the United States and we had read and heard much of the things she had done and could do. So my friend said, "Let's go in and see if she can tell us anything interesting." I said, "All right; might as well stuff off a little money that way as to try to drink it all up as some of these fellows around here seem to be doing."

"You can do the talking," he proposed, "and I'll go along and keep tab on what she tells you." I told him there were four or five questions I would like to ask her and, taking out my memorandum book, I wrote down five, tore the page out, doubled it twice and tucked it snugly in my vest pocket. Then we went in. Ismar was one of these clairvoyants who advertise to call you by name when you first meet them.

Being skeptical, as usual, I had my doubts about this and, imagining it to be just a case of mind reading, I determined to hold another name in my mind and see if I couldn't fool her. Ismar herself opened the door and shook hands with me, seeming to understand at once that I was the one with whom she would have to transact business. To my friend she merely murmured a polite greeting. I fancied she held my hand a trifle longer than was necessary and, feeling sure she was trying to read my mind, I held firmly in my thoughts the name of Frank Brown. But it was no use.

Presently she spoke: "Mr. Reynolds, Mr. John C. Reynolds, I believe; glad to meet you." As Ismar to my certain knowledge had never before laid eyes on me, this rather got my goat. Inviting us to be seated, she informed us she gave five different kinds of readings and asked me which kind I would want. I replied I would take two, a trance and a palm reading. I really have a lot of confidence in a palm reading, for the reason that no two palms on earth have similar lines and markings in their hands. And perhaps these lines have a significant bearing on the lives of the owners. I do not claim to know a great deal about palmistry, though I have owned and studied several books on the subject and have had a lot of it explained to me by teachers of the art. To be truthful, I don't exactly believe in it, nor do I entirely disbelieve.

Anyway, she sat down and threw herself into a trance in probably less than half a minute. Then she began to tell me all about myself and my occupation and warned me against taking a trip into the desert, as I had secretly been figuring on, as it would be a losing venture. Then she startled me again by remarking, "I see you have brought a list of questions you wish to ask me," and began to read them off and answer them, though I had not yet removed the paper on which they were written from my vest pocket. Just let something like that happen to you and see if it doesn't make funny little shivers run up and down your backbone.

Later she read my hand. In fact, both of my hands and, looking at a line in my right hand, informed me I was going to be deathly sick inside of nine days, at which I grinned as, except for a slight siege of mountain fever, I had hardly been sick a day in my life. In fact, I was so healthy I was ashamed of it, as Teddy Roosevelt used to say. She took offense at

once and snappily remarked that I need not laugh, as that particular line told the truth and I would find it to be so.

Her advise on my intended desert trip came so straight that, after thinking it over carefully, I decided to give it up. Then, in about a week, I took a sudden notion to go north to Seattle so, purchasing a first-class ticket, which also included bed and board, I engaged passage on the Jeannie, one of the smaller steamers plying up and down the coast, leaving my friend in Oakland, where he lived. And we sailed smack into the worst storm that had swept the coast in 20 years. At least, so everybody said. Now I had sailed around on the Atlantic quite a bit, had been off Cape Hatteras in a bad blow and prided myself on being quite a sailor. But let me tell you that the Atlantic, with all her hard-boiled reputation, isn't a circumstance to old man Pacific when he gets riled up. I went down in a pile before we had gotten outside the Golden Gate and most of the passengers followed suit soon after. Even the captain's wife, who had sailed with him for 20 years, became seasick.

We had two Christian Scientists on board and they gave us the horse-laugh at first, but next day were just as sick as we were. I hate to say this, because I think highly of Christian Science and the cheerful, agreeable, sincere people who practice it. But truthfully, I have seen several conditions that Christian Science doesn't seem to be able to handle and seasickness is one of them. At least seasickness like we had on that trip. Maybe their faith was not strong enough.

I will not venture to say how high those waves were, as I might not be believed. But they were plenty high and our little 300-foot steamer would skate up the side of one and then fall down the other side, with a corkscrew wiggle that would sure drag out the insides of anybody.

The only place I could get a moment's peace was on my back in bed in my room in the center of the vessel. I made many attempts to get out in the fresh air and fight off this sickness, but soon had to fly back to my bed, where I could hear the agonizing groans of people on all sides of me. I was so sick myself that I took no further interest in living. If someone had come rushing into my room with the information that we had struck a rock and were headed straight for the bottom I would have shouted, "Hurray for hell; anything for a moment of peace from this everlasting vomiting."

