

McCLURE'S

Edited by Herbert Kaufman

AUGUST
1920



*Wallace Irwin
Edna Ferber
Zane Grey
Eleanor Hallowell Abbott
Harvey O'Higgins
Perceval Gibbon*

Has the
Direct Primary
Made Good?

25¢

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Neysa McMein

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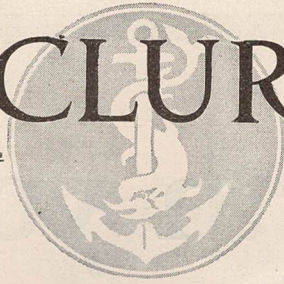
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Volume 52
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Published Monthly. Entered as Second-Class Matter, February 19, 1917, at the Post Office at New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Entered as Second-Class Matter at the Post Office Department, Canada. Entered at Stationer's Hall, London. Copyright, 1920, by McClure's Magazine, Incorporated, New York, 25 West 44th Street, New York. All dramatic, moving picture, and other reproduction rights reserved. Subscription terms: In the United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, and American Possessions, \$3.00 per year. In all other countries in the Postal Union, \$4.00 per year. An order blank with the magazine is notice that your subscription has expired. The Editor assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts, but he will use all due care while they are in his hands.

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Zane Grey's Greatest Novel

The Wanderer of the Wasteland

A Pageant of the Old Frontiers

Illustrations by W. Herbert Dunton

ADAM LAREY and his brother Guerd started West, after the death of their mother, to make their fortune. Guerd, the elder, was selfish, domineering, inclined to be dissolute. Adam, the younger, was just the opposite and, of course, there was a quarrel. After a scene over a gambling game and bitter words over a woman Adam left to go on his own. At Picacho he found work and friends, among them a Spanish girl, Margarita, who fascinated him. But Guerd overtook him, stole the girl's affection, the brothers again quarreled, and Adam, heartsick, plunges off into the mesquites.

THAT night in the dead late hours Adam suddenly awoke. He sat up, startled. If he had dreamed of violence or peril no remembrance of either remained in his consciousness. Instinctively he listened.

The night seemed the same as all the desert nights — dark and cool under the mesquites — the same dead, unbroken silence. And like a grave was the village behind his camp. But something had pierced his slumbers, and as he pondered deeply, there seemed to come out of the vagueness beyond that impenetrable wall of sleep a voice, a cry, a whisper. Had Margarita, sleeping or waking, called to him? The feeling of an intangible cry or whisper haunted him till he fell asleep again.

When Adam awoke late, in the light of the sunny morning, unrealities of the night dispersed like the gray shadows, and vanished. He arose eager, vigorous. The day was Sunday. Another idle wait, fruitful of brooding moods! Circumstances did not fall in his favor. But he vowed he would not go to the willow-brakes, there to hide from Guerd and Collishaw. Let them do their worst! He would go up to Picacho and gamble and drink with the rest of the drifters. Merryvale's words of desert-learned wisdom rang through Adam's head. As for Margarita, all Adam wanted was one more look at her face, into her dusky eyes.

At breakfast Arallanes presented a thoughtful and forbidding appearance, although this demeanor was somewhat softened by the few times he broke silence. The *Señora's* impassive serenity lacked its usual kindness, and her lowered eyes kept their secrets. Margarita had not yet arisen.

After breakfast he went out to stroll along the river bank and then around the village. He ascertained from Merryvale that Collishaw, Guerd, and their associates had found lodgings at different houses for the night, and after breakfast had left for the mining-camp. As usual, Merryvale spoke pointedly: "Your brother said they were goin' to clear out the camp. An' I reckon he didn't mean greasers, but whiskey an' gold. Son, you stay away from Picacho to-day."

For once, however, the kind old man's advice fell upon deaf ears. Adam had to fight his impatience to be off up the canyon; and only a driving need to see Margarita held him there. He walked from village to river, and back again. By and by he espied Arallanes and his wife, with their friends, parading toward the little adobe church. Margarita was not with them.

Adam waited a little while, hoping to see her appear. He did not analyze his strong hope that she would go to church this Sunday as usual. But as no sign of her was forthcoming he strode down to the little brown house and entered at the open door.

"Margarita!" he called. No answer broke the quiet. His second call, however, brought her from her room, a dragging figure with a pale face that Adam had never before seen pale.



From the top of the first rocky slope Adam gazed back fearfully. Yes—men were pursuing him. "They can't trail me here," he whispered hoarsely

mute. It betrayed her. What had been the dalliance of yesterday, playful and passionate in its wild youth, through the night had become dishonor.

"Lift your face — higher," said Adam, hoarsely, as he put out a shaking hand to touch her. But he could not touch her. She did lift it and looked at him, denying nothing, still unashamed. But now there was soul in that face. Adam felt it limned on

his memory forever — the stark naked truth of her frailty. Terrible was it for Adam to realize that if she had been given that choice again she would have decided differently. But it was too late.

"Adios, *Señorita*," he said, bowing, and backed out of the door. He stopped, and the small pale face with its tragic eyes, straining, unutterably eloquent of wrong to him and to herself, passed slowly out of his sight.

Swiftly Adam strode up the canyon, his fierce energy in keeping with his thought. He overtook the Irishman, Regan, who accosted him.

"Hullo, Wansfell, ould frind," he called, gaily. "Don't yez walk so dom fast."

"Wansfell! — Why do you call me that?" asked Adam. How curiously the name struck his ear!

"Ain't that your noime?"

"No, it's not."

"*Señor Ad — dam*," she faltered.

The look of her, and that voice, stung Adam out of the gentleness habitual with him. Leaping at her, he dragged her into the light of the door. She cried out in a fear that shocked him. When he let go of her, abrupt and sharp in his motions, she threw up her arms as if to ward off attack.

"Do you think I would hurt you?" he cried, harshly. "No, Margarita! I only wanted to see you — just once more."

She dropped her arms and raised her face. Then Adam, keen in that poignant moment, saw in her the passing of an actual fear of death. It struck him

"Wall, all right. Will yez hev a dhrink?" Regan produced a brown bottle and handed it to Adam.

