

Charley, she thought, for they were clean, innocent, and of graceful mien. After all, here was one vastly dearer to her than those for whom she labored and prayed—one whose heart and happiness lay in her very palm. Might she not soften her line of action somewhat for his sake?

But conscience turned the glass, and she remembered Wilhelmina, and thought of the happiness of little Hilda Maginnis and her mother. Was it nothing that God had endowed her with this beneficent power? How could she shrink from the blessedness of dispensing the divine mercy? Her imagination took flame at the vision of a life of usefulness and devotion to those who were suffering.

Then she raised her head and there were the white flowers. She felt an impulse to kiss her hand in good night to them as she rose from

her chair, but such an act would have seemed foolish to one of her temperament.

She went to bed in doubt and got up in perplexity. She could not help looking forward to Mrs. Frankland's Bible-reading that afternoon with expectation that some message would be providentially sent for her guidance. The spirit perplexed is ever superstitious. Since so many important decisions in life must be made blindly, one does not wonder that primitive men settled dark questions by studying the stars, by interpreting the flight of birds, the whimsical zigzags of the lightning bolt, or the turning of the beak of a fowl this way or that in picking corn. The human mind bewildered is ever looking for crevices in the great mystery that inwraps the visible universe, and ever hoping that some struggling beam from beyond may point to the best path.

(To be continued.)

*Edward Eggleston.*

## A MINER'S SUNDAY IN COLOMA.

(FROM THE WRITER'S CALIFORNIA JOURNAL, 1849-50.)



THE principal street of Coloma was alive with crowds of moving men, passing and repassing, laughing, talking, and all appearing in the best of humor: Negroes from the Southern States swaggering in the expansive feeling of runaway freedom; mulattoes from Jamaica trudging arm-in-arm with Kanakas from Hawaii; Peruvians and Chilians claiming affinity with the swarthier Mexicans; Frenchmen, Germans, and Italians fraternizing with one another and with the cockney fresh from the purlieus of St. Giles; an Irishman, with the dewdrop still in his eye, tracing relationship with the ragged Australian; Yankees from the Penobscot chatting and bargaining with the genial Oregonians; a few Celestials scattered here and there, their pigtailed and conical hats recalling the strange pictures that took my boyish fancy while studying the geography of the East; last of all, a few Indians, the only indigenous creatures among all these exotics, lost, swallowed up—out of place like

“*rari nantes in gurgite vasto.*”

It was a scene that no other country could ever imitate. Antipodes of color, race, religion,

language, government, condition, size, capability, strength and morals were there, within that small village in the mountains of California, all impressed with but one purpose,—impelled with but one desire.

A group of half a dozen Indians especially attracted my attention. They were strutting about in all the glory of newly acquired habiliments; but with this distinction—that one suit of clothes was sufficient to dress the whole crowd. The largest and best-looking Indian had appropriated the hat and boots, and without other apparel walked about as proudly as any city clerk. Another was lost in an immense pair of pantaloons. A third sported nothing but a white shirt with ruffled bosom. A fourth flaunted a blue swallow-tailed coat, bespangled with immense brass buttons. A fifth was decked with a flashy vest; while the sixth had nothing but a red bandana, which was carefully wrapped around his neck. Thus what would scarcely serve one white man just as effectually accommodated six Indians.

The street was one continuous din. Thimble-riggers, French monte dealers, or string-game tricksters were shouting aloud at every corner: “Six ounces, gentlemen, no one can tell where the little joker is!” or “Bet on the jack, the jack’s the winning card! Three ounces no man can turn up the jack!” or “Here’s the place to git your money back! The veritable string game! Here it goes! Three, six, twelve ounces no one can put his finger in the loop!” But



rising above all this ceaseless clamor was the shrill voice of a down-east auctioneer, who, perched on a large box in front of a very small canvas booth, was disposing of the various articles in the shebang behind him, "all at a bargain." What a ragged, dirty, unshaven, good-natured assemblage!—swallowing the stale jests of the "crier" with the greatest guffaws, and bidding with all the recklessness of half-tipsy brains and with all the confidence of capacious, well-stuffed bags. Behind a smaller box, to the left of the Yankee, was a Jew in a red cap and scarlet flannel shirt, busy with his scales and leaden weights, to weigh out the "dust" from the various purchasers. There was no fear of the weights being heavier than the law allows, or that the tricky Jew by chance should place the half-ounce on the scales when there was but a quarter due. That there should be a few pennyweights too many made no difference; it is only the hungry purse that higgles about weights or prices. A little bad brandy and a big purse made a miner wonderfully important and magnanimous; and he regarded everything below an ounce as unworthy of attention.

