

FINDING THE POLE

BY JULES VERNE

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

"I shot it this morning," he continued, "well use it."

"What do you mean?" asked Altamont.

"I mean to blow up the bears en masse with 100 pounds of powder."

"But where is the powder?" exclaimed his friends.

"In the magazine. This passage I dug will lead to it. I made it purposely."

"And where is the mine to be?" inquired Altamont.

"At the farthest point from the house and stores."

"And how will you manage to entice the bears there, all to one spot?"

"I'll look after that. Let us set to work. We have 100 feet more to add to our passage to-night, and that is no easy matter. There are five of us—we can take turns. Bell will begin, and we will lie down and sleep meantime."

"One by one, all went to work, and in ten hours—that is to say, about 8 in the morning—the gallery was entirely open.

With the first streak of day the doctor reconnoitered the position of the enemy. The patient animals were still occupying their old position, prowling up and down and growling.

Hastening away to the mine, he had a strong stake fixed firmly on the granite foundation, on the top of which the dead fox was fastened. A rope was attached to the lower part of the stake, long enough to reach the powder stores.

"This is the last," he said, pointing to the dead fox, "and here is the mine," he added, rolling a keg of powder containing about 100 pounds of powder.

"And how will you manage?" asked Altamont.

"By hauling in this rope we leave the dead fox exposed to view. The bears are so famished with their long fasting that they won't lose much time in rushing toward their unexpected meal. Well, just at that very moment, I shall set fire to the mine, and blow up both the guests and the meal."

"Capital!" exclaimed Johnson, who had been listening with intense interest.

Hatteras said nothing, for he had such absolute confidence in his friend that he wanted no further explanation. But Altamont must know the why and wherefore of everything.

"But doctor," he said, "can you reckon on your match so exactly that you can be quite sure it will fire the mine at the right moment?"

"I don't mean to be taken at all; that's a difficulty easily got over. I have a hundred feet long."

"You are simply going to lay a train of powder across the mine connected."

"One of us must light the powder," said Johnson. "I'm ready—ready and willing."

"Quite useless to risk your life, brave fellow," replied the doctor, holding out his hand. "All our lives are precious, and they will be all spared, thank God!"

"We have an electric battery," he continued, "and lines long enough to serve our purpose? We can fire our mine whenever we please, in an instant, and without the slightest danger."

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Johnson.

"Hurrah!" echoed the others, without heeding whether the enemy heard them or not.

The doctor's idea was immediately carried out, and the lines were ready. By 9 o'clock everything was ready. Johnson was stationed in the powder magazine, in charge of the cord which held the battery.

"Now," said Clawbonny to his companions, "load your guns. In case our assailants are not killed. Stand beside Johnson, and the moment the explosion is over rush out."

"All right," said Altamont.

"We have done all we can to help ourselves. May heaven help us!"

Hatteras, Altamont and Bell repaired to the powder magazine, while the doctor remained alone beside the pile.

Soon he heard Johnson's voice in the distance calling out "Ready!"

"All right!" was the reply.

Johnson pulled the rope that brought the body of the fox on top of the ice. The next instant the bears had eagerly rushed to seize the booty.

"Fire!" called out Johnson, and at once the electric spark was sent along the lines right into the keg of powder. A formidable explosion ensued; the house was shaken as if by an earthquake, and the walls cracked asunder. Hatteras, Altamont and Bell hurried out, with the guns. But four of the bears lay dead, and the fifth, half roasted, though alive, was scampering away in terror, as fast as his legs could carry him.

"Hurrah!" Three cheers for Clawbonny! they shouted, and overwhelmed the doctor with plaudits and thanks.

Next morning there was a singular rise in the temperature, the thermometer going up to degrees above zero. This comparative heat lasted several days. In sheltered spots the thermometer as high as 31 degrees, and symptoms of a thaw appeared.

The ice began to crack here and there, and jets of salt water were thrown up like fountains in an English park. A few days later the rain fell in torrents.

For about a fortnight hunting was the principal occupation. There was an abundant supply of fresh meat to be had. They shot partridges, ptarmigans and snow otters, which are delicious eaters.

"Do you think we shall have a long spell of this weather, Dr. Clawbonny?" asked Johnson.

"No, my friend, I don't; it is a last blow from the cold. You see these are his dominions, and he won't be driven out without making some resistance."

"What is the reason?"

"Because generally there is a period of frost in the month of May, and it is coldest from the 11th to the 13th. That is the fact."

The doctor was right, for the cold lasted till the end of the month, and put an end to all their hunting expeditions. The old, monotonous life in accordance recommenced.