"Thanks, I will," said Adam, and he tipped the bottle to his lips. The raw spirits seared like fire, seemingly burning out the oppressed condition within his breast.

They walked on up the canyon. Regan with his short stunted legs being hard put to it to keep up with Adam's long strides. The Irishman would attach himself to Adam, that was evident; and he was a most talkative and friendly fellow. Whenever he got out of breath he halted to draw out the bottle. The liquor in an ordinary hour would have befuddled Adam's wits, but now it only heated his blood.

"Wansfell, if yez ain't the domdest foineest young feller in these diggin's!" ejaculated Regan.

"Thank you, friend. But don't call me that queer name. My name is Adam."

"A-dom?" echoed Regan. "Phwat a hell of a noime! Adom an' Eve, huh? — I seen yez with thot black-eyed wench. She's purty, an' I loike your taste. . . . Pard, I'm a-goin' to foind a gurl fer meself. Not one of thim painted loidies by a dom sight. But a girl thet's a looker an' phwat can take care of me. B'gorra, I'm shakin' the gold dust of this Picacho from me fate."

"I'm leaving, too, Regan," said Adam.

"Foine, Adom. Let's dhrink on thet; we'll go to-gether," replied the Irishman, with great enthusiasm.

They finished the contents of the bottle and proceeded on their way. Regan waxed warmer in his regard for Adam and launched forth a strong argument in favor of their going on a prospecting trip. And here it developed that Regan was not quite drunk, for all his loquaciousness.

"Yez would make a foine prospector an' pard," he said. "Young an' big an' husky, an' no dom fool! I've hed me eye on you fer weeks. I'm an ole prospector an' I know this desert from Death Valley to Sonora. Thar's gold, pard, all over. But gold ain't all. It's the min-in'-camps thet take a mon's money an' health an' loife. Out on the desert yez are free an' happy, b'gorra! No place loike the desert, pard, whin yez come to know it! Phwat do you say? Mebbe we'll hev the luck to foind Peg-leg Smith's lost gold mine."

"**W**HO was Peg-leg Smith and what gold mine did he lose?" queried Adam.

Then they plodded on up the canyon, trying to keep to the shady strips and out of the hot sun. Adam heard for a second time the story of the famous lost gold mine. Regan told it differently, perhaps exaggerating after the manner of prospectors. But the story was impelling to any man with adventurous blood in his veins. The lure of gold had not yet obsessed Adam, but he had begun to feel the lure of the desert.

"Regan, suppose we should happen to find Peg-leg's mine. What would you do with your share?" inquired Adam.

"B'gorra, I'd sell out fer a few hundred thousand. Phwat's money to me! An' I'd go to 'Frisco, an' buy iviry dom thing I loiked. I'd buy the foineest dom feather-bed in the foineest hotel, an' I'd hev a room full of soft boots, an' I'd lay in thot bed fer a week hevin' the waitors comin' wid dhrinks an' grub till I busted. Then I'd go to Noo York an' do the same job over, only I'd hev some of thim acktresses foightin' fer me favor and me smoiles. B'gorra, it'd be grand!"

"Would you get married?" asked Adam.

"Me! I should smoile not!"

"Well, when the money was all spent what would you do then?"

"Frind, I'd come back to the desert an' be dom sorry it wasn't sooner."

Adam concluded that under happier circumstances this Regan would be a man well worth cultivating in spite of his love for the bottle. They reached the camp about noon, had a lunch at the stand of a Chinaman, and then entering the saloon they mingled with the crowd, where Adam soon became separated from Regan. Manifestly it was a big day at Picacho. Liquor flowed like water, and gold thudded in sacks and clinked musically in coins upon the tables. Adam had one drink and that incited him to take another.

Again the throb and burn of his blood warmed out the coldness and bitterness of his mood. Deliberately he drank and deliberately he stifled the voice of conscience until he was in a reckless and dangerous frame of mind. There seemed to be a fire consuming him now, to which liquor was only fuel.

He swaggered through the crowded hall, and for once the drunken miners, the painted hags, the cold-faced gamblers did not disgust him. He reveled in the scene. The smell of rum and smoke, the feel of the thick sand under his feet, the sight of the motley crowd of shirt-sleeved and booted men, the discordant din of music, glasses, gold, and voices — all these sensations struck him full and intimately with their proof that he was a part of this wild assembly of free adventurers. He remembered again Merryvale's idea of a man equipped to cope with this lawless gang and hold his own. Another force impelled Adam, a powerful thing, more feeling than will. And it was a conscious motive that he did not question. But suddenly when he espied his brother Guerd he shook with the driving passion that had led him there.

Guerd sat at table, gambling with Collishaw, and Mackay and other men of Picacho well known to Adam. Moreover, all his acquaintances except Arallanes and Merryvale were watching that game, evidently one of high stakes. Guerd looked the worse for liquor and bad luck. When he glanced up to see Adam, a light gleamed across his hot face. He dropped his cards, and as Adam stepped near he rose from the table and in two strides

confronted him, arrogant, menacing, with the manner of a man dangerous to cross. Adam's nerve quailed, and might have weakened, but for that false inspiring of drink-fired blood.

"I want money," demanded Guerd.

Adam laughed in his face.

"Go to work. You're not slick enough with the cards to hide your tricks," replied Adam, in deliberate scorn.

Temper, and not forethought, actuated Guerd then. He slapped Adam, with the moderate force of an older brother punishing an impertinence. Swift and hard Adam returned that blow, staggering Guerd, who fell against the table, but was upheld by Collishaw. He uttered a loud and piercing cry.

Sharply the din ceased. The crowd slid back over the sand, leaving Adam in the center of a wide space, confronting Guerd, who still leaned against Collishaw. Guerd panted for breath. His hot face turned white except for the red place where Adam's fist had struck. Mackay righted the table, then hurriedly drew back. Guerd's fury of astonishment passed to stronger controlled passion. He rose from Collishaw's hold and seemed to tower magnificently. He had the terrible look of a man who had waited years for this moment of revenge.

"You hit me! — I'll beat you for that — I'll smash your face!" he said, stridently.

"Come on!" cried Adam.

At this instant the Irishman, Regan, staggered out of the crowd into the open circle. He was drunk.