This German Jew was also barkeeper. Beside him were a few tin cups, and a whole army of long and short necked, gaily labeled bottles, from which he dealt out horrible compounds for fifty cents a drink. His eye brightened as he perceived coming up the street a crowd of rollicking, thirsty, sunburned fellows, fresh from their "diggins" among the hills. But the quick eye of the auctioneer also singled them out and read their wants.

"Here 's a splendid pair of brand-new boots! cowhide, double-soled, triple-pegged, water-proof boots! The very thing for you, sir, fit your road-smashers exactly; just intended, cut out, made for your mud-splashers alone; going for only four ounces and a half—four and a half! and gone—for four and a half ounces; walk up here and weigh out your dust."

"Wet your boots, old boy!" sang out the companions of the purchaser.

The barkeeper, with his weights already on the scales, exclaimed, "Shtand back, poys, and let de shentlemens to de bar."

The newcomers approached, crowding tumultuously around their companion of the boots, who, drawing out a long and well-filled buckskin bag, tossed it to the expectant Jew with as much carelessness as if it were only dust.

"Thar 's the bag, old feller! weigh out the boots and eight lickfers. Come, boys, call for what you like; it 's my treat—go it big, fellers! all one price."

"Vat ye takes?" asks the barkeeper, after weighing out the amount due and handing the purse back to its owner.

"Brandy straight," "brandy punch," "brandy sling," "gin cocktail," and thus they went on, each one calling for a different drink.

Then the bargaining began. Butcher-knives for crevicing, tin pans, shovels, picks, clothing of all colors, shapes, and sizes; hats and caps of every style; coffee, tea, sugar, bacon, flour, liquors of all grades in stiff-necked bottles—in a word, almost everything that could be enumerated—were disposed of at a furious rate; so that in an hour's time the contents of the little grocery were distributed among the jolly crowd.

Suddenly there was a great noise of shouting and hurrahing away up the street, and, the crowd heaving and separating upon either side, on came a dozen half-wild, bearded miners, fine, wiry, strapping fellows, on foaming horses, lashing them to the utmost, and giving the piercing scalp-haloo of the Comanches! They suddenly halted in front of Winter's hotel, and while the greater number dismounted and tumultuously entered the bar-room for refreshment a few of the remainder made themselves conspicuous by acts of daring horsemanship—picking up knives from the ground while at full gallop, Indian-like whirling on the sides of their steeds, then up and off like the wind and, while apparently dashing into the surrounding crowd, suddenly reining in their horses upon their haunches, and whirling them upon their hind legs, then without a stop dashing off as furiously in the opposite direction. These few proved to be Doniphan's wild riders, who even excelled the Mexican caballeros in their feats of horsemanship. At last, all together once more they came sweeping down the street, apparently reckless of life and limb. As they passed, the scurrying footmen cheered them on with great good nature. The crowd closed again and in a brief time everything was as restless as ever.

Passing up the street, I came to a large unfinished frame-house, the sashless windows and doorway crowded with a motley crew, apparently intent upon something solemn happening within. After a little crowding and pushing I looked over the numberless heads in front, and saw—could I believe my eyes?—a preacher, as ragged and as hairy as myself, holding forth to an attentive audience. Though the careless and noisy crowd was surging immediately without, all was quiet within. He spoke well and to the purpose and warmed every one with his fine and impassioned delivery. He closed with a benediction but prefaced it by saying: "There will be divine service in this house next Sabbath—if, in the meantime, I hear of no new diggin's!"

The audience silently streamed out, the greater part directing their steps to a large, two-story frame-house across the street. This was





AN AUCTION IN COLOMA.



the hotel *par excellence* of the town; one could easily perceive that by its long white colonnade in front, and its too numerous windows in the upper story.

A large saloon occupied the whole front of the building. Filling up the far side of the room was the gaudy and well-stocked bar, where four spruce young fellows in shirt-sleeves and flowing collars were busily engaged dealing out horrible compounds to thirsty customers strung along the whole length of the counter. The other three sides of the saloon were crowded with monte tables, each one of which was surrounded with a crowd of old and young so that it was almost impossible to obtain a glimpse of the dealers or their glittering banks. There was a perfect babel of noises! English, French, Spaniards, Portuguese, Italians, Kanakas, Chilians, all were talking in their respective languages. Glasses were jingling, money was rattling, and, crowning all, two fiddlers in a distant corner were scraping furiously on their instruments, seemingly the presiding divinities of this variegated pandemonium!

Crowding, inch by inch, into one of these motley groups, I found myself at last in front of a large table, neatly covered with blue cloth, upon which was a mass of Mexican silver dollars piled up in ounce or sixteen-dollar stacks. Immediately facing me was the banker; a well-dressed, middle-aged, quiet little man, with one of the most demure countenances imaginable. Beside him was the croupier, a very boy, whose duty it was to rake in the winnings and pay out the losses, which he did with wonderful dexterity.

