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E. ROSENBURGER & CO. New York City

A VALUABLE CLAIM.

BY WILL LISENBEE.

Buck Summers walked behind the huge prairie-breaking plow, watching with evident satisfaction, the chocolate-colored ribbons of earth which the plow was turning over. The two-horse team was moving slowly, and seemed to say no inducement to hurry through life, which disposition was in perfect harmony with Buck's own feelings on the subject. He did not believe in physical precipitation in connection with common labor. To be in a hurry seemed to him to be undignified, and to show a mentally incompetent.

On reaching the end nearest the cabin he brought the team to a halt, and, allowing the cattle to graze on the luxuriant grass, seated himself on the beam of the plow and lighted his pipe.

"Reckon I'll be a-plowin' purty soon," he said to himself, "an' I'll be ready for watermelons, it can't be long this side uv the Rockies."

A wavered wagon, drawn by a pair of oxen and a mule team, came to a halt in the road close by, and a lanky-headed man got out.

"Mr. Simon's Stillman—Bob Stillman," he said, as he came up to the man who was sitting on the beam of the plow, "I reckon you've heard tell uv me."

"Yes, I reckon I have," said Buck, removing his pipe from his mouth and looking at the man. "Leastways, I've heard you."

"Well, I'm the man," said the man, with a nod. "I've come back to live, an' I reckon I'll stay. I've got a good one when I get started, an' I'm a-goin' to stay. I'm a-goin' to settle down an' raise a family, an' I'm a-goin' to be a good citizen. I'm a-goin' to be a church member, an' I'm a-goin' to be a deacon, an' I'm a-goin' to be a Sunday-school superintendent, an' I'm a-goin' to be a justice uv the peace, an' I'm a-goin' to be a member uv the legislature, an' I'm a-goin' to be a county judge, an' I'm a-goin' to be a member uv Congress, an' I'm a-goin' to be President uv the United States, an' I'm a-goin' to be buried in a marble tomb, an' have a epitaph on it as long as a log chain, an' I'm a-goin' to have a monument as high as a church steeple, an' I'm a-goin' to have a—"

"Hold on!" said Buck, interrupting the stranger. "I wouldn't live on this claim for all the land in the country. Don't go back my money, and we will call the deal off."

"Why, what on earth could you want with a claim in a place like that?"

"I reckon you happen to find a buyer?"

"I allus raised sweet a year; then we lucked her will sort 'how the ground stood. Then was our luck run out. What do you suppose a man would want uv you for selling him such a claim?"

"I never stayed for me."

"I suppose not. What did the man that bought your claim do when he found out what bad kind of a place he had got into?"

"Said that till the next rain."

"Did, then?"

"He sold out for another claim. The next he a great chance to get a place for any hour long-up' as he transferred. Yell say no fees—I'm the maker a man."

"I be sure—we were talking about your claim. I was sayin' that that was a very good, and I suppose water could be got by sinking a well. I like the lay of that piece of land, and if your price is reasonable, I might settle on it."

"Do you?"

"Yes, and it."

"I thought you call a fair price for your claim."

"Host er thousan' dollars."

"A thousand dollars, Billy, mind, is a reasonable price for a claim that is in the county for $20. Those claims that you give me deed, but only quit your claim."

"I likewise knows all that, but this claim is worth a thousan' dollars to me. Two fifty in the sweet I own claim."

"Then the claim's yours."

"Very well. I will come back in a few days and have the papers drawn up."

"That seems fair-like; but I hate to have you to a stranger for so much as the cost of the money and take possession of the claim."

"Why, you was allowed to witness me for warm or thou. Buck reckoned he was a-goin' to be a member uv the legislature, an' that I'll bet he gets on this yere claim. Buck's got a heap uv confidence in himself, an' he's honest about cut for get up to."

That's what I'm a-goin' to be," said Billings, "I don't know what I'm a-goin' to be, but I'm a-goin' to be somethin'. I'm a-goin' to be a man, an' I'm a-goin' to be a man that's known. I'm a-goin' to be a man that's known all over, but I'll allus believe in Billings, I don't know what I'm a-goin' to be, but I'm a-goin' to be somethin'. Then some other fellow can't say I've settled on a claim that I couldn't prove up on for Now they're elected? Then I'm a-goin' to be somethin'."

"I'll bet it that is the case," broke in