"Sic 'em, Wansfell, sic 'em!" he bawled. "I'm wid yez! We'll lick thot — loidy face — an' ivery dom —"

Some miner reached out a long arm and dragged Regan back.

Guerd Larey leaned over to pound with his fist on the table. A leaping glow radiated from his face, as if a genius of hate had inspired some word or speech that Adam must find insupportable. His look let loose a bursting gush of blood through Adam's throbbing veins. This was no situation built on a quarrel or a jealous rivalry. It was backed by years, and by some secret not easily to be divined, though its source was the very soul of Cain.

"So that's your game!" declared Guerd, with ringing passion. "You want to fight and you make this debt of yours a pretense. But I'm on to you! It's because of the girl I took from you!"

"Shut up! Have you no sense of decency? Can't you be half a man?" burst out Adam, beginning to shake.

Guerd only laughed. "Listen to Old Goody-Goody! . . . Mother's nice boy —"

"By heaven, Guerd Larey, if you speak of my — my mother — here — I'll tear out your tongue!"

They were close together now, with only the table between them — Cain and Abel — the old bitter story plain in the hate of one flashing face and the agony of the other. Guerd Larey had divined the means to torture and to crucify this brother whose heart and soul were raw.

"Talk about the fall of St. Anthony!" cried Guerd, with a voice magical in its steely joy. "Never was there a fall like Adam Larey's — the Sunday school boy — too sweet — too innocent — too pure to touch the hand of a girl! . . . Oh, we can fight, Adam! I'll fight you. But let me talk — let me tell my friends what a damned hypocrite you are . . . Gentlemen, behold the immaculate Saint

Adam whose Eve was a little greaser girl!" There was no shout of mirth. The hall held a low breathing silence. It was a new scene, a diversion for the gamblers and miners and their painted consorts, a clash of different kind and spirit. Guerd paused to catch his breath, and evidently to gather supreme passion for the delivery of what seemed more to him than life itself. His face was marble white, quivering and straining.

Adam saw the living visible proof of a hate he had long divined. The magnificence of Guerd's passion, the terrible reality of his hate, the imminence of a mortal blow, locked Adam's lips and jaws as in a vise, while a gathering fury, as terrible as Guerd's hate, flooded and dammed at the gates of his energy, ready to break out in destroying violence.

"She told me!" Guerd flung the words like



Purple Patchwork

by Amélie Rives

Decoration by Coulton Waugh

I have made for myself a marvelous coverlet
To cover my bed with on white nights,—
A coverlet of unique and mystical potency
Wrought of purple patches
From the mantles of the most royal poets.

All the white nights until sleep comes
I wander in waking dreams
Through arabesques of imperial phrases
As through festoons of magical purple morn-
ing-glories
That centuries of snow and sunlight
Have not been able to wither.



"You needn't bluff it out with your damned lying white face — She told me . . . You — you, Adam Larey, with your pure thoughts and lofty ideals — the rest of them! — You — damn your milk-sop soul — you were the mate of a dirty little greaser girl who looked you, laughed in your face — left me for me — for me at the snap of my fingers. . . . And, by God, my cup would be full — if your mother could only know —"

It was Collishaw's swift hand that knocked up Adam's flinging arm and the gun spouted red and boomed heavily. Collishaw grappled with him — was flung off — and then Guerd lunged in close to save himself. A writhing, wrestling struggle — quick, terrible — then the gun boomed with muffled report — and Guerd Larey, uttering a cry of agony, fell away from Adam, backward over the table. His gaze, conscious, appalling, was fixed on Adam. A dark crimson spot stained his white shirt. Then he lay there with fading eyes — the beauty and radiance and hate of his face slowly shading.

COLLISHAW leaned over him. Then with hard grim gesture he shouted hoarsely: "Dead, by God! . . . You'll hang for this!"

A creeping horror was slowly paralyzing Adam. But at that harsh speech he leaped wildly, flinging his gun with terrific force into the sheriff's face. Like an upright stone dislodged, Collishaw fell. Then Adam, bounding forward, flung aside the men obstructing his passage, and fled out of the door.

Terror lent wings to his feet. So swiftly he flew down the broad road that persons and houses he swept by were indistinct in his sight. In a few moments he was beyond the outskirts of the camp, and like a deer he covered the hundred yards of gravelly ridge to the slow-rising rocky slope. Even here, fierce in his energy, he bounded upward, from rock to rock, until he reached the steep jumble of talus where swift progress was impossible. Then with hands and feet working in unison, as if he had been an ape, he climbed steadily.

From the top of the first rocky slope he gazed back fearfully. Yes — men were pursuing him, strung out along the road of the mining-camp; and among the last was a tall, black-coated, bare-headed man that Adam took to be Collishaw. Other men were trying to hold him back or assist him. Adam heard yells.