Fronting the dealer, and dividing the silver into two equal portions, was a large Chinese box of exquisite construction. Upon it were ranged half a dozen packs of French and Spanish cards, several large masses of native gold, and a dozen or more buckskin bags of all sizes and conditions containing dust. Dollars and half-dollars were piled upon these purses—some with a few, others with a greater number thereon. One unacquainted with the game might guess for a day and not be able to hit upon the object of this arrangement, but a close observer might read elation or depression in the anxious eyes of the players, as the weight upon these bags was either diminished or increased. These purses were in pawn; the dollars and half-dollars were the counters wherewith the banker numbered the ounces or half-ounces that might be owing to the bank.

"There 's another millstone on the pile," groaned a thin-faced, watery-eyed little fellow in a hickory shirt and walnut pantaloons, as he saw another dollar added to his dust-bag.

"Take off two o' them air buttons," laughed a fat-faced man in red shirt and Chinese cap.

"I won two ounces on the deuce; another bet like that, and my bag 's not for your mill, old feller!"

The cards were all out, and the "old feller" was shuffling them for a new deal; during which operation he cast a furtive glance about the table to see if there were any new customers to bite at his game, or, perhaps, to note if any of those who had bitten seemed to be cooling off—a weakness which he hastened to counteract by singing out: "Barkeeper!" and inquiring "What will the gentlemen take to drink?" This invitation was given in such a quiet and insinuating manner that one hesitated to decline for fear of wounding the delicate sensibilities of the banker. Each called for what he wished, and all concluded to "fight the tiger" a little while longer. The sprightly barkeeper was back in a twinkling, with a large waiter covered with glasses. These he distributed with wonderful dexterity, remembering perfectly what each one had ordered; so that, much to the player's surprise, he found his own glass chosen from among twenty and placed before him. That barkeeper had a niche in his brain for every man at the table.

The drinking over, the glasses were whisked away, and all hands were again ready for the game.

"It's your cut," said the banker, reaching the cards towards our watery-eyed acquaintance.

"Jack and deuce! Make your bets, gentlemen."

The jack appeared to be the favorite; ounce after ounce was staked upon it; two more cards were thrown out.

"Seven and ace. Come down, gents; come down!" The seven was the favorite by odds.

"All down, gents?" inquired the dealer, as he rapped his knuckles on the table.

"Hold on!" exclaimed a shrill, puerile voice, as if coming from under the table. Every one looked down; and there was apparently a curly-headed boy, whose mouth was little above the level of the bank. He cautiously, coolly and methodically thrust forth a small hand, and laid down two dimes upon the ace. Every one laughed—all but the dealer, who with the same placidity thrust back the dimes and dampened the little fellow's ardor by observing:

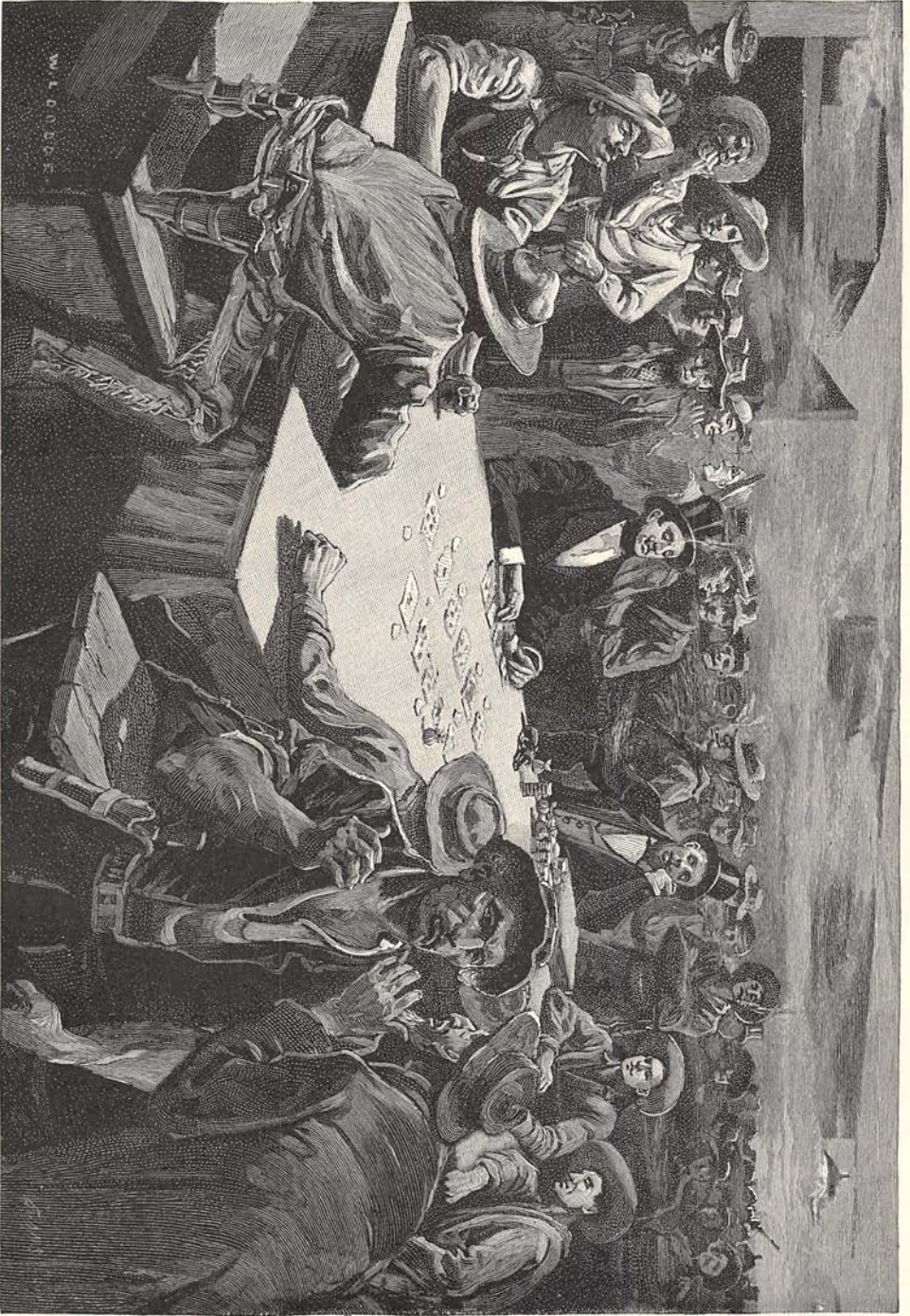
"We don't take dimes at this bank."

But no, the little fellow had spunk; he was not so easily dashed. Picking up his dimes, his hand suddenly reappeared, this time holding a very weighty buckskin bag apparently filled with the yellow dust. This he tossed upon the ace, exclaiming:

"There! I guess you 'll take that. Six ounces on the ace!"

Every one was astonished. All looked around





THE FARO PLAYERS.



to see if he had any relatives or friends in the crowd. He appeared to be entirely alone and a stranger to every one; but the play began—and, strange to say, the ace won!

"Good!" "Bully!" "Lucky boy!" were the exclamations on every side. The fortunate little gambler pocketed his bag and placed upon the deuce the six ounces he had just won.

"Bar the porte!" shouted the boy as the dealer was about to turn the cards. It was well for him that he cried out in time, for the jack was in the door. It was a narrow escape, but the little fellow was safe for this time. The cards were brushed aside and others took their places. The betting went bravely on. The boy laid his money on the deuce and, wonderful to say, it won! He was now the gainer by twelve ounces. He was the hero of the table; all eyes were upon him; and it was seen that he was not as young as he seemed—an old head upon a child's shoulders! For the remainder of the deal old players regulated their bets by his, and he carried them along upon the wave. The bank looked a little sickly from this bleeding.

The deal being out, the banker, the same cool imperturbable figure, chose another pack of cards, and shuffled and cut and reshuffled them until the patience of the crowd was almost exhausted. It was the boy's cut, and a lay-out was made.

"Jack and queen. Come down with your dust. Gentlemen, make your bets."

The little fellow was very much puzzled; it was a hard matter to choose between the jack and the queen. Another lay-out was made: the deuce against the seven.

"Twenty-five ounces on the deuce," said the little man, piling all his winnings around the card. But few other bets were made; the older hands were afraid this sudden luck would change, and they all held back. The plucky lad was pitted against the man of fifty—youth, enthusiasm and a dare-all luck arrayed against the craft and cunning of an experienced gambler! How our sympathies were warmed by the fearlessness of the boy! The play began; the deck was faced; and, as I live, the deuce was in the door! The boy won the full amount of his bet.

The successful urchin was the least excited person in the room. He hauled in his winnings as carelessly as if those stacks of dollars were only chips. Another shuffle, and another lay-out was made. The field was now given up entirely to the two antagonists. The ace and the five were the cards; against all our hints the boy staked his fifty ounces on the five. We were breathless with fear; the dealer himself paused a little before drawing the cards,—but at length the deck was faced, and slowly and

cautiously the cards were drawn, one by one—deuce, tray, king, queen, and seven appear in succession—and then—the five! The boy was again victorious: his fifty ounces were now one hundred. The last round made a huge chasm in the appearance of the bank, and the table immediately in front of the little hero was absolutely covered with money.

