



## The WATER BEARER

By J. ALLAN DUNN  
AUTHOR OF "A MAN TO HIS MATE"  
"TRIMROCK TRAIL"

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### THE DIVINER

WENDERS, tall, tawny, hair matted with the dust of the trail, Caleb, son of a New Englander, is witness to the end of a century pulled down by two waterhounds, armed with a gun and knife, knowing no better than to run away from his home, his name is El Nido. Water-worn, weary, he meets his mother and the catch to meet his father. At the new friend's house in Golden, he is welcomed by her father, Southern Civil War veteran and owner of Hermance's valley. He tells the story of his life and gives him the feeling that he is destined to be a "Water-Bearer." But the violent efforts ceased and the man rallied, smiling wanly, with a grimy handkerchief set to his lips. Caleb caught sight of telltale decks of bright red blood quickly folded into the rag. The cough was from the lungs, the man tubercular.

The other looked at him oddly. "Expect to uncover a gold mine at El Nido." Beware of the sirens who are behind the rocks! As I remember last day at the dog show, the Clinton girl was a looker. Beware!

"I'm not looking for that kind of a mine, Ted. And I hadn't thought of going across the bay tomorrow, promising."

"All right, stranger," said the man. "I've had a sight worse. I'm gettin' it baked out of me here. Lung-teach, but they're health. Fishing, yes! Better work up to the canyon wonder. Folly the road below the tip, then trail the creek. It's tough goin'. Sile's chokin', what little they is of it."

"Mostly gravel underneath, to judge by the pit," Caleb answered. "Thanks for the tip. Have a cigar."

The man took it wolfishly and bit off the end.

Caleb gave him a match.

"I thought that perhaps you owned the gravel pit."

"Me? I don't own nothin'. Gertie this cough and I'm willin' to get shot of that. Minck's a charin' job. It's good gravel an' the hill makes it handy to git at. I can't work at my trade no longer. It takes it out of me, you see."

Caleb didn't see. The glitter in the man's eyes was not so much that of fever as that of the spirit, he decided. He fancied him a little demented, by way of being a crank or a fanatic.

"I'm glad the land's worth somethin'," he said. "It doesn't look like it." The man shot over a quick, burning look.

"That's to them as looks only on the surface," he said.

"What do you mean?"

The man led the way into the shack. From the two-by-fours that supported the corrugated iron roof hung some switches of freshly cut willow and hazel. Some were old and dried. And all were forked.

"Know what those are?" asked the man. "They're divin' rods. I'm a diviner. A Water-Finder. That's my trade. It's the power within me that goes out an' leaves me weak. Too weak to work at it. Each job means another nail in the lid of my coffin. Melches you're one of them that laugh at it!" he demanded fiercely. "But there's many in the upper valley 'em where to here."

The thing seemed uncanny. Yet, somehow, it fitted in. The hunch stirred in his brain. To Caleb, under the spell of his vision, it seemed predestined that he, the Water-Bearer, should meet this Water-Finder to complete his hope, a living signpost that he was on the track.

He knew that within the year the French Academy of Sciences had accepted the demonstration of a number of scientifically controlled cases where the "water-divining rod" had proved beyond a doubt that certain persons were gifted with the power to discover subterranean springs and reservoirs. Scientists did not attempt to explain the mystery, but accepted the phenomenon and were making it the subject of expert research to discover the natural causes.

"I have known many cases back in the East, where I come from," Caleb said, "where water has been found by the use of the rod."

The man was instantly mollified.

"Ah," he said. "It's all true. I ain't quite human, mebbe. It's a gift, the power. Like a medium's. Supernatural. The spirits talk to me about it sometimes. I'd like to show ye about it. But I'm too weak. But you can take my word for it—me, David Evans, the Welsh Water-Finder, what's discoverer of the secret of Coyote creek, Caleb named flood signs. Then he gave himself up to studying his sketches, covering the region he was going to prospect, going over them while the train rumbled up the canyon until he knew by heart.

Caleb kept his face clear of everything but earnest attention. But he was breathing more easily. His theory was still virgin.

Hinkley proceeded to go into the present filtration system and the layout of the conduits that supplied the hydrants of Golden. Caleb's interest in Crystal Lakes had been satisfied but he followed the technical talk with intelligent comment and left the engineer at last on terms that were more than merely friendly. He reached Golden after the stores were closed for the day but early the next morning he obtained geometric section maps of the quadrangles covering Galisteo valley and the Gabilan range. He put in most of the day studying these and making little drawings to scale in vertical plane.

It was all in support of a mere theory but it was his habit to pains-taking even in preliminaries, and he surveyed his sketches with a good deal of satisfaction. If the theory panned out it meant not merely money and fame if he handled his discovery properly, but it would make him, Caleb Warner, an actual factor in pioneering in city building. He quoted to himself what Betty Clinton had said at El Nido.

"That is what I should prefer, if I

were of wracking body and mind. For there seems no reason to believe that the world ever has known a golden age of health. Geologists find diseased bones which are thought to show that even great prehistoric lizards, and after them the early mammals, suffered from tumors which, according to the advertisers, will claim the teeth of four out of five of us. Man probably falls heir to troubles which are often safer now to live in a city than in the open country itself. Is the science of public health—Survey Graphic.

By heading in crowds, by giving in his dower rights of sunlight and space, he even has added to many of those troubles, has created wholly new

ways of wracking body and mind. For a time the balance of life and death promised doom to cities; they survived only because life was produced abundantly and cheaply without their walls, and the best and most adventurous were fed into them. The slow process of observation and control which has made it safer now to live in a big city than in a village (and often safer to live in a city than in the open country itself), is the science of public health—Survey Graphic.

Of all European countries, Ireland accommodates the fewest Jews.

### Man Ever Waging Fight on Disease

Happy legends to the contrary, there seems no reason to believe that the world ever has known a golden age of health. Geologists find diseased bones which are thought to show that even great prehistoric lizards, and after them the early mammals, suffered from tumors which, according to the advertisers, will claim the teeth of four out of five of us. Man probably falls heir to troubles which are often safer now to live in a city than in the open country itself. Is the science of public health—Survey Graphic.

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