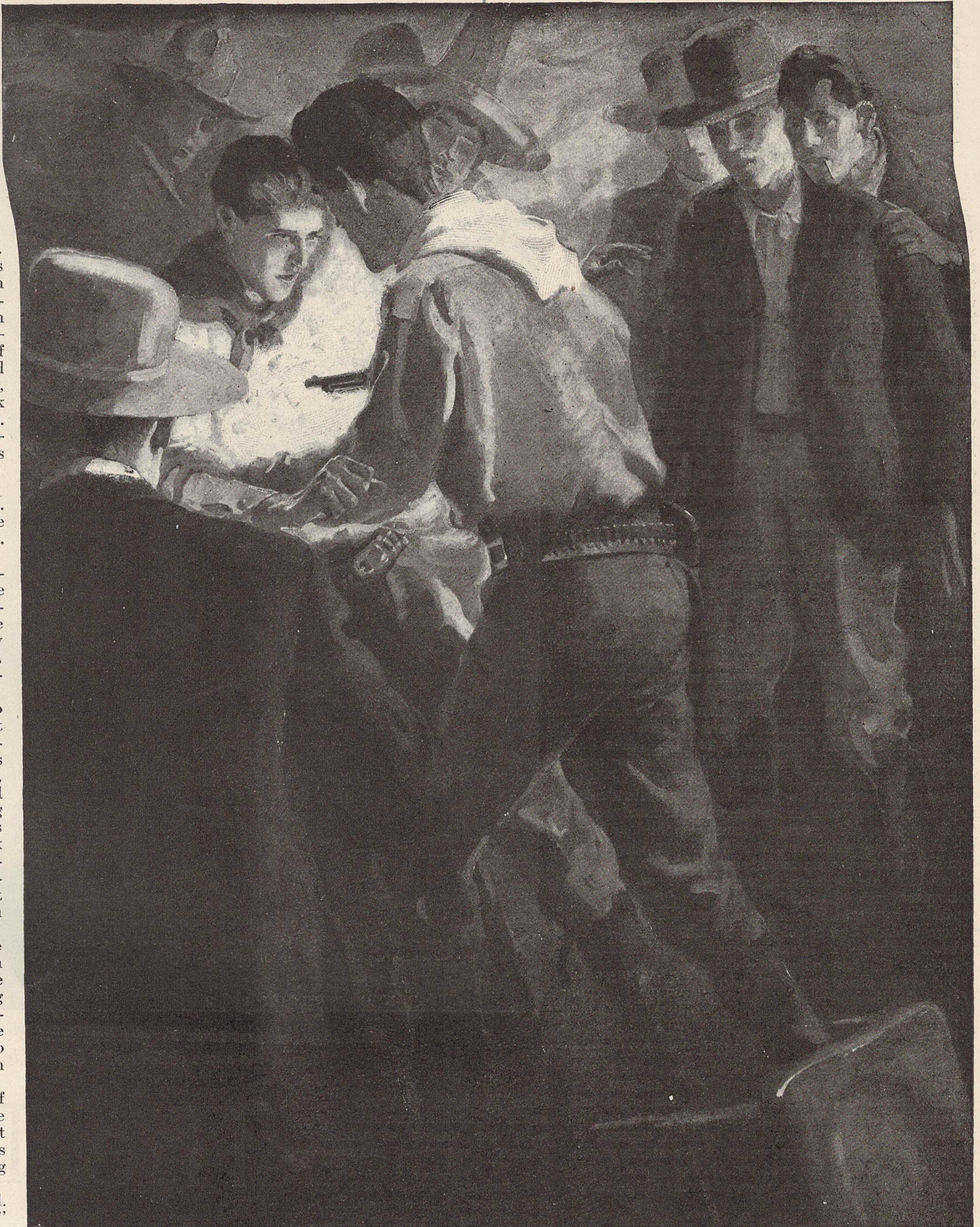
Into his mind then flashed a picture of the Mexican hanged by Collishaw to the trestle bridge. The ghastliness of that distorted purple face — Adam saw it as clearly as if the dead man were swinging before him. This fate awaited him!

"Never — never!" he panted. "They'll — not — get — me — alive!"

So he headed straight up the ascent. Picacho loomed to the right, a colossal buttress of red rock, wild and ragged and rugged. Adam, keen-sighted to select the open bare spots on the slope, the easy slides of weathered rock, climbed like a goat, sure-footed and strong. But the ascent that had looked so short and easy — how long and steep! Every shadow was a lie, every space of slope in the sunlight hid the truth of its width. Sweat poured from his hot body. He burned. His breath came in labored bursts. A painful stab in his side spread and swelled to the whole region of his breast. He could hear the mighty throb of his heart.

At last he reached the height of the slope where it ended under a wall of rock, the backbone of that ridge, bare and jagged, with no loose shale on its almost perpendicular side. Here it took hard labor of hand and foot to climb and zigzag and pull himself up. Places with precarious foothold he essayed without a misstep; and short sheer ascents he crawled up like a fly. When he surmounted that ridge to stagger out of sight of the valley below, his breath and strength left him, and he fell, gasping and blind with blood-red sight, with a splitting agony of heart.

But the convulsion was short-lived. His will power



Guerd lunged in close to save himself. A writhing, wrestling struggle — quick, terrible — then the gun boomed with muffled report — and Guerd Larey, uttering a cry of agony, fell away from Adam

was supreme and his endurance had not been permanently disabled. He crawled before he could walk, and when he recovered enough to stagger erect he plodded on, invincible in his spirit to escape.

From this height, which was a foothill of the great peak, he got his bearings. Picacho and the river were behind him to the north. Westward, toward the blazing sun, now lowering toward the ranges, rose a bewildering raggedness of barren spurs and ridges, all too desolate to sustain life. Southward over the low ranges of foothills opened a wide flat plateau, across which shone a narrow white strip, like a winding ribbon, and this was the road to Yuma. He would keep to the hills, to the rocky hidden recesses until dark, and then, taking to the road, go on to Yuma.

"They can't — trail me — here," he whispered, hoarsely, as he looked back with the eyes of a fugitive. "And — down there — I'll keep off the road."

But to reach the road before darkness set in appeared to be a harder task than any he had accomplished: and if he did not make it before night he never would.

After that brief moment of reasoning, he became once more victim to fear, and desperate passion to hurry. He had escaped; his pursuers could not see him now; he could hide; the descent was tortuous; yet these apparent facts, favorable as they were, could not save him. Adam pushed on, gaining strength as he recovered breath. After a while he lost sight of the road to Yuma. But anticipating that, he had marked his direction by a bold bronzed mountain. Everywhere along the descent he came upon holes dug by prospectors. They honey-combed the mountainsides. The farther he descended the oftener he looked back.

Then suddenly he discovered that he was facing west. He had got turned round. For an instant the control of his nerves failed, and he shook with a panic of terrors that beset him. He was lost in a baffling network of shallow ravines, no one of which apparently led in the direction of the road! And Collishaw pursued him — the sheriff that hanged men! And any moment Adam feared he might turn a corner to encounter Collishaw with his deputies. He overcame [Continued on page 69]

had been sullen, disheartened, almost hopeless of making headway against the entrenched machine of the national administration. The bugle blast from Illinois gave them new courage and fighting spirit. The Roosevelt sentiment grew daily stronger and more threatening. In states which had presidential primaries it found potent expression. It took a relentless and desperate hand to drive the wheezing Taft steam-roller over the increasing obstacles in its path.

What happened at the Chicago convention is political history. It is, perhaps, not straining the facts to say that this Illinois primary, called as an afterthought and almost over-night, was chiefly responsible for defeating and temporarily disrupting a great political party and for putting Woodrow Wilson in the White House—a minority resident, with a majority of 2,450,000 votes against him.