The second day the captain came around to jolly me up a little. I said to him, "Captain, if there are any islands out here please stop at one of them and I'll get off. I've sure had enough of this." That tickled the captain. He told me there were no islands along our route and I simply would have to stay with it. You see, to avoid bumping into those rocky cliffs along that coast we had to put away out into the middle of the Pacific somewhere and all that could be seen on any side was water standing on end. To make matters worse, they have the finest kind of cats on these vessels and every time my door opened, I could see the long tapers loaded down with all the good things imaginable and I couldn't get there to eat any of it. They say seasickness is never fatal, but I am positive if mine had lasted one more day I would have been as dead as a smoked codfish.

In the next room to mine was a fat woman who weighed close to 300 pounds. She was just about as sick as anyone could get. She kept calling for the purser and, finally, he came trotting down the stairs in his natty blue uniform with shiny brass buttons all over it. The fat woman was lying on her bed but when he opened the door rolled over to tell him what she wanted and zingo! everything she had eaten for a couple of days struck him in the breast, spilling his uniform and causing him to utter some of the most picturesque language I ever heard. Before he had done I think he had called her

everything but a lady, though eventually he apologized. He told me afterwards that he was usually very respectful to women, but he said that old hell-cat could lie on her back and vomit all over the ceiling and he had seen her do it.

To make a short story shorter, it was three days before our hurricane ran out of material and had to quit. I finally came out of it after having thrown up everything but my appendix, and though pretty wobbly on my legs, I managed to stagger to the table. And did I do anything to those fine groceries? I'll tell the world I did! I had with me three little funny books I had picked up on the train some time previously. They were a little off-color but so darned comical that no one could read them without having a big laugh. I lent one to the steward in return for some little favor and he soon got the other two. He told the others and soon I was the most popular person on board. All the ship's crew wanted to read them and did so, even in the limited time we had before reaching Seattle. Nothing was too good for me after that and when we docked the purser, steward, first mate and engineer took me up to the New England hotel where they stayed, and paid for everything. I had to sneak away from them finally to avoid getting stewed.

It was then I first heard of the disaster at Frisco, and was surely thankful I had come away from there before that happened. That must have been an awful mess with houses tumbling down, fires starting up in hundreds of places and all the water pipes busted. The old colored lady, standing amongst the falling buildings and praying fervently to the Lord for aid described the situation very accurately: "Oh Lawd, come down and help us. Doan't send your Son, Lawd. Come down your own self. Dis here ain't no boy's job." I have seen several old foggy fundamentalists since who declared solemnly that the Lord sent that calamity on San Francisco to punish the inhabitants for their wickedness.

There is no doubt that Frisco was a wicked city. I could write books about the wickedness I saw there myself and then not tell more than a fraction of it. But the men of that city did not figure that the Lord was at fault in any way. They knew the disaster was owing entirely to a seismic disturbance that might occur anywhere. So they built the city again, stronger than ever, and provided better safeguards against future upheavals of the same nature.

And I presume that San Francisco is fully as wicked today, if not more so, than it ever was. When Galveston, Texas, was destroyed by a tidal wave, these same fundamentalists wagged their heads and spoke of Sodom and Gomorrah and how the Lord had visited punishment on wicked Galveston.

But the people of Galveston said "the fault is all our own for not

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having provided a proper seawall that will keep the ocean in its place. And they proceeded to build one that has proved adequate for their purpose ever since.

If the poor, old superstitious nit-wits of Sodom and Gomorrah had been possessed of half the courage of the men of Galveston and Frisco, they would have built their cities again on the shores of the Dead Sea and continued living there, provided they liked the location. But in those days of superstition, every little thing from a hailstorm to a seismic upheaval was attributed to an angry God.

There are quite a few people yet today in the world so dominated by superstition they can't think straight. But it takes all kinds of people to make a world like this.

Any game may seem foolish until one really learns to play it, or else finds it too difficult to learn.—Weston Leader.

Looks as though future generations will not only have their own financial problems to solve, but ours.—Weston Leader.

The esteemed Blue Mountain Eagle says the scum of society is always at the top and must be skimmed off. Kindly advise us, Brother Eagle, when the skimmer is scumming.—Weston Leader.

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"Clark Wood is never more alone than when alone with his own thoughts," says Olin Miller. We must admit we have nothing on our mind after reading Olin's column.—Weston Leader.

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