

"Just who argues?" I inquired.

"Everybody," replied the man on the flat rock. "Martin started it and we've never got it settled. If it hadn't been for Martin, we'd be away ahead on this job."

"That's why I'm here," I explained, "to find out what's wrong. I'm here to investigate for the company."

"You are!" exclaimed the man on the flat rock jubilantly. "Then you're the man I want to see. I'm Tom Morgan. I'm the champion of the theory that a shovel is made to shovel with."

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The odd champion of an odd cause arose and accompanied me, relating incidents of the camp, incidents that appeared fantastic, but which I have had occasion to verify and now embody in this report.

An ingenious ditch digger, William Martin by name, is the founder of the Dry Lake City economic system. There is no question of Martin's plausibility. In any other environment—in some city, for example, where he might have become a local boss—his statecraft would, no doubt, have been fittingly appreciated.

Explorations of his motive would be out of place. The