But in times of similar emergency, even under the old convention system, the people possessed—and used—the same power. When the Democratic national convention met in Chicago in 1892, practically every party boss was opposed to the nomination of Grover Cleveland. The delegation of his own state of New York, with David B. Hill at its head, was bitter and relentless in its opposition. The head of almost every big machine in the country was openly out for the political blood of the ex-president. With every weapon, open and secret, they fought to the literal limit of physical exhaustion to defeat him. Yet all the time there was a silent and irresistible ground swell of popular pressure in his favor. Against it the power of the bosses was nothing. They were swept away by an invisible force which they could feel, but could not measure or control. At three o'clock in the morning, in the midst of a cyclonic thunder storm, the rain pouring in floods through the leaky roof of the old Wigwam, Cleveland was triumphantly nominated.

The strongest argument in favor of the direct popular primary is that all of the old time political bosses bitterly oppose it. Only the cynic or the demagogue, however, will refuse to consider and weigh the objections which even the boss presents. And there are many men of the new order, both in public office and outside, scientific students of political methods and machinery, who have become convinced that under present conditions the direct primary is not a success.

After all the primary is merely a piece of political machinery with which we have been experimenting. May it not be the fact that we are on the right track and have not yet perfected our mechanism? Is it not possible that we have made its operation so complicated and onerous that the voter has become discouraged and stays away from the polls?

Though the table of direct primary votes printed elsewhere in this article was not compiled with that object in view, it seems to indicate that the majority of voters, for some reason, do not vote. It would be possible, with further research, to compile similar tables showing both larger and much smaller primary votes.

But it is surely time that we took stock—high time for us to make up our minds whether the charges made against the operation of the direct popular primary are justified.

The recent absurd presidential primaries taught us that, if nothing else. With these primaries fresh in mind we should be able to decide whether we are going to discard the direct primary or revamp it—make it over into workable form.

(In the foregoing article an attempt is made to give the reader an idea of the effect of the direct primary in our politics, up to the time of the recent presidential primaries. An analysis of these primaries will be published in McClure's for September, together with an outline of suggested reforms and amendments in the primary laws.)

The Wanderer of the Wasteland

[Continued from page 19]

his weakness. Facing directly away from the west he climbed to the top of a ridge. From there, he again saw far below the winding white road. His relief was immense. But this hope soon faded.

The descent here appeared to be a long even slant of broken rocks, close together like cobblestones in a street, and of a dark bronze hue. They shone as if they had been varnished.

His misgivings were soon verified. He had to descend here, for the afternoon was far gone, and whatever the labor and pain, he must reach the road before dark. At the very outset Adam slipped, and falling with both hands forward he thrust them into a cactus. The pain stung, and when he had to pull hard to free himself from the thorns, it was as if his hands had been nailed. When at last he got all the cruel spikes out of his quivering flesh he understood why prospectors hated cactus. Thereafter he proceeded with extreme caution. His hands throbbed and swelled, as if they had been stung by wasps, and at length they became numb. Once he ran a cactus spike into his knee-cap, clear to the bone, and his leg became as if paralyzed. That thorn he extracted with his teeth. Then he limped on, down the black slope.

The white road below grew closer and closer. It seemed like a shore to a shipwrecked mariner. Nothing beyond that road had significance for Adam's mind now. It was a goal.

When Adam at last reached the road, there to fall exhausted and wet and burning upon a flat rock, it seemed that he had been delivered from an inferno.

Presently he sat up to look around him. A wonderful light showed upon the world—the afterglow of sunset. Picacho bore a crown of gold. All the lower tips of ranges were purpling in shadow. Desolate, lifeless, silent—the gateway to the desert—Adam felt steal over him a sense of awe.

All at once, in a flash, he remembered his passion, his crimes, his terror, his flight. He lifted his face in the cool darkening twilight.

"Oh!—Oh!" he moaned. "What will become of me? . . . No family—no friends—no home—no hope! . . . Oh, Guerd—my brother!—His blood on my hands! . . . He ruined my life! He's killed my soul! . . ."

Oh, damn him, damn him,—he's made me a murderer!"

Adam fell face down on the rock with breaking heart. The deepening of twilight to darkness, the cold black grandeur of the great peak, the pure pale evening star that pierced the purple sky, the stupendous loneliness and silence of that solitude—all these facts seemed nature's pitiless proof of her indifference to man and his despair.

Despair and pride and fear of death, and this strange breath of life, dragged Adam up and for a mile he staggered and plodded along, half blinded by tears and choked by sobs, abject in his misery; yet even so, the something in him that was strongest of all—the instinct to survive—made him keep to the hard gravelly side of the road that his tracks might not show in the dust.

And that action of blood and muscle, because it came first in the order of energy, gradually assumed dominance of him, until again he was an escaping fugitive. The direction took care of itself, being merely a matter of keeping along the edge of the road that gleamed pale in front of him. Objects near at hand, however, had to be carefully avoided.

Some time in the night he reached a place where the road descended off the plateau. Far ahead he believed he discerned pin-points of light. Time and distance appeared not to be significant to him. When the gloom paled in the east and the sky lightened he realized the fearful dawn of another day.

Morning broke swiftly and relentlessly, a gray desert dawning. Dim columns of smoke scarce a mile away showed him that Yuma was close. Fields and cattle along the road, and then an Indian hut, warned him that he was approaching the habitations of men, and that sooner or later he would be seen. He must hide by day and travel by night. Bordering the road to his left was a dense thicket of arrow-weed, indicating that he had reached the bottomlands of the river. Into this Adam crawled like a wounded and stealthy deer. Both mind and body longed for the oblivion that came at once in sleep.

His heavy slumbers were punctuated by periods when he half awakened, drowsily aware of extreme heat, of discomfort and sluggish pain, and of vague sounds.



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Twilight had fallen when he fully awakened, stiff and sore, with a gnawing at his stomach and a parching of mouth and throat from thirst. The long hours of sleep in the dense thicket, hot under the sun, had augmented his physical needs in one way, and revived his strength in another. Sitting upright he pondered a moment. The result of his cogitation was that he had only one plan of procedure. He must avoid being seen by any one who might notice him particularly; he must quench his thirst and satisfy his hunger; he must buy a few necessities for travel and hurry away from Yuma into the wilderness of the desert.

