

IN BOHEMIA.

I came between the glad green hills Whereon the summer sunshine lay, And all the world was old that day, As when the Spring's soft laughter thrills...

I came between the sad green hills, Whereon the summer twilight lay, And all the world was old that day, And hoary age forgot the thrills...

-Louise Chandler Moulton, in Scribner's Magazine.

FINDING THE "ALBIA."

"That it is! I've spent a month sarchin' it, an' more money than I could save in six. I've toiled up an' down that gulch till my eyes is blinded with the 'tarnal rocks. All kinds, jest a stickin' out, to ketch the sun, 'ceptin' this kind as is wanted, an' is a hidin' somewhere. I gives it up. An' of any other feller ken fin' it, he's welcome, says Ned Clark!"

As he spoke, he threw upon the counter a bit of rock, looking sullenly at it, while, one by one, the group of men around the great stove in the middle of the store came up and examined the small piece of beautiful red quartz with gold fairly studding it.

No one made a comment, each laying it down with a shrug of the shoulders, until it had passed through every hand in the store except a young fellow, who, the first to leave the stove, had stood silent until the men were back in their comfortable quarters near the fire and the rock on the counter.

Then he approached, took it up, saying slowly as if thinking aloud: "It is the first pure red quartz I've seen in the camp."

"Oh, is it?" Ned Clark's voice mocked the quiet words, and Ned Clark's ruddy face was full of open contempt.

The young fellow did not answer, gave no evidence of having heard, just kept on steadily looking at the quartz.

After a few moments' silence Ned grew impatient. "Well, why don't you speak?" he asked.

"I have nothing I wish to say," answered the other. His fair unbearded face looked out of place among the sunburnt, heavily bearded men, who, expecting amusement "in Ned chaffin' the youngster," stopped all conversation to listen.

"Oh!" sneered Ned, "p'raps that's suthin yer wish ter do?" And spreading out his chest, he laughed sarcastically at the stripping, who, with the slenderness of youth and of delicate build, appeared a child in contrast with him.

"Yes, there is something I wish to do. I wish to look for the ledge that rock came from." His voice was quiet and firm, his hat well back on his bright hair, snowing how very fair and young he was. Yet there was no lack of manliness, for he looked unflinchingly back at the brawny fellow trying to provoke his anger.

"Yer wants ter fin' that ledge? Yer wants ter fin' it, does yer? Yer wants the moon, too! I spec's yer'd cry for the sun," sneered Clark.

"My wants are nothing to you, Ned Clark." The young fellow's face was red now with anger. "You said any one could try who wanted to. And I mean to try. You have no right to these mountains! You can't locate a ledge before you find it. Keep yer bit of rock," he tossed it back on the counter. "I have eyes, and can remember what I've seen."

"Oh, yer hez eyes, hez yer? Rale purty eyes, too! An' a face like a gal's with a soft, white skin! It's a pity yer mother didn't keep yer at home, 'stead of lettin' yer run over these mountains o' Nevada a-spillin' yer beauty!"

"We can't help our faces, but we can our manners, and if you dare speak of my mother again, I'll strike you in the mouth!" said the young fellow.

"Oh! yer'll strike, will yer? That!" Ned Clark threw out his fist with a force that would have levelled George Elmair, but he was prepared. A quick side step, and the blow fell harmless. No, so the well directed one on Ned's great chest, which in place of angering, pleased him. "Ha, ha!" he shouted; "George Elmair, yer hez knocked the devil out o' me. When I see yer a-pekkin' at that rock, I felt that contempt for yer, as I would feel for a gal masqueradin' in pants! But, blame me, if yer ain't a boy—and a fust class one, too! Here's my han', an' honest one though rough. Take the rock, lad, an' ef yer fin' it, dem me ef that'll be a man in camp as'll be readier ter say hooray than Ned Clark!"

George returned Ned's grip with one as hearty, and then, without a word to the men about the stove, went out, taking the trail across the low hill that led to the "dug out" in the rocks where he was "cabinning."

He was a boy and a young one, not having yet reached his majority; but he had had a painful spot in his life that, but for his mother, might have blighted all the years he had to live. The mention of his mother's name before the crowd of rough men, had set his heart throbbing, his lips trembling. And here, in the darkness, leaving behind him the light of the store and the twinkling candles in cabin windows, the tears came out.

They ran down his cheeks as he whispered: "I'm a baby, and a girl. But how I do love her! I was thinking of her, almost in despair tonight, as I sat in the store, only because I had no money to waste for candles and firewood. And when that man brought in the rock it seemed to me God had sent him—if God ever does send help to a fellow! he continued, sadly.

