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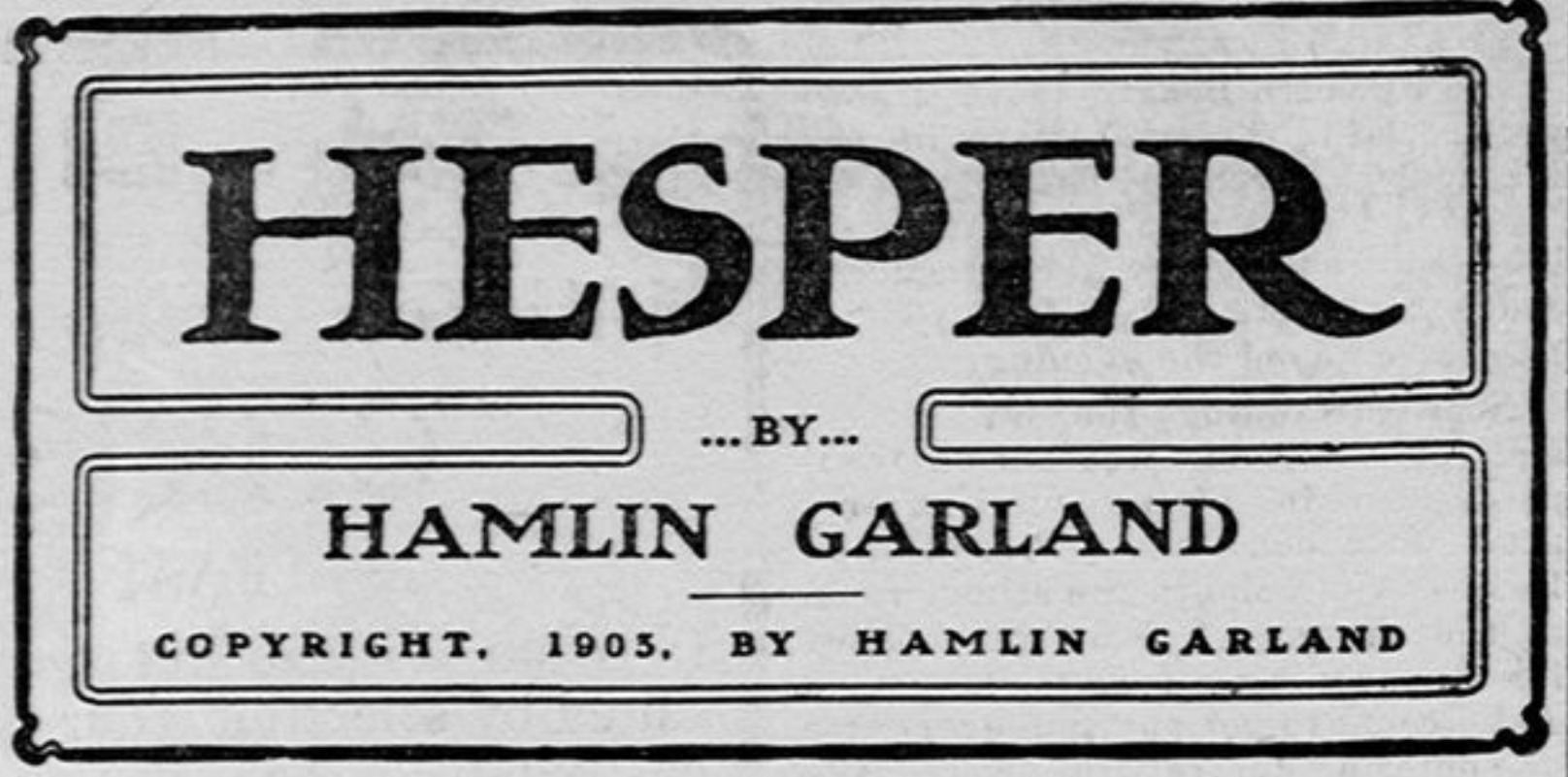
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CHAPTER XI. ON the second morning after his meeting with Dolan, Raymond, riding down the trail toward Bozle, discovered a small figure toiling toward him, pausing often to rest.

Raymond looked down at the boy's small legs clothed with miner's laced boots. "You believe in dressing the part, don't you? You are a kidlet."

Raymond's whole expression changed. "Climb that horse," he said sternly. "You're going back to town, and you're going to send her a telegram at once."

Louis braced himself. "Fire away!" "As I understand it, you and Ann are alone in the world—I mean you are closer to each other than to any one else—she's your best friend.



Raymond looked at him in silence. "No. I'm going to put you to work." "That's the bully! Now I'm all right. Give me a pen," he wrote: "I have found Rob. We're all O. K. Don't worry."

Raymond packed his hand bags on the horse, and together they set out up the trail. At first the lad exulted and cried out like a blue jay, but his breathing grew labored as they rose, and at last Raymond turned. "Now, see here, Louis, this air is pretty thin till a fellow gets used to it; you'd better mount. You'll enjoy the scenery better."

With a feeling that he was succumbing to an unmanly weakness, Louis clambered to the horse's back and perched among his possessions, while Raymond, striding ahead, led the way up and up till the whole world seemed coming into view. "Oh, this is fine! Jupiter, this is the place for me!"

Kelly was puzzled and a little embarrassed by this outspoken admiration and regarded Louis with definite disfavor till he presented him with a pencil drawing of the lads playing on the doorstep, and then he said: "The Lord God has made a power of people that the Kellys have not seen. This is wán of them. Now, isn't that a wonder? He put the whole thing together in five minutes."

Raymond raised a warning hand. "Careful, Don. It doesn't do for you to say such things up here. This union has come to stay, and you who employ labor will do well to treat it with a certain measure of respect."

