

THE GREEN FLAME.

Story of What Happened in Death Valley.

By CUTHBERT BAKER.
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"Father, tell us a story about something that occurred when you lived in the far west."
"A true story about something that really happened?"
"Yes, a real true story!" shouted several children at once.
"Very well, I'll tell you what happened to Aaron Winters and his wife, who lived in the Death valley region."
"Death valley! That must have been a awful place."
"That's why they called it Death valley. It was so hot that people didn't live there. Aaron and Rosie didn't live in the valley, but in a gulch just above the valley. But even at Ash Meadows it was so desolate and lonely, the couple lived in a little hut on the side of a mountain. The country was wild and rugged, so wild and rugged that no one else would live there. Their cabin was a hundred miles from the nearest neighbor. Aaron Winters was a hunter, and that's why he lived away from other people. Hunters stay live where there is game, and when settlers come in the game moves away."
"Aaron often considered the feasibility of taking his wife to a more cheerful region, but he knew no trade but that of a hunter. And how could he make a living except when there was game? Besides, having always dwelt away from men, how would he get on with them? If he had means to make him independent that would be another matter. He had nothing but his skin and the game he killed. He needed funds to enable him to make the change."
"But how could he ever hope to gather funds in a country where no man could come to settle? True, he could save all the land he cared to take possession of, but it wasn't worth anything. I have often thought that this might have been another cause to keep him there. Perhaps he thought that one day settlers would come in and he could sell his mountain side for enough money to enable him to get



away. But if that was what he was thinking for he was doomed to disappointment.
"One day a desert tramp came along and asked for shelter overnight. He was the first human being that either Aaron or Rosie had seen in many a long day, and you may be assured the tramp made him welcome. A desert tramp is not likely to be a very intelligent or well bred fellow, and this one certainly was not. He was burned almost black by the sun, and his clothes were dirty and ragged. But he could talk to them, and that's more than their cats or their dogs could do. And just think how the sound of another voice than their own must have delighted them!
"Rosie got up a good supper for the tramp, which he ate as though he had passed through Death valley, where there was neither flesh nor vegetable that a man could live on. After supper, while Rosie was clearing the table and washing the dishes, Aaron gave the tramp a pipe and some tobacco, and the two sat down for a smoke and a chat. Aaron didn't care what his guest talked about so long as he talked, and Rosie at her work enjoyed the sound of a voice, rough and uncouth though it was, as well as her husband.
"The tramp had visited many regions and naturally talked about them. He had been at Salt Lake and told them that the water was so dense that persons bathing in it would float on its surface like a boat on water. He had been in Colorado and told them how the gold was stamped out of the rock. His last place he had been was Nevada. There are borax deposits in that state, and he told Aaron how they were used.
"Now, Aaron had often been in Death valley and had noticed something that looked like what the tramp described. He asked how one might get borax deposits, and the tramp told him that there were certain chemicals which when combined with borax would burn a green flame. Aaron also asked the tramp what borax was used

for, and he told him, as you all know, that it was used for washing purposes and that a little package of it was worth about 10 cents. Aaron thought that if this was the price what he had seen must be worth thousands of dollars.
"The next morning, after the tramp's departure, Aaron talked over with Rosie what had been said about the borax deposits. He thought it was possible that what he had seen in Death valley might be borax. But even if he went there he had no means of discovering whether what he had seen was borax or ordinary soil.
"Rosie, dear," said Aaron, "I would like you to go to a town where you can get these chemicals for testing borax, but it will require a week or two, during which I shall have to stay here alone. Then when you come back we shall have to make a trip to Death valley, and after all our trouble there isn't one chance in a dozen that what I have seen there will turn out to be borax."
"I really think, Aaron," replied the wife, "that the chances don't warrant the trouble, but I'm worn out with this desolation and am yearning to see people. I feel as if I must have one of my own sex to talk to, even if only for a day."
"Well, sweetheart, go, but don't stay any longer than to have a good chat for I'm very anxious to make the test."
"So the next day Aaron took her where she could get some one to take her on farther and left her to go back to the cabin. As she kissed him good by she looked at him wistfully and said:
"Aaron, I won't leave you again. I know how lonely you are without me, how hard it is for you to have to get your meals, and I worry for fear something will happen to you. What would you do while I am away if you should become sick or meet with an accident?"
"Never mind about that, Rosie. Bring back the chemicals as soon as you can."
"Oh, there's nothing in that, Aaron. Don't think about it. You're sure to be disappointed."
"They parted, Rosie going on and Aaron going back to the cabin. It seemed very quiet there without his wife, and he wished it was the end instead of the beginning of their separation. After he had cooked and eaten his supper he sat smoking his pipe, thinking about what the tramp had told him. He realized that there was scarcely a chance of what he had seen being borax, but the thought of what would happen if it should be borax sent a thrill all through him. He would be the only person to know it, and no one was likely to come into Death valley to learn of the secret before he had established his legal claim to all the property he cared to possess.
"In ten days Rosie came back with a substance she had obtained from a chemist. But neither she nor Aaron thought much about this, they were so glad to meet again. After a day or two Rosie spoke of it and asked her husband when he was going to Death valley. He said he dreaded to go, for he felt sure he would have his trouble for nothing. But Rosie said that since they had the materials they might as well make the trip and she would go with him.
"So the next day Rosie spent the morning preparing a lunch of antelope steak—this was all there was, since they lived only on game—and in the afternoon they set out for the valley.
"They reached their destination some time before sunset, and, having procured some of the substance they had gone for, they mixed it with the chemicals. But they did not wish to light it till night came, because they might not be able by daylight to tell whether or not the flame was green. More than an hour must elapse before it would be dark, and they spent the interval in suspense, so much depended on what they hoped for. Aaron did not care so much for himself directly. It was of Rosie he was thinking. For years he had kept her in a wilderness, and now if this substance were borax he could take her wherever she cared to go. While he was thinking of this the wife's mind was full of dread lest her husband, who had built great hopes on this matter, should be disappointed.
"The sun set, darkness came, and yet Winters delayed to apply the match.
"Why don't you light it, Aaron?" asked Rosie.
"Aaron made no reply. None was needed. His wife knew he dreaded the disappointment that both felt was almost sure to come. They had had no careful description of the appearance of the substance the tramp had seen, and even if they had there might be resemblance without the substance being at all alike. What folly to expect that they were the same!
"Then Aaron scratched a match and held it to the combination. It blazed up in a bright flame.
"It burns green, Rosie!" he shouted. "We're rich!"
"So they were for people who had been so poor. They sold their property for \$20,000.
"But they were not city people and would not enjoy a city life. Therefore the fortune they acquired was all they needed to make them comfortable and happy. They bought a ranch in Nevada, where they enjoyed a country life and had all the neighbors they wished for.
"That's the story, my dears, as I heard it, and I think it's about as it happened. The west is full of such wonderful cases of people without money, even in rags, fighting upon something of great value to make them rich. It was not riches that Aaron Winters and his wife required to make them happy, but sufficient means to enable them to leave the Death valley region."

