

Indians lay panting on the ground. Next morning the Spaniards gave up the attempt and started on their return; that night they stumbled into the village. As they passed through the deserted streets they noticed that the black gash in the cliffs was gone; the whole face of the cliff seemed changed. Hernando stopped. What damage had the great rock done. Why had he not thought of its starting an avalanche? He pledged his comrades to secrecy, and they entered the barracks. The priest met them, and with him was Don Antonio Madiero, leader of the second company of soldiers who had arrived that day.

"The mine—was anyone killed?" cried Hernando. And Madiero answered them, "Yes, Don Francisco and a dozen Indians." They listened breathlessly to his story. Luckily at that hour in the evening there were few men in the mine, but by chance the Don himself had been there when the great rock crashed down with its attending avalanche of earth and stones, and the whole front of the cliff caved in. There was no use attempting to move the rock this time. Imbedded in earth, the centre of a great mass of debris, it could not have been moved in a month.

"It was the judgment of God," said the Padre, as he talked the matter over with Don Antonio," and though it happened in such a fearful manner, I rejoice that the Indians are freed from their slavery at last."

"Let it be so," said Mediero. "My friend willed the mine to me; but it will never be re-opened. Even if I cared to do so, it would be an almost impossible task."

Next day the soldiers marched north to meet the Aztes. The old priest watched them go; then turned and looked at the straggling huts of the Indians. No longer need they toil at the back-breaking work in the mine. Now they could return to their little farms, and he could teach them without interruption the gentle ways of Christianity.

In time he made them an honorable, industrious people, who very seldom lie. And that is why there must be some truth in their legend of the secret of the mountain top, that often-told tale of the gold-clad men of the lost city of Boies.

—Sakoose, 23.