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Literature.

Scorpion Gulch. A GOLD-SEEKER'S TALE. Continued. In the morning we were fully so. A heavy rind and a long refreshing, slumber

Arriving once more at the gulch, it did not look quite so gloomy and forbidding as on the evening before. We allowed our guide to make the preliminary preparations, which he quickly performed with a practiced hand.

Fastening one end of his stout rope to a tree on the side which sloped most gradually to the verge, he took the cord in his hand and boldly walked down to the inner brink.

At length I felt that the extremity of the rope must be reached, as the regular jerks above my head suddenly ceased. I had left the broad, sunny daylight behind me; but now, turning my gaze upward through the apparently diminutive aperture at the top, the outline of which I could faintly distinguish, I saw the stars shining brightly in the heavens.

His disappearance was so sudden that it startled us considerably. At the same time, it gave us a much higher opinion of our swartny confederate than we ever before had entertained.

He must have gone down pretty far, for, although we could hear him sweating at the obstacles he was encountering, his voice came up very indistinctly. Then there was a silence for many seconds.

But sin is a frequent accompaniment of wealth. See! I said hereford, pointing to the earth that was clinging to one of the fragments; and, as I looked, I saw a scorpion about three inches in length, spring from it, and glide with incredible rapidity down the slope.

My heart stood still as I put to it that frightful query. I listened, with a sense of hearing sharpened by my extremity into an acuteness of abnormal intensity.

In a few seconds, I was aroused from my horror by feeling a tug at the rope from above. Instinctively loosening it from my person, I wound the end secure by round a massive fragment close at hand.

Strapping a small pick to my belt, and providing myself with pine-knots and matches to illuminate the depths when I should get to the extent of the line, I concluded my preparations by stuffing in my belt a small meal-bag, in which the Donna had placed my lunch.

gold before returning to the surface. Then, permitting Miguel to fasten the rope under my arm-pits, I was swung over the chasm, my two comrademeans while keeping a tight grip on the rope, which had also a twist round the crowbar.

A feeling of horror took possession of me as I felt myself slowly descending into the unknown depths of that fearful abyss. I raised my hand, feeling of the tightly drawn rope above my head, and was astonished that I noticed had not before how very frail it was.

But I paused. I only had three more pine knots. Should I not be sparing of them for an emergency? Emergency! What one could arise more perilous than my present situation?

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I was suddenly interrupted in my operations by a great noise, as of contention, far above my head. I could hear curses and yells, and then fragments of the little pyramid, which Gonzago had piled about the crowbar, would come hurrying down before my face.

Again I viewed the glittering gold-crustured walls of my prison-house with gloomy reflections. Above, around beneath my feet was opulence outlying that of kingdoms and principalities—wealth enough to equip vast armies and cover the seas with mighty navies.

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doubt as to whether he had succeeded in launching me after my comrade, for he hung round the mouth of the abyss, sending down a jargon of oaths and yells, but without eliciting any response from me.

Need I say that I considered myself lost beyond redemption? The awful extremity of my own situation soon ameliorated the grief and horror into which the death of my friend had plunged me.

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conformation of all sides was in no instance smoothly perpendicular, but composed entirely of ledges or gullies, at quiet regular intervals, probably varying in width from six to ten feet.

I was encouraged to find myself planning and devising, with a busy brain, some method of ascent, however ridiculously impossible. Anything was preferable to the torpidity of despair.

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densely black as it had been. I could see the larger auriferous particles glittering on the wall. To my still greater satisfaction on creeping to the verge of the ledge, and looking upward, I noticed that the stars in the sky were not so distinct as upon my former observation.

Much encouraged, though with a visible sense of hunger, I lit my torch, and set to work with a will. The present roof which I was attempting to force was more difficult than any of the others, being thicker, harder, and more compact.

I was now so confident of ultimately reaching the upper world, that, before proceeding to the work of my deliverance, I spent upward of an hour in heaving out the most valuable pieces of quartz I could select, and filling my little meal-sack, first carefully gathering every crumb of the cracker, which I placed in my side-pocket.

When at length the little bag was filled, by its weight I judged it to contain pure bullion to the value of nearly twenty thousand dollars.

I here, however, met with a misfortune which impressed me more severely than any incident that had yet befallen me. Scarcely had I resumed my labors with the crow bar, when it accidentally slipped from my hands and rolled over the ledge.

Choosing several large fragments, I loosened them with my pickax, and built a little hillock on the ledge, by which I was enabled to step up to within a few inches of the ceiling; and, avoiding the loathsome insects as much as possible, I commenced pegging away at the rocky roof with all my might.

I still had my pick, and again I dashed away despair by a resort to my unflinching and sympathising little friend the torrent. Judgment or no judgment gold-seeking was my trade, and, grasping my remaining implement with an iron hand, I resolved to cleave to my bag of bullion, if the heavens fell.

I soon found that I had somewhat exaggerated the misfortune sustained in the loss of the crow bar. Although fully four hours were consumed in breaching the ledge, at length I succeeded, and passed through with all my effects.

I had left the little gulch far behind in my devious ascent; so, wearily retracing my steps, I found it again, and placing in my mouth the last crumb of the cracker, I took a deep draught from the limped flood.

Nevertheless, I resolved to do the best I could with the materials at hand. The next ledge, immediately overhead, was thicker than the first, but not so far above me, which rendered it easier of access; and I made a breach in about the same time.

I thought that I rolled from the ledge into the abyss. Down, down, indefinitely down, I felt myself plunging, while a great sound of thunder was in my ears.

With a full knowledge of their value I took a handful of the crumbs, crawled to the tumbling rill which I yet held within reach, and there made a supper whose delicious relish passes all words to express.

Notwithstanding the dampness of the air, and the tormenting lizards, I slept well and arose strong and hopeful for another struggle to gain the upper air.

After great effort I succeeded in Concluded on fourth page.