I planned to take myself out of your life as completely as if I were dead, but Louis would not have it so. When I met him on the hill today and he told me how long he had been from home, I determined to hustle him back to the Springs, but he asked to stay a day or two, and here he is.

There was nothing more personal in the letter than this, but Ann's heart warmed to the writer unaccountably. And yet the thought of Louis in a mining camp troubled her.

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Raymond hesitated. "I didn't know whether you—

Louis was much interested in the stranger. "Who was that, Rob?" "A chap I used to know."

Next morning after breakfast Raymond hurried Louis off down the canyon. "This is a boy friend of mine."

Raymond returned to the camp. "Very promising." In the talk that followed Raymond learned for the first time of the proposed consolidation of the Red Star with two or three other heavy properties, and they fell into a discussion of the camp.

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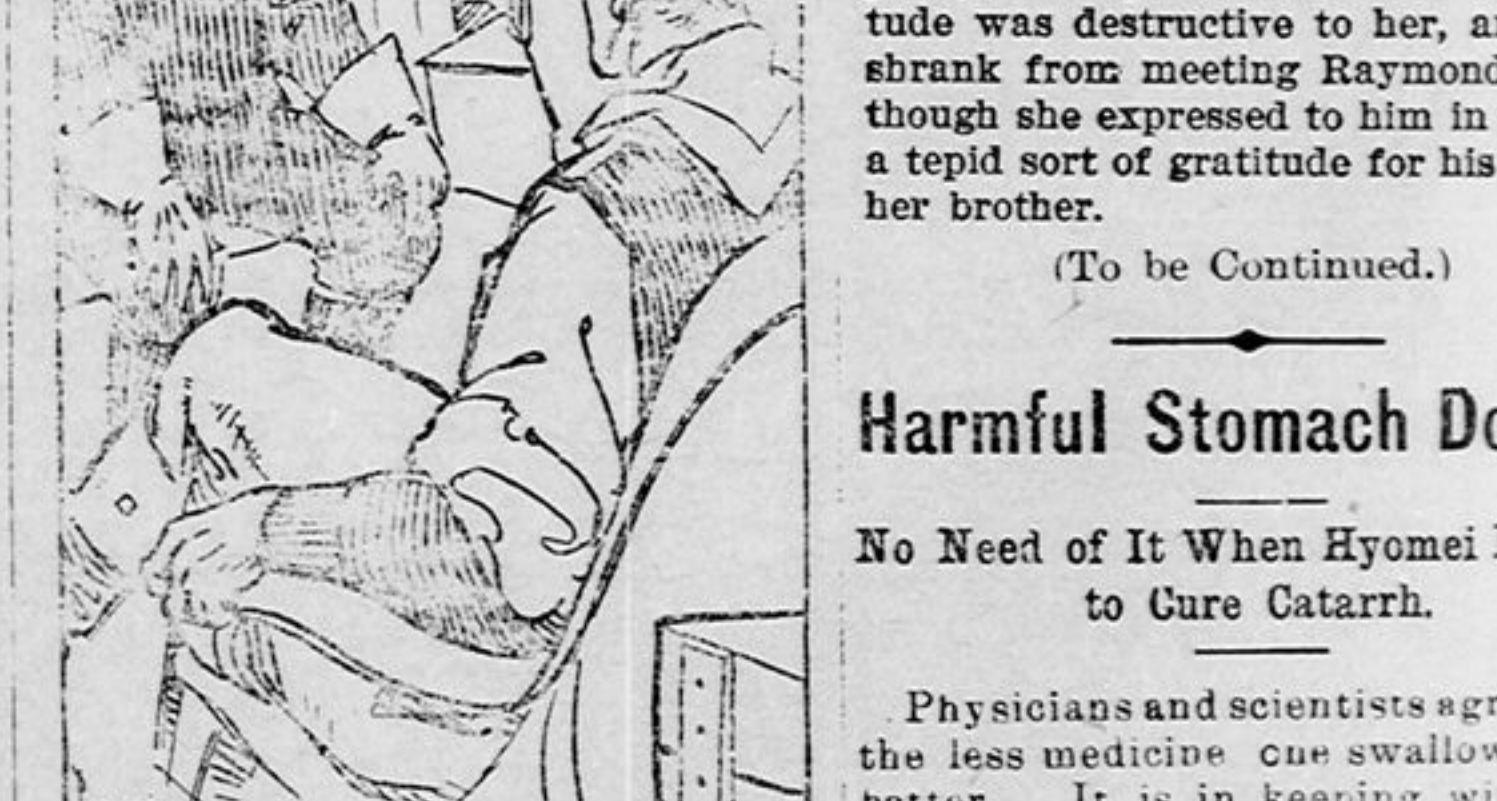
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ann to the stage and in his letter to Ann repeated his pledge to look carefully after the boy's health and to keep him out of mischief.

Louis arrived at the Springs fairly hysterical with joy over his wonderful day's ride and set about to describe Skytown.

His absence had been a revelation of his value to Ann. She had not realized up to that moment how deeply his case was woven into her daily life.



"This is a boy friend of mine."

his happiness is more than my own and because he no longer regards my wishes. I have heard much of the gambling and drinking of mining camps, I beg of you to guard him. He is so fine and sweet now, and contentment is so easy.

Upon reading this letter the camp suddenly became a dark and dangerous place to the young miner. He found it harder to make excuse for profanity and foul jests of the miners, and he went less and less among them and spent more of his time with the lad watching him draw or listening to him while he read.

Their cabin became the center of the finer spirits of the camp. Dolan and one or two of his friends often came in of an evening to smoke a pipe and play a friendly game of cards.

An Atchison man, the Globe of that city says, was showing a fine horse that attracted the attention of a man who was looking for a family horse.

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