For he was almost in despair. The blight from which his mother had rescued him had fallen upon him through his own fault, and she, to save him, had paid all she had. "The only son of a widow." Words so simple and full of pathos that they have come down to us through ages, carrying with them the history of two lives. And this widow, this only son, were as dear to each other, as necessary, as ever had been those others in the scriptural story.

She had been too unselfish, this widowed mother; and he, such a bright, affectionate, wilful boy, that while really needing greatest control, he had seemed not to require any.

Study came easy to him; success was a right. A college education, and then a profession! This was the mother's dream. Stinting herself, and keeping the stint hidden, that her boy might stand among his

peers, nor lack what they had in abundance. Just the boy to win boys' hearts and lead in manly sports, George Elmair's years in college had been one scene of triumph, until at last, at the very close, with honors still warm on his brow, he did, what other boys had done before, and what, alas! they will hereafter do—"he went on a spree."

Went on the spree with some other fellows, full as merry, but not so innocent as he. And for the result—not only aching head and limbs, but papers forged!

How it happened he knew not, having no memory beyond the hour of drunken merriment, until after three days' searching his mother found him in bed, in a strange hotel, his companions fled, and under his pillow the notes that had been advertised.

An hour of agony, an explanation that was no explanation, and then, with a prayer to the God of the fatherless, just as George was, his mother bade him dress and come with her to the banker's office. Pausing first at her own bank, and drawing out every cent, she hurried on, her feet not seeming quick enough to carry her to save her boy from dishonor. With her hand on George's arm, and in her bosom the book containing her little all—the all that stood between her and destitution—went that mother to the rich man's office, asking admission.

Treated most curtly, yet she had laid down her money and stated her mission. At first the offer was refused, prosecution threatened, but she pleaded as a mother can; then, as an intelligent woman, she stated the many points in the boy's favor, and the slight case that could be made against him, that his only proof of guilt lay in the unconscious possession of notes which she herself had found. The rich man finally considered, and, with the mother's thanks, accepted her money, opened the door for her, and let her pass out, penniless, into the world.

There followed days of agony for George—days when, between him and the despair of his young heart, stood his mother, like the angel he had called her, telling him that suicide was cowardice, that she believed in his manhood, and looked to his future as her sole hope.

Then, with the rashness of youth, he asserted that if a future was possible for him, he must find it out in the West, among a nobler class than in the eastern cities, where friend was synonym with traitor.

The young fellow was so nearly broken-hearted that the mother yielded, sold her watch and every trinket saved from the wreck of past prosperity, and sent him off loaded with her blessings and her love.

He knew she had obtained a position as teacher, but he did not know her last cent was in his pocket, and that the only bit of gold she owned was her wedding ring.

He knew she would be lonely for him, but he did not know that under her smile at parting her heart cried out in agony for her only child.

No, he did not know this, nor what she would feel, when far away from her the westward-bound train bore him and his bright hopes. He only knew that he would soon be back to her with a fortune, like every fellow did who went West. This was George Elmair's firm belief, when from a forlorn little station on the P. R. he took the stage to the great camp of Bellaire.

The miners in their flannel shirts, and pants tucked in boots, who sat with him on the stage, which, more properly defined, was an old-fashioned "buckboard," gave him no more attention than a passing look. "A boy like a gal, wild a skin like a baby's. Wonder what he's doin' here!" said one brawny fellow, who had nothing of his babyhood about him—not a relic of its purity to judge from his broad jokes, at which his companions laughed, sometimes clapping him on the back with, "Wal, Ned Clark, but yer is good company." "I flatter myself better'n a baby who's nigh ter cryin' fer his mammy," Ned Clark shouted, as the horses ran down a little gulch, jostling the occupants of the stage together. These loud words reached George Elmair's ears, and made him conscious that the sense of desolation in his heart had somehow, despite his self control, sent its expression to his face.

He turned his head away, pressed his lips together, wondered if man was the animal who most delighted to oppress his kind, and then, determining to give no further cause for jokes to the man called "Ned Clark," began to observe more and think less. The country through which they were rapidly riding seemed a desert to him, with its light, sandy soil raising even in clouds, and the heavy sagebrush losing even its grayish semblance to green, as the dust settled upon it. The bushes, though, sent up a pungent and rather pleasant odor, and the soil was capable of cultivation, as was evidenced by the large fields of grain, and fine potato vines which called "ranches," were found at every streamlet.

What a relief these "babbling brooks" were to the hungry valley, that swallowed them up within its sandy depths!

How they spoke of cool and shady nooks as they ran down from the great, pine-clad mountains, that with their snowy crests sent out here and there a great "boulder" to "show formation," which, since the miners had ceased laughing at him, seemed their only topic of conversation!