The banker was as cool and methodical as ever; taking a fresh pack he shuffled it carefully and made another lay-out. The boy bet his hundred ounces and was again victorious! Two hundred ounces were now piled up before him. We advised him to desist, not to tempt his luck too far; but he coolly replied: "I'll break that bank or it'll break me!"

Did any one ever hear of such determination, even in a man? He increased in our estimation, and we liked him all the better for his grit. More than half the bank was his already, a fortune in itself! but the little, round, gray eyes of the boy were not upon his winnings, but were feeding eagerly upon the moiety that was not yet his.

"Queen and tray. Come down," said the dealer.

"How much have you in the bank?" asked the boy.

"A hundred and fifty ounces."

"I tap the bank upon the queen."

This would decide the game. A stillness as of death was upon the crowd; our breath was hushed; our very hearts almost ceased to beat; the suspense became painful; even the banker paused, and wiped the cold drops from his brow.

The deck was faced at last, and calmly, steadily, and without hurry the cards were drawn, one by one. One—two—three—four—five—he had lost! The queen had thrown him; and his entire winnings were ruthlessly swept away by the sharp croupier beyond.

Dizzy and sick with the result, we turned our eyes upon the loser; he bore himself bravely, and did not seem to feel the loss half as sensibly as ourselves. He looked about with a stern, defying air, as if to chide us for our sympathy. As yet he had lost nothing; his large buckskin bag was still intact. Laying it upon the table, with the air of a Cæsar, he put his all upon the throw, defying fate to do her worst! Our pity was suddenly changed to admiration. We felt that he was lost; but we were sure he would die game.

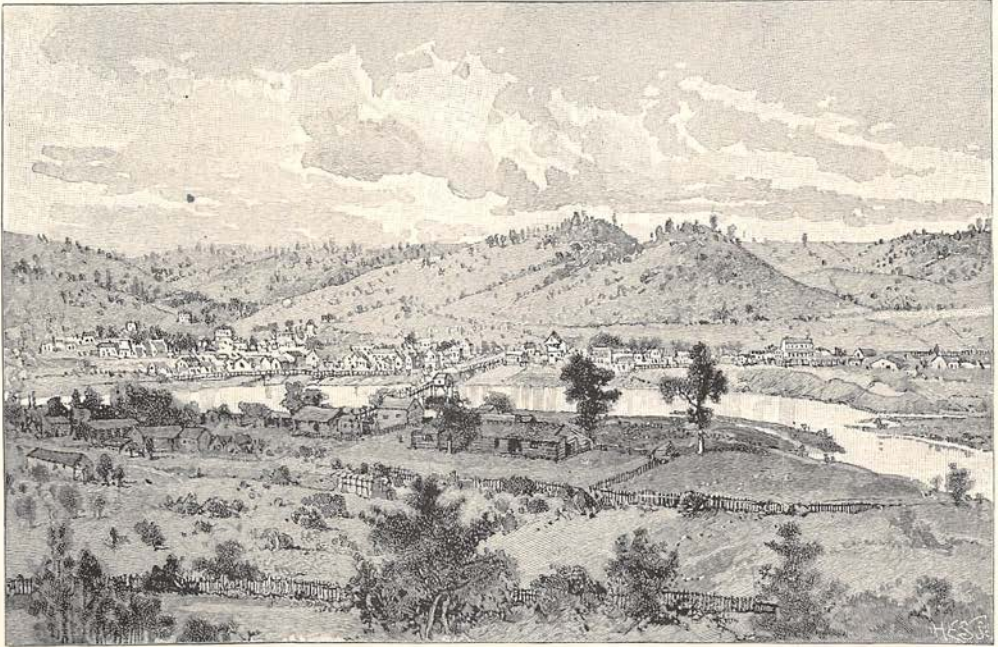
The cards were again shuffled and cut. The seven and the king were laid out; the boy chose the king. The cards were drawn, slowly and steadily; at last the seven appeared; and the game was ended. He saw his well-filled purse stowed away along with many others within that Chinese box and, whistling "O Californy," turned his back upon the scene. The



crowd parted sympathetically to let him through; and he strutted out with all the importance of a noted hero, the eyes of the astonished and admiring assemblage following him to the door.

I passed out silently after him and joined him in the street. I could scarcely find words to express my sympathy for his loss. He looked

At the next corner I stopped for a few minutes to watch the manœuvres of a tall, slim man, who was explaining the mysteries of thimble-rigging to a crowd of lately arrived gold hunters. He was young, and had a long, high-bridged nose, blue eyes, a florid complexion, and thin flaxen hair, without even the slightest appearance of a beard upon his chin. From



COLOMA IN 1857. (PHOTOGRAPHED BY E. SIMAS, FROM AN EARLY PICTURE.)