CHAPTER IX.

During this compulsory leisure, Clawbonny determined to have a talk with the captain on an important subject—the building of a steep out of the planks of the Porpoise.

The doctor hardly knew how to be-

gin, as Hatteras had declared so vehemently that he would never consent to use a morsel of American wood; yet it was high time he were brought to reason, as June was at hand, the only season for distant expeditions, and they could not start without a ship.

He thought over it a long while, and at last drew the captain aside. In the kindest, gentlest way:

"Hatteras, do you believe I'm your friend?"

"Most certainly I do," replied the captain earnestly; "my best friend, my only friend."

"And if I give you a piece of advice without your asking, will you consider my motive is perfectly disinterested?"

"Yes, for I know you have never been actuated by self-interest. But what are you driving at?"

"Wait, Hatteras; I have one thing more to ask. Do you look on me as a true-hearted Englishman like yourself, anxious for his country's glory?"

Hatteras looked surprised, but simply said:

"I do."

"You desire to reach the north pole," the doctor went on, "and I understand and share your ambition, but to achieve your object you must employ the right means."

"Well, and have I not sacrificed everything for it?"

"No, Hatteras, you have not sacrificed anything for it. I know you are in the mood to refuse the indispensable conditions of reaching the pole."

"Ah! it is the boat you want to talk about, and that man—"

"Hatteras, let us discuss the question calmly. We are on all sides. The coast on which we find ourselves at present may terminate abruptly; we have no proof that it stretches away to the pole; indeed, if you present to me an open sea, during the summer months. Well, supposing we reach this arctic ocean and find it free from ice and easy to navigate, what shall we do if we have no ship?"

Hatteras made no reply.

"Tell me, now, would you like to find yourself only a few miles from the pole and not be able to get to it?"

Hatteras still said nothing, but buried his head in his hands.

"Beside," continued the doctor, "look at the question in its moral aspect. Here is an Englishman who sacrifices his fortune, and even his wife, to win fresh glory for his country. He crosses the ocean, or whirls him across an unknown sea, or touches the planks of an American vessel—a castaway wreck of no use to anyone—will that lessen the honor of your discovery?"

"If you yourself had found the hull of some wrecked vessel lying deserted on the shore, would you have hesitated to make use of it; and must not a sloop built by four Englishmen and manned by four Englishmen be English from keel to gunwale?"

Hatteras was still silent.

"No," continued Clawbonny, "the real truth is, it is not the sloop you care about; it is the man."

"Yes, doctor, yes," replied the captain. "It is this American I detest; I hate him with a thorough English hatred. Fate has thrown him in my path."

"To save you!"

"To ruin me. He seems to defy me, and speaks as if he were lord and master. He thinks he has my destiny in his hands, and knows my projects. Didn't we see the man in his true colors when we were giving names to the different coasts? Has he ever avowed his object in coming so far north? You will never get out of my head that this man is the leader of some expedition sent out by the American government."

"Well, Hatteras, suppose it is so, does it follow that this expedition is to search for the north pole? May it not be to find the Northwest Passage? But, anyway, Altamont is in complete ignorance of our object, for neither Johnson, nor Bell, nor myself, have ever breathed a word to him about it, and I am sure you have not."

"Well, let him always remain so."

"He must be told in the end, for we can't leave him here alone."

"Why not? Can't he stay here in Port Providence?"

"He would consent to leave at once, if he were told that he was to be left in that way, and not know whether we might find him safe when we came back, would be worse than imprudent. It would be inhuman. Altamont will come with us, he must come. But we need not disclose our projects; let us tell him nothing, but simply build a sloop for the ostensible purpose of making a survey of the coast."

Hatteras could not bring himself to consent, but said:

"And suppose the man won't allow his ship to be cut up?"

"In that case, you must take the law in your own hands, and build a vessel in spite of him."

"I wish to goodness he would refuse, then!"

"He must be asked before he can refuse. I'll undertake the asking," said Clawbonny.

He kept his word, for that very same night, at supper, he managed to turn the conversation towards the subject of making excursions during summer months for hydrographical purposes.

"You will join us, I suppose, Altamont," he said.

"Of course," replied the American.

"We must know how far New America extends."

Hatteras looked fixedly at his rival, but said nothing.

"And for that purpose," continued Altamont, "I had better build a little ship out of the remains of the Porpoise. It is the best possible use we can make of her."

"You hear, Bell," said the doctor, eagerly. "We'll all set to work to-morrow morning."