The stage stopped at each of the "ranches," its passengers apparently well known to the "fellers," who would leave whatever they were about, "jest ter give yer a shake, Ned," they said to the ruddy-faced, broad-chested man. "Ned" seemed a hero in these parts, but George, concluding he had done something remarkable, was soon undeceived by a young girl—the first stranger to be pleased with him. She ran out to the buckboard with a glass of milk as he sat waiting.

"Mother sez as she'll be glad ter hev yer take this; it's so awfu dusty ter day," she said, holding out the milk.

"Thank you." He gratefully accepted the courtesy.

Then she continued in the perfect frankness common to the West: "I say, ef yer is a stranger to these parts, and hain't got no frien's, yer'd better make up ter Ned Clark. He's orful good ef he has a mind, an' mighty mean ef he ain't. Why, he's jest skinned a greenhorn out o' a lot o' money, jest for a lark! An' then—with a laugh, as if she was telling a good joke—"jest took all these fellows down ter California! Now money's all gone, Ned's back. So ef yer hez spar' cash, jest look out. An' ef yer is dead broke, tell Ned; he'll help yer."

The girl—and a pretty girl, too—told the story with such evident relish, such perfect ignorance of any wrong on Ned's

part, that the free, generous, wild West George had been dreaming of began to seem a place where man sinned and erred, the same as in eastern cities, but without shame or hypocrisy to hide his wrong.

The great mountains were, however, great; they grew awful in their grandeur as the stage, after rushing down a road so precipitous that George felt exultation from the very danger, drew up at a store where several men lounging roused themselves into something like life, when one exclaimed: "Ned Clark, I'll be derned!"

"Yes, Ned Clark," called out this distinguished son of the camp, with a voice that, despite George's great inclination to fight him, had a pleasant ring in it. "Ned Clark, an' 'dead broke.' Ha, ha!" he laughed. "California's the place to scatter yer cash; but dem me ef fellow made a bow to the few poor cabins that were all of the 'great camp of Bellaire,' as the newspapers had called it—'jest dem me ef Bellaire ain't the place to pick it up!" He struck one hand into the other, looked around to see who would negative his remark, and, finding himself the admired centre of a ring of fellows with slouch hats and canvas pants, laughed once more his "Ha, ha!"

George Elmair, in his eastern-cut clothes, with his college elegance showing itself even more than his surprise at the scene before him, was bitterly smiling at his thoughts. Was this to be the scene of his success. How was he to make headway against such rudeness, such roughness? He did not understand that, rude and rough as the men were, had they known of his poverty and his difficulties hardly one in the group, including Ned Clark himself, but would have extended his hand, and calling him "pard," have offered him a share of the best he had.

But they did not know this, and quickly finding out he was no capitalist for whom they could "salt a mine," they concluded he felt himself about them, and they hated him for his reserved dignity.

"He's a settin' hisself above us," the loungers in the store said to one another, and so the phrase spread to the whole camp; even the girls—pretty ones, too, grow up in the mountains—turned up their noses as he passed and to fro gulches seeking work. Had the men been friendly things would have been easy, and an experienced miner soon have given him practical lessons. But as it was, work was hard to get. The gravel, as was called the great boulders of rock, with their cement of sand and small stones, was not easy for an inexperienced miner to move. And although George Elmair swung the pick, bringing its point down in better position each day; though, with his hands unused to labor, he left the mark of his blood on the hard wooden handles, and worked the small rockers until the gold was caught in the riffles, and his flesh seared with many a deep cut the water leaves as its complications; he could not pay the high prices for meals at the "restaurant," nor the lodging house charge for a very hard bed.

So he withdrew more and more into himself, found an unused "dug out" in the mountains for a cabin, and buying a sack of flour and a side of bacon with his last silver, bravely started "cabinning" for himself.

If he had had a companion to share his hardship, he could have made light of them; but he was alone, and a lonely laugh brought forth fearful echoes from that hole in the rocks.

The contempt the miners felt for his "education and handsome face," he returned for their "roughness, gambling and drinking"; and though his letters to his mother were full of cheerfulness he loathed openly committed sins of the mountain camp, feeling with a shudder that from just such, under a velvet covering, his mother had rescued him.

Mother! It was the thought of her that kept him from despair, kept him from tossing his young life as a worthless gift back to his Creator. What brave letters she wrote! How she believed in him! He must repay her. So he struggled on against want and disappointment, until that cold evening, shivering in his "dug-out," he had gone to the store, had seen the red rock, and resolved to find the ledge.

George's pluck in hitting Ned had delighted more than the great fellow himself.

"Here, lad; here's luck! Drink w' us ter yer findin' the red ledge," had called out several voices. And even though the lad refused, the miners had all drunk to him, wiping their mouths with the backs of their hands, and calling him "derned plucky."