[The site of the Marshall Monument is on the hill back of the town on a line vertical with the bridge. The site of Sutter's mill, which was torn down in 1856, is at the extreme right of the picture where the race is shown.]

at me furtively with one eye, without ceasing to whistle. I took his arm and, leading him around the corner of the house, begged to know the amount of his loss, and if he had any money on which to come and go. He did not cease his whistling, but planted himself firmly before me and looked up. I took out my purse, and offered him a part; the whistling instantly ceased; his face swelled out into a broad and homely grin. Looking cautiously around for fear of being overheard, he whispered:

"Mum 's the word; I believe you 're a good egg! You want to know how much was in that bag? Well, I 'll tell you; just four pounds of duck-shot mixed,—and—nothing more; what a swa'rin' and a cussin' when they open it!" and the little imp laughed till the tears were in his eyes. I, too, tried to laugh, but my sympathies were shocked; and I turned away from that premature scamp and strode off with a heavy weight upon my spirits. But I had not gone far until the trick was even too much for my feelings; and I laughed long and heartily at its audacity.

his language I saw that he was English—"a Sydney chap," no doubt, fresh from the galleys; there were thousands like him in the country. He was standing with his left foot upon a low box, so as to make a table of his thigh, on which were three small wooden thimbles and a little pellet of paper, with the movements of which he completely mystified his audience. With what dexterity he moved the little joker from cup to cup! and yet so slowly that every one could see it in its passage. Now you would be willing to swear it was safely ensconced under the farthest thimble, for you saw it distinctly when the cup was raised; but you might as well give up your money at once as to stake it on the movements of the little joker, who was the very genius of the thimble; even, like him of Aladdin's lamp, becoming visible or invisible as its owner willed. In vain did he invite a bet; no one was bold enough to risk six ounces. Then the thimble-rigger changed his tactics; he saw there were many willing and anxious to bet, were they but half assured there was no hidden trickery in this



manual dexterity. His movements, therefore, became slow and careless, as though he supposed there was no one there disposed to risk his money on the game. He was so absent-minded as to turn his head away, as though looking for some one beyond the crowd, but still moving his thimbles and the joker so carelessly that the little pellet was at last left outside of one of the cups, when it should have been totally concealed within. The gambler's mind was evidently not on his game, or he never would have made this mistake, which might be taken advantage of by some of his sharp-sighted auditors. A black-eyed little fellow had been intently watching him for some time past. He had the dress and appearance of a miner, but his hands were soft and delicate—a fact you noted as, taking advantage of the thimble-rigger's carelessness, he cautiously reached forward, and very dexterously swept the joker from the gambler's thigh, without the latter being aware of his conduct. This trick created a marked sensation among the bystanders; so much so, that the Englishman's attention was recalled to his game.

There was now an evident willingness to bet on the part of three or four of the lookers-on, but a swarthy miner, with his face covered with an immense black beard, got the start of all the rest and, trembling with excitement, exclaimed:

"I'll bet you ten ounces the 's no ball under thar at all."

"Put down your dust," replied the gambler. The miner drew a well-filled buckskin bag from his pocket, but, before he staked his money, had the foresight to declare that the gambler must not touch the thimbles, that he himself must have the privilege of lifting the cups. The Englishman assented to this. Without the least hesitation the miner put down his dust. We all circled closer, laughing within ourselves at the evident discomfiture of the careless gambler. The miner raised the nearest thimble, the ball was not there; he lifted the second, it was not there; he laid his fingers on the third and last and, with a triumphant laugh at his evident good luck, lifted it likewise. But his laugh was suddenly changed to a short, quick, smothered cry of astonishment. We all looked down; and there, lying as cozy as an egg in its nest, was the wonderful little joker!

The miner had been completely fooled. There had been two little paper pellets, and the dark-eyed man was a confederate.

Leaving the thimble-rigger, I passed along under the colonnade of the hotel, my ears almost deafened by the rattling of money and the hubbub of various dialects; and, piercing all, like the shrieking of termagants, came the