He crawled out of the copse of arrow-weed, and stealthily proceeding to the road, he peered out and listened. No man in sight—no sound to alarm! Consciousness of relief brought bitterly home to him the fact that he was a fugitive. Taking to the road he walked rapidly in the direction of the lights.

Quite a number of dimly-lighted huts and adobe houses appeared to cluster on the long slope of the side of the river Adam was descending. He met both Mexicans and Indians who took no apparent notice of him, and this encouraged Adam to go on, at slower pace and unconcernedly. Presently he fell in with a jabbering crowd of Mexicans who were proceeding toward the river. Adam walked on just behind them, and soon ascertained that they were going to a ferry. In the darkness he made out a long boat, like a barge, black against the gleam of the water. The Mexicans walked aboard, and Adam, following them, sat down on a gunwale to be less conspicuous for his height. A ferry-man approached, and by his garb, and the jargon with which he hailed his passengers, proclaimed himself a Mexican. He did not appear to see Adam.

The boat was shoved off. Adam saw that it was fastened to a cable overhead by ropes and pulleys. The current worked it across the river. Adam got out with the rest of the passengers, and leaving them, walked down the bank a few rods. He found a little dock with a skiff moored to it, and here he lay flat and drank his fill. Then he washed his face and hands.

Next in order for him was to find a place to eat. Going back to the path which the Mexicans had taken he followed it, climbing a steep bank, to find himself in a street of Yuma. As good luck would have it he came at once upon an eating-house, or rather tent, where several rough-looking white men and some Mexicans were being served by a Chinaman. Adam took a seat on one of the benches. He learned with grim certainty that a man could eat with great relish, even if he was a victim of dread and misery.

Before he ended this meal, he had determined upon a course to take. Adam calculated that there was as much chance of Collishaw guessing he was hidden out in the mountains behind Picacho as there was that he had gotten to Yuma. He needed a gun, ammunition, canteen, burro and outfit. He set out to look for them, meaning to take the risk and get them if possible, and then under cover of night hurry out of Yuma.

A short walk brought Adam to a wide street, dimly lighted by the flare of lamps from open doors of saloons and stores. He halted in a shadow on the corner. A stream of men was passing—rugged, unshaven, dusty-booted white men, and Mexicans with their peaked sombreros and embroidered jackets and tight braided trousers. The ring of hob-nailed boots and jingling spurs and deep voices struck strangely upon Adam's ears. He liked the music, the motion, the near presence of men; and the strange quality of this pleasure rose from the thought that he could not stay there. Like a hunted fox he must take to lonely coverts. He saw Yuma Indians, exceedingly tall, wiry yet muscular men. Dusty riders were coming into town on dusty horses.

Presently Adam ventured forth and walked up the street. The town resembled Picacho in its noisiest hours, magnified many times. He felt a wildness he could not see or hear. It dragged at him. It somehow made him a part of the frontier life. He longed to escape from himself.

A glimpse of a tall man in black frock coat startled Adam. That coat reminded him of Collishaw. His common sense told him to make sure whether or not it was the sheriff, but his instinctive tendency was too violent for him to control. He sheered down a side street into the gloom. It would be better to wait till early morning, before the movements of men had begun, and then hurriedly buy what he needed and depart. At the end of this side street was a fence with a gate open.

He saw wagons and heard the munch of horses in stalls. Evidently this place was a barnyard and might afford him a safe retreat for the night. He went in. The first wagon he examined contained straw. Climbing into it he lay down, and at length he fell asleep.

When he awoke the sun was rising in red splendor and the day promised to be hot. As it was early but few people were to be encountered, and this fact lent Adam more courage. He had no difficulty in finding the place where he had eaten the night before. Adam ate as heartily as he could.

That done, he sallied forth to find a store where he could purchase the outfit he needed; and he approached the business section by a street that climbed to what was apparently the highest point in Yuma. Here he had a panoramic view of the surrounding country. To the east and south, across the muddy Colorado, wide green flats led to the foothills, and these in turn led to the red mountain ranges, so clear and sharp in the distance. Northward, beyond bottomlands of willow and cottonwood, lifted ridges and slopes of bare gray and yellow earth, the glaring steps of the desert where he must lose himself. Beyond this heave of the desert floor rose a bold black knob of a mountain, standing alone, a landmark that must have been familiar to all who knew the country.

Adam entered a store, and almost forgot himself in the interest of the purchases he wanted to make. One good thing about his situation, at least, was the fact that he had money. But it turned out that he never got as far as paying for the outfit he had selected. One of his needs was a small burro, to pack his outfit, and while the storekeeper went out to get one for Adam several Mexicans entered. One of them cried out: "Santa Maria!" and ran out, followed by his amazed comrades. It took Adam a moment to place the man, Felix! the Mexican that had drawn a knife on Arallanes!

"He was only scared," soliloquized Adam. "He'd left Picacho. He'd hardly know what happened there. . . . But I can't be sure."

Therefore Adam pondered. He must take risks to get away with this necessary outfit. The storekeeper could furnish a good burro ready to be packed at once. Adam made a deal with him for the whole outfit, and began to count out the money. The storekeeper did not wait, and gathering up an armful of Adam's purchases he carried them out through the back door. This gave Adam opportunity to have a look from the front door into the street. To the right strode Felix, gesticulating wildly—two white men Adam had seen before—and lastly, the black-coated tall form of Collishaw, significant and grim with a white bandage over his face.

A shock pierced Adam's heart, and it was followed by a terrible icy compression, and then a bursting gush of blood, a flood of fire over all his body. Leaping like a deer he bounded back through the store, and out of the door. He did not see the storekeeper. One vault took him over a high board fence into an alley, and through this he ran into a street. He headed for the river, running fleetly. Plunging down the bank he flew toward the dock, intending to cross if a boat was available, otherwise to take to the thickets of the bottomlands. Not a man was in sight. Upon reaching the dock Adam espied a skiff, with oars in place, with bow pulled up on the sand. One powerful shove sent it, with him aboard, out into the stream, and it took him only a few moments to cross. Not yet had any men appeared in pursuit. As he jumped out on the California shore of the river, and began to run north he found that he faced the lone black mountain peak which dominated the rise of the desert.