PEOPLE OF THE DAY

A Power in Railways.

Among the lieutenants of the late E. H. Harriman none is better known in the railroad world than Albert J. Earling, who was held in high esteem by his former chief. Wherever railroaders gather Mr. Earling's name is mentioned with respect and enthusiasm, because he began at the bottom and won his way.
Sixty years ago Mr. Earling was born in a little town in Wisconsin, and his education was acquired in the common schools. At the age of eighteen he entered the employ of the St. Paul and Minnesota as a clerk, and since then his career has been ever on the up grade. After serving for a time as clerk he learned telegraphy and be-



ALBERT J. EARLING.

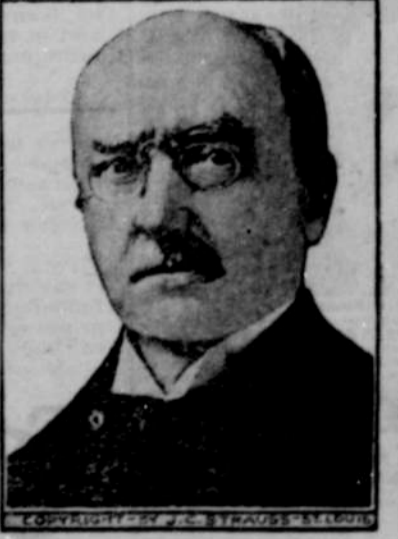
came a train dispatcher. It is said of him that he never made a mistake.
For five years he controlled the movements of the trains on the St. Paul system and then became successively assistant superintendent and general manager, achieving the latter position at the age of forty. Ten years later he was elevated to the presidency of the St. Paul. Under him that road became a part of the transcontinental route established by Mr. Harriman.
Mr. Earling was an important factor in consolidating the system outlined by Mr. Harriman and since the latter's death has been the real head of the Union Pacific.

Ballinger's First Law Case.

Richard A. Ballinger, secretary of the Interior, tells of his first law case which he had at Kankakee, Ill. "I had hung out my shingle a good while before any client arrived," he said. "Finally one came. He was a weak, meek being whom three determined women had wedded in rapid succession, and he was being tried for bigamy. As all of the wives appeared against him, we lost the case, and he got a term of two years. But this did not seem to worry him—in fact, he seemed anxious for more. He was taken to the penitentiary, and just before his term ended I got a letter from him. 'Do you think,' the bigamist asked anxiously, 'that it will be safe for me to come out?'"

A Stickler For the Law.

It is said of Judge Elmer B. Adams, one of the four United States jurists who declared the Standard Oil company to be a trust in restraint of trade, that he originated the phrase "the man higher up." Whether or not this be true, it is well known that Judge Adams is a stickler for the law as it is written and has a stern sense of justice.
It is told of Judge Adams that on one occasion a man came before him who was charged with assaulting a mail carrier and taking from him registered letters, burning all save the money contained in the pouch. Unable to believe the evidence against



ELMER B. ADAMS.

the well dressed man before him, the judge looked for some indication that a mistake had been made. When convinced that the culprit was guilty he sentenced him to imprisonment for life. As the astounded offender staggered from the room the judge called him back and added a sentence of twenty years.
Judge Adams is a native of Vermont, was educated at Yale and got his law degree from Harvard. He is sixty-seven years old and was appointed to the federal bench by President Roosevelt. He is a Democrat in politics, but voted for Taft at the last election.

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