He was plucky, starting out the next morning, walking up the gulch, keeping up the gulch, keeping his eyes earthward, picking up bits of the red quartz, which in mining parlance is called "float." These mining parlance is called "float." These mining parlance is called "float." These mining parlance is called "float." These mining parlance is called "float." These mining parlance is called "float."

"floats" persistently stopped at the foot of one great bald peak, whose only ornament was a dead cedar, which had gained for it the sobriquet of "Injun's Arrow." For its tall, sharp spire struck out against the sky like a giant's sharpened weapon. Nothing had ever been found on this bald peak; not even a boulder broke its smooth surface nor wild flowers, which, during spring and early summer, cover these mountains. Alone, with its "Injun's Arrow," the head stood for centuries.

"It is nothing but country earth, the wash of some waves millions of years ago, when these valleys were great seas," said George to himself, adding the miners' beliefs to his own theories.

So he passed the bold peak, searching still farther up the gulch for the bits of red float.

None could be found.

"Well, I'll try here, for it's nowhere else," he said, and began the ascent toward "Injun's Arrow."

He had walked a good distance, slipping, falling and pulling himself up, before a bit of the red rock greeted his eyes, when, suddenly, after a backward look where the valley hung with the morning's mist, seemed the land of plenty and not a sandy waste, he started forward again, and just at his feet a great piece of the rock he was searching lay before him.

He picked it up with a cry of joy. He had not felt so glad since, as "stroke," his crew had won the college race.

For he was on the right track. He knew it, and he would persevere.

He kept his resolution, though day after day he would spend hours in searching, and then, after "packing"—the western term for carrying—whole sacks of rock down to the spring, only tiny bits of the red quartz would reward his labors.

His money was gone, his food was scarce,

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his strength failed fast; yet, panting, exhausted, on he toiled. The whole camp grew interested in him. The men betted on him, some even speculated whether it would "jest be neighbor like to offer him a loan," but his proud bearing and reserve made them "kinder shamed."

One day the maddest desire for liquor came to him. He felt if he had but one drink to warm him he would be able to find the ledge. But then the mother who loved him rose in his thoughts; and weak, shivering, wearied, he started once more up the bald peak.

It was so high, there was no other peak above it. It was so steep George Elmair staggered under the small prospecting pick with its hammer on one side, his only weapon in this battle for success.

"I'll reach that arrow today," he said. "I'll reach it if it be only to die by it." And then he said "mother!" with a sob.

Then he was silent, searching in the loose earth for those specks of red quartz.

Midday found him near the "Injun's Arrow," but perfectly exhausted; so exhausted that he fell on his face, and at the same time into a heavy, trance-like sleep. He woke with a shiver. He had dreamed his mother was calling, and he could not find her; yet the sleep strengthened him, for he saw the great dead cedar tree, and said, "I'll reach you now." Then his head grew light; he began to laugh at money and its power. He began to fancy himself a king. A king! He would at least have a fire to die by. Pulling off some of the cedar bark which still clung to the stump of the "Arrow," he lit it, and soon had a blaze worthy of a king. As the warmth cheered him he grew more master of himself. The glorious view of mountain after mountain range, the wide valley with its sage-bush looking like verdure, the sky with wonderful pellucid blue, and great clouds moving in majestic grandeur; and the air, the invigorating breath of God it seemed, as George's strength temporarily returned. Yes; Nevada was a glorious country.

The fire blazed on, crackling and sending out its starry sparks like beacons to welcome wanderers, and still George dreamed.

Presently his heart gaved a great leap; he caught his breath: "Was he really mad, or was that—that rock there, just under the burnt cedar, his ledge?"

A moment more he was on his feet, swinging his pick, and hitting at that boulder with a giant's strength. Great pieces flew off, but the boulder was firm, it was no float. It was the ledge and—filled with gold!

"I proclaim thee 'Albia,' for my mother," shouted the young fellow, half crazed with joy.

Then he built up the little piles of rocks called "monuments," and "located" his find, proclaiming in his notice to whoever might chance that way that George Elmair had located this gold bearing ledge, which shall be known as the Albia. That he claimed 1500 feet north and south, 600 feet east and west, with all the dips and spurs, and all the advantages the mining laws of Nevada allowed.

Then he added dates, put the paper notice between the rocks, and rushing down the mountain side, burst into the store with: "I've found the ledge."

The men gathered around him; Ned Clark gave him "a thousand jest down" for one-third, and he sent for his mother.

Bellaire, however, did not seem a lonely place to her when she saw her boy's glad face, and knew he had achieved success. Yes, he had succeeded in more than finding a fortune, for he had conquered himself.

-Belgravia.

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