Presently he caught up with a Mexican boy riding a horse. Adam halted him, pulled him out of the saddle, threw money at him, and leaping astride, beat the horse into a gallop. The moment he realized that he had made his flight significant in this direction he deplored it. But too late! He goaded the horse into a run, soon getting out of sight of the town. Clouds of dust arose. These too would betray his flight. But now he cared only to place distance between him and Yuma. The horse was neither fast nor enduring. Within five miles he gave out. Adam left him, and took to the road on foot.

The dust was ankle-deep. It stifled him, choked him, and caked on his sweaty face and hands. He could not see far ahead or far behind.

By and by he climbed and passed out of the zone of brush. He was on the open gravel ridges.

Assured now that escape was in his grasp he began to put his mind upon other consid-



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erations of his flight. He was not such a fool as to underrate the danger of venturing out upon the desert without food, and especially without water. From a high ridge he saw the sweep of the Colorado, and farther on the green line where it wended its way along a chocolate-colored range of mountains. These mountains looked close. But were they close? Perhaps from Indians or Mexicans he might buy the necessities of travel; and if not, he knew he could manage to live in the bottomlands. These thoughts pressed hard upon him until he surmounted the long slope to the top of the desert mesa. Here he looked back.

First he saw clouds of dust puffing up from the brush-covered lowlands, and then in an open space, where the road crossed, he espied horsemen coming at a gallop. Again, and just as fiercely, did his veins seem to freeze, his blood to halt, and then to burst into flame. "Collishaw—and his men!" gasped Adam, his jaw dropping. "They've trailed me! . . . They're after me—on horses!"

The apparent fact was terrific in its stunning force. Adam reeled; his sight blurred. It was a full moment before he could rally his forces. Then, gazing keenly, he saw that his pursuers were still miles away. They could trail him swiftly in the dust of the road, but upon the gravel ridges they must slow down. He remembered Collishaw's reputation as a trailer. A one-time Texas cowboy and ranger who prided himself on his keen eye for tracks! Adam turned north, facing a glaring and endless open, and began to run.

At first he ran fleetly, with endurance apparently unimpaired, but he meant to slow down and husband his strength as soon as he dared. Before him stretched a desert floor of fine shining gravel, for what seemed hundreds of yards; and then began to appear short bunches of low meagre brush called greasewood. These multiplied and enlarged in the distance until they looked as if they would afford cover enough to hide Adam from his pursuers. But the hundreds of yards devoid of vegetation were a delusion. He ran a mile and then did not reach the first scraggy bushes.

Reaching the zone of plant life he soon placed a thin but effective barrier of greasewood and ocatilla behind him. None of his pursuers had yet appeared above the rim of the desert. Before him extended a vast hazy expanse, growing darker with accumulated growths in the distance. To the right rose the chocolate mountain range and it ran on to fade in the dim horizon. To the left rose a low faint wavering line of white, like billows of a sea. This puzzled him until at length he realized it was sand.

Adam also made the discovery that as he looked back over his shoulder he was really looking down a long gradual slope. A rather stiff wind was blowing straight at him. It retarded his progress, and little puffs of fine invisible sand irritated his eyes. The wind weighed upon him, the white sun weighed upon him. How hot the top of his head, and his face! He swallowed hard and his throat tightened. A couple of pebbles that he put into his mouth mitigated these last sensations.

INTELLIGENCE gave him pause then and he halted in his tracks. If death was relentlessly pursuing him it was no less confronting him there to the fore, if he passed on out of reach of the river. Death from thirst was preferable to capture, but Adam was not ready to die. He who had loved life clung to it all the more fiercely now that the sin of Cain branded his soul. But the sun was hotter than he had ever experienced it, and it was having a strange effect upon him. He saw the bare gray desert with its green growths slope gradually to the rugged base of the range. Somewhere between him and there ran the river. How strangely and clearly the lines of one ridge merged into the lines of another! There must be distance between them. But it could not be seen.

"Look here," panted Adam, as he halted once more. "I've been told about the desert. But I didn't pay particular attention and now I can't remember. . . . I only know it's hot—and this won't do."

It was just then that Adam, gazing back, down the gray desert, saw puffs of dust and horses.

Panic seized him. He ran directly away from his pursuers, bending low, violent, furious, heedless, like an animal in flight. And with no sense of direction, with no use of reason, he ran on till he dropped.

Then his breast seemed to split, and his heart lift with terrific pressure, agonizing and suffocating. He lay on the ground gasping. Gradually the paroxysm subsided.

He arose to go on, hot, dry, aching, dizzy, but still strong in his stride.

"I've—got—away," he said, "and now—the river—the river!"

Fear of Collishaw had been dulled. Adam could think of little besides the heat and his growing thirst, and this thing—the desert—that was so strange, so big, so menacing.

The wind was blowing sand in his face, obstructing his sight. Suddenly his feet dragged in sand. Dimly then he made out low sand dunes with hollows between, and farther on larger dunes waving and billowing on to rise to what seemed mountains of sand. Turning away he plodded on half-blinded, fighting the blast of wind that was growing stronger. The air cleared somewhat. Sand dunes were all around him, and to his right, in the direction he thought was wrong, loomed the chocolate range. He went that way and again the flying sand hid a clear view. Unwittingly he had wandered into the region of the dunes, and the strong gusty wind swept up the fine sand in sheets and clouds. He must get out. He plodded on, and the way he chose, with its intermittent views of the mountains, at last appeared to be the wrong one. So he turned again.

After a while Adam discovered that when he trudged down into the hollows between dunes he became enveloped in flying sand that forced him to cover mouth and eyes with his scarf, and go choking on; but when he climbed up over a dune the air became clearer and he could breathe easier.

Adam climbed on, growing weaker. As the heat had wrought strangely upon his blood, so the sand had dragged strength from his legs. His situation was grave, but though he felt the dread and pity of it, he feared more the instinctive reaction—the physical resistance that was growing in him. He realized that unless he somehow changed the present condition, sun and sand would overwhelm him. So when from a high knoll of sand he saw down into a large depression, miles across, where clumps of mesquites showed black against the silver, he descended toward them, and eventually reached them.