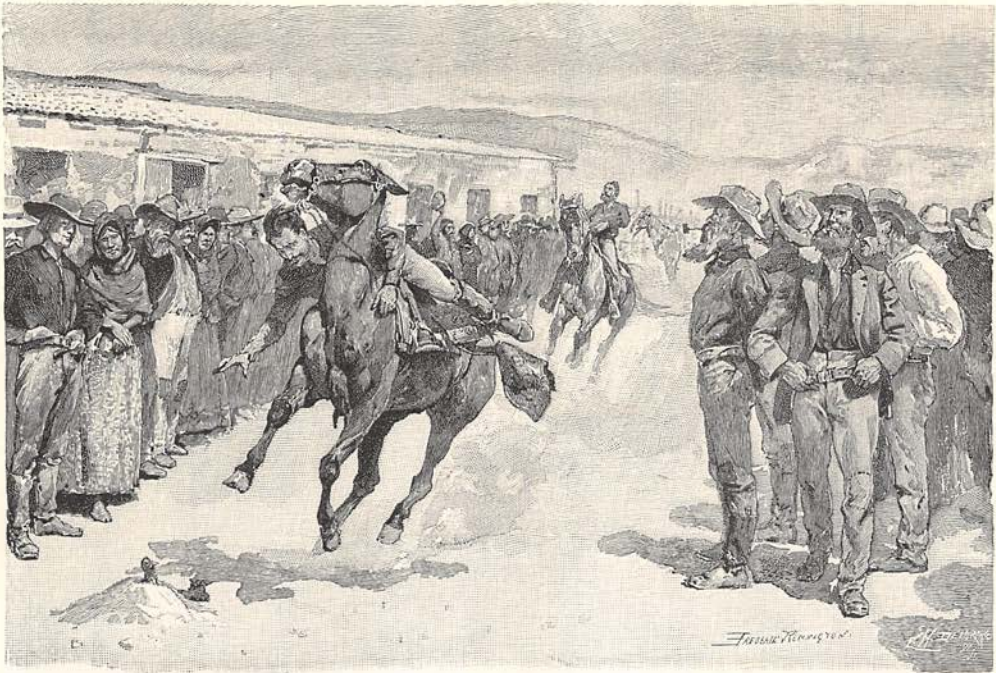
noise of the tortured fiddles. The saloon was filled with a mass of men, laughing, talking, gambling, drinking, and all apparently in the best of humor. It was no use trying for admittance, so I stepped down to the next house, where there was another large assemblage filling up half the street and intently watching something that was happening in the midst of them.

Edging my way with a good deal of difficulty, I at last saw a long, slab-sided, sleepy-looking Yankee, who was expatiating on the wonders of a small brass padlock, which he held up to the admiration of the crowd, declaring it to be "the wonder of the world," "the very essence of mechanical ingenuity," and "a thing that puzzles the scientific, considerable." And, as a voucher for the truth of his statement, he was willing and ready to wager any amount from ten ounces to a hundred that no man in the crowd could open it within the space of two minutes.

The crowd was agape with wonder; the lock was passed from hand to hand; it was twisted, turned, and tried in a hundred different ways, but all to no purpose,—it withstood the most rigid scrutiny. Some were willing to give it up in despair; but there were others whom the very difficulty of the undertaking impelled to still greater exertions. At last it fell into the hands of a rough, hairy, raw-boned fellow with the mouth and jaw of a bulldog, every feature of whose countenance showed an inflexibility of purpose to overcome every obstacle, whether for evil or for good. He twisted and turned the miniature lock into every conceivable position, searching for the hidden spring. At last he found it. He was astounded at his own success. He gave a furtive look at the owner, to see if he had been observed; but the Yankee was absorbed in conversation with a neighbor, to whom he was narrating the history of the wonderful lock, and did not even appear to know that this bulldog fellow had it in his possession. The latter, now satisfied with his success, gave his neighbor, a thick-headed German, a nudge with his elbow. The two withdrew somewhat from the crowd, and there, in a measure secure from observation, he showed his companion the hidden spring, and advised him to bet twenty ounces on the result, and agreed to "go his halves." The German eagerly accepted the proposition; and the two reëntered the ring with the triumph of discovery in their faces. The German laid down his bag, and on the top of it the Yankee piled his twenty Spanish doubloons. The gambler drew out his watch to note the time; and handing the wizard lock to his opponent, told him to begin.

The German took the lock, and with a smile





A SUNDAY AFTERNOON SPORT.

of derision put his finger on the spring; and lo! the lock was still a lock. Perhaps he mistook the knob whereon to press; but no! that was the boss that but a moment since unhasped the lock. He pressed it again with a firmer hand; but it was of no use, the clasp was still unclasped. The German felt dimly that he had been victimized; the two minutes were rapidly passing away; large drops of perspiration oozed from his forehead,—his hands trembled with excitement,—every knob on the brazen puzzle was convulsively pressed,—but all in vain. The time was up—and his money lost! With a pitiable countenance he turned to his partner in misfortune, but he had gone! His spirit sank within him. He must bear the loss himself! His missing partner was of course a confederate of the Yankee's, and before the money was staked had quietly neutralized the spring upon which the German had so confidently relied.

