

DYING ALONE IN THE WILD.

*Hermit of Laurel Canyon
Found Helpless.*

*Odd Aged Character Amid
Awful Conditions.*

*Will Be Taken Out Today If
Yet Alive.*

The Hermit of Laurel Cañon has at last met his match.

For twenty years "Prof." C. E. Watson has lived in a little old shack at the head of the beautiful cañon back of Hollywood, and has resisted all the attractions of civilization and all inducements of persons who wanted to purchase the ground upon which he lives, but now he lies helpless upon his back and with heart-rending moans admits that he is dying—dying alone and amid horrible surroundings.

This morning a Hollywood liveryman will go to the hovel with a wagon, and under instructions from Superintendent Stewart of the Associated Charities, will take the dying old hermit to the County Hospital, where even the hand of charity may add warmth to the chill of death.

Yesterday a young couple, seeking the beauty and solitude of Laurel Cañon, came upon the miserable abode of the hermit. The door was open, and, led by the distressing groans that reached their ears far down the cañon, they approached the place, only to be appalled at the stench and horror of the place.

Watson was found lying upon a filthy bunk, his arms outstretched and his eyes staring skyward. He was unable to move, but the noise of persons approaching had given him power to shake off the deathlike stillness that had enshrouded him for how many days nobody knows, and he groaned: "I'm dying," repeating it over and over, in a loud and despondent wail.

The young lady, who had dared to look in at the open door, was startled by the sight and nastiness, but she was neither frightened nor disconcerted.

HE EXPECTS DEATH.

She happens to be a trained nurse, and could not, if she would, resist the call of humanity. She heroically tucked up her sleeves, and, with the aid of her companion, raised the old man up, removed some of the filth, and made him as comfortable as possible. He was given wine and some of the lunch they had taken for themselves, and when they departed the remainder was placed at his hand, so that he might help himself.

Watson has for years talked to such persons as could draw him into conversation of attempts to poison him in order that others might secure the rich gold mine that he declares underlies his shack. This and other things have given everybody the impression that the hermit is not only eccentric, but crazy.

When talking to the nurse yesterday, however, he had remarkable gleams of intelligence on the subject of death. He talked, not only rationally, but brightly, and in good language expressed the belief that he was about to die. He called attention to the swelling of his limbs, and said that he regarded that as an evidence that his time had come.

Watson formerly came into the city occasionally, but he has not now been here for many months, and has depended largely for subsistence upon the generosity of Sunday excursionists into the cañon. Some carried provisions especially for him, while others gave him what was left. He has also been furnished with needful things through a man named Edwards at Hollywood, but there has been no one to look after him lately.

Watson has existed as a hermit so long that nobody seems to know just who he is or where he came from, but he has shown evidences of education and refinement that have caused the title of "professor" to stick to him. His supposed ownership of land in the cañon is also said to be mythical, as he has merely been a squatter prospector. After a while he got so old that he could no longer delve among the rocks, and he just continued to exist in the old haunts.

The young lady nurse who so humanely soothed the old man's pillowless head yesterday gives it as her opinion that he is about 90 years of age.



WATSON,
the dying hermit of Laurel Canyon, and the miserable hovel from which he
will be taken this morning.