Here under a thick-foliaged mesquite he covered his face with a handkerchief, his head with his coat, and settled himself to rest and wait. It was a wise move. At once he felt by contrast what the fierce sun had been. Gradually the splitting headache subsided to a sensation that seemed to Adam like a gentle boiling of blood in his brain. He could hear it. His dry skin became a little moist; the intolerable burn left it; his heart and pulse ceased such labored throbbing; and after a time his condition was limited to less pain, and to a difficulty in breathing, and thirst.

From time to time Adam removed the coverings to look about him. The sun was westering. When it sank the wind would cease to blow and then he could find a way out of this wilderness of sand dunes. Leaning back against a low branch of the tree he stretched out, and fell asleep.

When he awoke he felt better, though half-smothered. He had rested. His body was full of dull aches but no more pain. His mouth did not appear so dry or his tongue so swollen; nevertheless the thirst remained.

Then Adam, suddenly realizing what covered his head, threw off the coat and handkerchief. And his eyes were startled by such a sight as they had never beheld—a marvelous unreality of silver sheen and black shadow, a starry tracery of labyrinthine streams on a medium as weird and beautiful and intangible as a dream.

"Oh, God! am I alive or dead?" he whispered in awe.

Night had fallen. The moon had arisen. The stars shone lustroously. The sky burned a deep rich blue. And all this unreal beauty that had mocked him was only the sculptured world of sand translating the magnificence and splendor of the heavens.

His first steps were painful, a staggering halting gait, that exercise at length worked into some semblance of his old stride.

A sense of direction prompted him to face east. He obeyed it. And he walked for what seemed hours over a moon-blanching sea of sand, to climb at last a high dune from which he saw the dark level floor of the desert, and far across the shadowy space, a black range of mountains. He thought he recognized the rugged contour, and when, sweeping his gaze southward, he saw the lone mountain looming like a dark sentinel over the desert gateway, then he was sure of his direction. Over there to the east lay the river. And he had long hours of the cool night in which to travel.

Gray dawn found him many miles closer to the mountain range. Yet it was still far and his former dread returned.

A deepening rose color over the eastern horizon appeared to be reflected upon the mountain peaks. When the blazing disk of

the sun shone over the ramparts of the east all that desert world underwent a wondrous transfiguration.

One moment Adam gave to the marvel and glory of the sunrise, and then he looked no more. That brief moment ended in a consciousness of the gravity of his flight.

"Got to reach—river soon," he muttered, thickly, "or never will!"

He was perfectly conscious of a subtle changing of his spirit. Courage diminished as fear augmented. More and more he felt the urge to hurry, and though reason warned against the folly of this, it was not strong enough to compel him to resist. Like the breath of a furnace the heat rose from the rocky, sandy soil.

His skin became as dry as dust and began to shrivel. It did not blister. The pain now came from the burn of the flesh underneath. He felt that his blood was drying up.

At last he reached the base of a low rocky ridge. It obstructed sight of the slope to the mountain range. Surely between that ridge and the slope ran the river. Surely he would soon reach the bottomlands, and the water that he must have or perish.

AS he climbed he gazed up into the coppery sky, but his hot and tired eyes could not endure the great white blaze that was the sun. Half-way up he halted to rest, and from here he had a measureless view of the desert. Then his dull brain revived to a final shock. For he seemed to see a thousand miles of green-gray barrenness, of lifting heat-veils like transparent smoke, of wastes of waved sand and ranges of upheaved rock. How terribly it confronted him! A sun-blasted world not meant for man!

Then Adam ascended to the summit of the ridge. His chocolate-hued mountain range was not far away. From his height he could see all the gray-green level of desert between him and the range. He stared. There was no river.

"Where—oh! where's—the river?" gasped Adam, mistrusting his eyesight.

But the Rio Colorado, the strange red river beloved of desert wanderers, did not flow before him—or to either side—or behind.

"God has—forsaken me!" cried Adam, in despair, and he fell upon the rocks.

But these rocks, hot as red-hot plates of iron, permitted of no contact, even in a moment of horror. Adam was burned to stagger up, to plunge and run and fall down the slope, out upon the level, to the madness that awaited him.

He must rush on to the river—to drink and drink—to bathe in the cool water that flowed down from snow-fed lakes. Thoughts about water possessed his mind—pleasant, comforting, hurrying him onward.

Suddenly Adam was startled by something blue and bright that danced low down along the desert floor. A lake! He halted with an inarticulate cry. There was a lake of blue water, glistening, exquisitely clear, with borders of green. He could not help but rush forward. The lake shimmered, thinned, shadowed, and vanished. Adam halted, and rubbing his eyes, peered hard ahead, and all around. Behind him shone a strip of blue, streaked up and down by desert plants, and it seemed to be another lake, larger, bluer, clearer, with a delicate vibrating quiver. Green shores were marvelously reflected in the blue. Adam gaped at this. Had he waded through a lake?

"Mirage!" whispered Adam, hoarsely. "Blue water!—Ha! Ha! . . . damned lie—it sha'n't fool me!"

But as clear perception failed these mirages of the desert did deceive him. All objects took on a hazy hue, tinged by the red of blood in his eyes, and they danced in the heat-veiled air. Shadows, glares, cactus and brush stood as immovable as the rocks of ages. Only the illusive and ethereal mirages gleamed as if by magic and shimmered and moved in that midday trance of the sun-blasted desert.

The time came when Adam plunged toward every mirage that floated so blue and serene and mystical in the deceiving atmosphere, until hope and despair and magnified sight finally brought on a mental state bordering on the madness sure to come.

Then as he staggered toward this green-bordered pond and that crystal-blue lake, he began to hear the beautiful sounds of falling rain, of gurgling brooks, of lapping waves, of roaring rapids, of gentle river currents, of water—water—water sweetly tinkling and babbling, of the wind-laden murmur of a mountain stream.

Lastly, as sight failed him, and these haunting lies of moving water deadened in his ears, he began to wander in a circle.

(To be continued)