In the end of May the temperature again rose, and spring returned for good and all. Rain fell copiously, and before long the melting snow was running down every little slope in falls and cascades.

But while they were building their boats arguments sprang up.

Dr. Kane was the first bone of contention on this occasion, for the jealous Englishman was unwilling to grant his rival the glory of being a discoverer, saying that it was by mere

chance he had made a discovery.

"Chance!" interrupted Altamont, hotly. "Do you mean to assert that it is not to Kane's energy that we owe his great discovery?"

"I mean to say that Dr. Kane's name is not worth mentioning in a country made illustrious by such names as Parry, and Franklin, and Ross, and Belcher, and Penny; in a country where the sea opened the Northwest Passage to an Englishman—McClure!"

"McClure!" exclaimed the American. "Well, if ever chance favored anyone it was that McClure. Do you pretend to deny it?"

Hatteras started to his feet, and said:

"I will not permit the honor of an English captain to be attacked in my presence any longer!"

"You will not permit!" echoed Altamont, so springing erect. "But these are facts, and it is out of your power to destroy them!"

"Sir!" shouted Hatteras, pale with rage.

"My friends!" interposed the doctor; "pray be calm. This is a scientific point that we are discussing."

But Hatteras was dead to reason now, and said angrily:

"I'll tell you the facts, sir."

"And I'll tell you," retorted the irate American.

"Gentlemen," said Clawbonny, in a firm tone, "allow me to speak, for I know the facts of the case as well as, and perhaps better than, you, and I can state them impartially."

"Yes, yes!" cried Bell and Johnson, who had been anxiously watching the strife.

"Well, go on," said Altamont, finding himself in the minority.

With charts the doctor told the history of McClure's voyage. Still Hatteras and Altamont were dissatisfied.

"Well, if arriving on one side and leaving at the other is not going through, I don't know what is!" said Hatteras.

"Yes, but he went 470 miles over ice fields," objected Altamont.

"What of that?"

"Everything; that is the gist of the whole argument. It was not the investigator that went through."

"Altamont," said the doctor, "we all consider that you are wrong."

"You may easily do that," returned the American. "It is four against one, but that will not prevent me from holding my own opinion."

"Keep it and welcome, but keep it to yourself. If you please, for the future," exclaimed Hatteras.

"And pray what right have you to speak to me like this, sir?" shouted Altamont, in a fury.

"My right as captain," returned Hatteras, equally angry.

"Am I to submit to your orders, then?"

"Most assuredly, and woe to you if I don't!"

The doctor did not allow him to proceed, for he really feared the two antagonists might come to blows. Bell and Johnson seconded his endeavors to make peace, and, after a few conciliatory words, Altamont turned on his heel, and walked carelessly away, whistling "Yank Doodle." Hatteras, on the outside, and paced up and down with rapid strides. In about an hour he came back, and retired to bed without saying another word.

QUEER THINGS IN NICARAGUA.

Ministers Unnecessary, as Yelaya Manages Republic by Phone.

According to the statement of an American resident of Nicaragua, who has the confidence of President Yelaya of that republic, the Mexican Herald says, the reports of the difficulties suffered in paying the Emery claim have been exaggerated or based upon misapprehension.

The above gentleman was in Nicaragua quite recently and while there visited President Yelaya. He saw that though the amount of the Emery claim, \$500,000 gold, was a considerable sum, there are some redeeming features, principal among which is the fact that the railroad track, houses, logging plant and other property of the Emery company, valued at upward of \$375,000, gold, all revert to the Nicaraguan government, according to the terms of settlement. The government can use all these facilities on its own account, so that their value is no loss. Furthermore, he says that the government owns all its steamship lines, railroads and other public utilities, which pay 35 per cent annually, and are not hypothecated to the slightest extent, and that money could easily be raised on these if the situation were serious. The same gentleman said that he had an offer from a foreign syndicate to lease the Nicaraguan government \$1,000,000 some three months ago, but that President Yelaya refused the opportunity, saying that the need for the money was not great enough to justify the government's taking on the debt.

The reported closing of the war college, he said, was due to annual vacations. He was doubtful if it were true that telegraph lines had been suppressed. As for the cessation of music and festivities in the public plazas, this had been brought about by entirely other considerations than those of economy. As for the dismissal of all the cabinet ministers, this matter, which the size of Nicaragua enabled them easily to be dispensed with.

The Nicaraguan president, he said, kept in touch personally by telephone with all the affairs of the republic, making the duties of the cabinet ministers practically nil on all ordinary occasions, most persons preferring to conduct their negotiations directly with the president, who was easy of approach. Economy could have had nothing to do with the dismissal of the cabinet ministers, since they held their offices merely through patriotism, the salary being, at the most, not above \$52 a month gold.

A Lesson in Politeness.

He was dining at a restaurant, 300 while he was sipping his black coffee, a stranger gracefully commended his overcoat. He had just reached the door when the owner tapped him on the shoulder.

"Pardon me, sir," he said, meekly, "but would you allow me to get another cigar from my coat pocket, in case I do not meet you again?"—Tit-Bits.

Very Likely.

"She thanked him with a look."

"I s'pose her gown was so tight that she couldn't trust herself to speak, eh."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

CURRENT EVENTS OF THE WEEK

Doings of the World at Large Told in Brief.

General Resume of Important Events Presented in Condensed Form for Our Busy Readers.

Snow storms and blizzards are sweeping the entire Rocky mountain region.

Senator Allds, of New York, is convicted of bribe-taking and resigns his seat in congress.

Coal miners of the East demand an immediate increase in wages or a strike will follow.

The Supreme court of California has decided that oral betting is not illegal under the Walker-Otis anti-betting law.

The English house of lords will not give up their privilege of the veto power and a fight is on with the Irish party and the Laborites.

A United States attorney at Tacoma declares he is certain that smuggling of Chinese is practiced continually by trans-Pacific steamship lines.

A brilliant meteor struck the earth in the neighborhood of Ravalli, Montana, and the Indians on the Flathead reservation are terror stricken.

Mrs. Joseph Jefferson, wife of the noted actor, has been sued for \$200,000 by James Morrissey for malicious prosecution, false imprisonment and slander.

Andrew Carnegie passed through Trinidad, Colo., en route East, where he met a daughter of a boyhood friend who gave him his first employment at \$2.50 a month as a weaver's assistant.

A 17-year-old boy and 15-year-old girl eloped from San Diego, Cal., and went to camp in the mountains. They were heavily armed and beat off a posse who went to capture them, but finally surrendered at the pistol's point.

Nearly every banker in Pittsburg will feel the graft probe.

A seven-year-old boy in Denver, shot and killed his four-year-old brother.

Representative McCredie delivered quite an eulogy on Speaker Cannon.

A Chicago insurance man and society leader is under arrest for robbing a blind man.

Over 300 persons were killed in a panic at the burning of a dance hall in Hungary.

Associate Justice Brewer, of the United States Supreme court died suddenly of apoplexy.

The reported death of King Menelik, of Abyssinia, is denied, but a regency has been established.

Alexander J. Moody, a rich Chicagoan who died a month ago, is believed to have been poisoned.

Representative Martin asks investigation of attorney general's alleged aid to sugar trust in acquiring land of the friars in the Philippines.

A two-year-old child at Vancouver, B. C., fell asleep with his head across a swing rope with which he had been playing, and was strangled to death.

Roosevelt denounced recent assassination of Egyptian premier, causing quite a sensation and some apprehension is felt for his safety while in Egypt.

Two accidents marred the opening of the international aviation meet at Cannes, France. Both aeroplanes were smashed and one operator badly bruised.

Sixty-five members of the class of '78, among them the president of the United States, died in private at the University club in New York. There were no set speeches and reporters were barred.

John Redmond is coming to the front as a leader of the English Radicals.

Roosevelt shook hands with over 400 Americans during a reception in Cairo, Egypt.

The eruption of Mount Etna is subsiding and all danger is believed to be past.

A St. Louis woman finds contract marriage a failure and wants a divorce.

Insurgents suggest a substitution of a "pure parliamentary" for Speaker Cannon and will continue their fight for his removal.

Officials of the state of Washington would like to exchange school lands in forest reserves for lands of equal value adjoining the reserves.

Four children in Hartford, Conn., were rescued by the police just as their maniac father was about to massacre them with an axe. The family had just been evicted by their landlord.

Several Tacoma women had expressed a willingness to adopt a certain promising baby which was being cared for in a foundling home, but all backed out when it was discovered that the child was colored.

Through the efforts of their grandson, Cody Boala, a reconciliation has been effected between Colonel W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) and Mrs. Cody. Colonel and Mrs. Cody became estranged three or four years ago and since that time they have lived apart.

A Wisconsin man set fire to a widow's house, claiming that the insurance money would do her more good. He got three years.

Their supplies stolen by Cree Indians in the wilds of the Rocky Mountains, and with every one of their 44 horses dead of starvation, 22 men belonging to a Canadian Northern Railway survey party, headed by Engineer C. F. Hanington, arrived in Vancouver, B. C., after having fought their way to civilization through midwinter snowdrifts.

QUICK ACTION OR STRIKE.

Bituminous Coal Miners in East Will Fight for Raise.

Cincinnati, March 30.—Only immediate increases in wages will prevent a great industrial war, numerous and widespread strikes in the bituminous coal mines, according to action taken by a special committee of the United Mine Workers here late today, following the final disagreement and dissolution of the joint conference of the central competitive field.

The terms proposed by the miners for the continuation of work after the expiration of the present agreements at midnight Thursday will admit of no compromise so far as wages are concerned. On other questions there is room for agreement and the general trend of opinion is that no lengthy suspension will be the result except in a few fields.

The most threatening aspect overshadows Pennsylvania and Illinois decisions. Briefly, the miners demand that

The extension of the portage to be built commences at Big Eddy, some three miles above The Dalles, and reaches navigable water and a safe harbor at the foot of Washington street. At the terminus will be bulkheads on which freights may be conveniently transferred from river steamers to wharf boats or onto cars that may be run on the incline, or may be discharged from cars directly into the steamers.

The construction of this extension will complete the connecting link of river transportation with the lower river and the upper Columbia and Snake rivers. Since the completion of the state portage around the falls of Celilo there has been a connection between the upper and lower river, but it has not been practicable to handle heavy freight over this line because of the poor facilities for transferring it from boats to the portage road at the lower terminus.

Rush Work on Coos Bay Road.

That the Harriman interests will rush construction of its proposed road across the state of Oregon from Coos Bay to Vale, by way of Burns, is the latest report in railroad circles on the coast. It is impossible to get confirmation, but the news emanates from excellent sources, leaving little room for doubt of its authenticity.

According to these reports completion of the Coos Bay-Drain branch will be rushed with all possible haste while at the same time large forces will be put to work between Vale and Burns, thus hurrying along the work from both ends of the line. Construction of a line from Burns to Crescent City, land from Roy Woodworth, on Indian creek. He will abandon the old works and set up a new plant on the new site. The clay which will be used is said to be better suited for brick making, and Mr. Zeek expects to turn out a much better brick than he has been able to before.

Keokuk—A. T. Zeek, who has been engaged in the manufacture of brick about three miles south of town for some time, has purchased five acres of land from Roy Woodworth, on Indian creek. He will abandon the old works and set up a new plant on the new site. The clay which will be used is said to be better suited for brick making, and Mr. Zeek expects to turn out a much better brick than he has been able to before.

Holds Banner for Alfalfa Seed.

Vale—Vale is the banner alfalfa seed point in Malheur county, shipping nine of the 14 cars of alfalfa seed sent out from Malheur county in 1909. The country in the Vale vicinity is unexcelled for the production of the finest quality of alfalfa seed. An average car holds about 30,000 pounds of alfalfa seed, which at 15 cents per pound, the price paid for most of the seed, makes a carload worth about \$4,500, or approximately \$40,500 for the nine cars.

Addition to Madras Sold.

Madras—The recently platted Boyce addition to Madras was sold to W. H. Taylor, of Spokane, and Max Leddeman, of Portland, for \$7,000. There is about 17 acres in the tract. The Oregon Trunk line railway passes through the land. The plat lies well for warehouse and railway siding purposes.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Track prices: Bluestem, \$1.01@1.03; club, 97@98c; red Russian, 96c; valley, \$1.

Barley—Feed and brewing, \$27@27.50 per ton.

Corn—Whole, \$34; cracked, \$35.

Hay—Track prices: Timothy, Willamette valley, \$20@21 per ton; Eastern Oregon, \$23@24; alfalfa, \$17.50@18.50; grain hay, \$17@19.

Oats—No. 1 white, \$22@30.

Fresh fruits—Apples, \$1.25@1.35 per box; pears, \$1.50@1.75; cranberries, \$8@9 per barrel.

Potatoes—Carload buying prices: Oregon 50@60c per hundred; sweet potatoes, 30@35c per hundred.

Onions—Oregon, \$1.50@1.75 per hundred.

Vegetables—Turnips, \$1@1.25 per sack; rutabagas, \$1@1.25; carrots, 85c@1; beets, \$1@1.25; parsnips, 75c@81.

Butter—City creamery, extras, 36c; fancy outside creamery, 34@36c; store 20c. Butter fat prices average 14c per pound under regular butter prices.

Eggs—Fresh Oregon, 22@23c.

Pork—Fancy, 13@13 1/2c per pound.

Veal—Fancy, 11@1