By this time my appetite began to warn me of the near approach of noon. There were any number of eating-houses and booths, but which to choose I could not tell. However, suffering myself to be guided in a measure by the crowd which was now streaming to the other side of the river, I soon found myself in front of "Little's Hotel," the largest frame building on the right bank of the river, serving in the treble capacity of post-office, store, and tavern. Here I found all my acquaintances, who, like me, were on the search for a good dinner; and who

had been induced to go there by the encomiums of "older hands," who every Sunday had made a custom of visiting Coloma for the express purpose of having one good dinner in the week. The first sounding of the gong had already brought a hungry crowd, apparently large enough to carry away the whole building. They were assembled in front of the closed door of the long dining-room, anxiously awaiting the second signal, when they were to be admitted.

While awaiting the opening of the door, my attention was directed to a diminutive, middle-aged Irishman, who was busily engaged narrating to a companion the various wonders and mysteries that "completely bothered him in this wondther of a place." After many famous adventures he had found himself on the bank of the river, hunting for a "quicksilver masheen," when the gong sounded for dinner; and he thus continued his narrative:

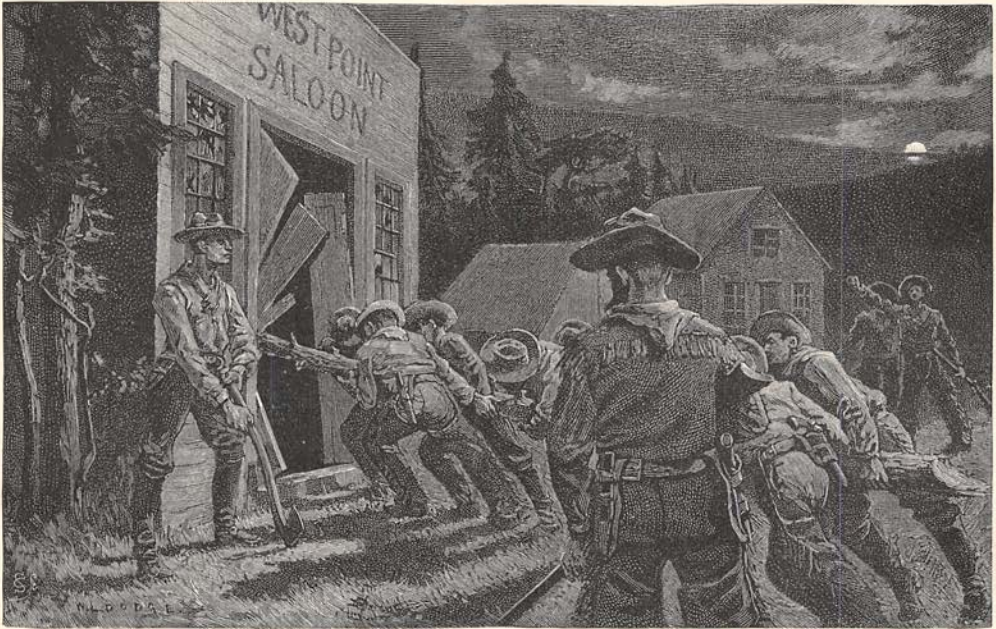
"An' do ye see, Dinnis, I jist went down be the wather to indivor to git a sight of a quicksilver masheen; for I niver seen the loike in this counthry yit; an' I had a great inclination to luck at one, ef it was oney to see the shape ov it, but I did n't see ony thing like the quicksilver masheen at all, at all; but a man that was there prospectin' tould me for to come up to the tavern, an' there was wun there sittin' out ov doors jist forninst the house. Jist thin I heerd a clatherin' as ov that big mounthin was tumblen down on us. I did n't know the manen'



ov it far a long time; whin it sthruck me right strate — it was nothin' but the quicksilver masheen. So I hurried up the bank, an' thin I saw evry wan runnin' up this way, as ef it was a rale Irish foight they were goin' to see, an' not the quicksilver masheen at all. Whin I sees them all runnin' like pigs afther pratee skins—stir your stumps, Condy, says I, or you 'll niver git near the baste. An' thin, I run loike the rist ov thim; an' whin I got to where the noise come from,—what do you think I seen, Dinnis? Why, nothin' but a big nagur batin' the tamboreen!"

We had scarcely time enough to laugh at Condy's disappointment in search of the

ners. At home, one would associate such a crowd with the deck of a Mississippi steamboat, or the platform of an Alleghany River raft, with iron forks and spoons, and tin plates spread on a rough pine board for a table; but here they lorded it over every luxury that money could procure. There was not a single coat in the whole crowd, and certainly not over half a dozen vests, and neither neckties nor collars. But then, to make amends for these deficiencies, there were any number and variety of fancy shirts, from the walnut-stained homespun of the Missourian to the embroidered blouse of the sallow Frenchman. Never before was I so fully impressed with the truth



"ROUGHS IN TOWN." (ADAPTED FROM A SKETCH BY HUBERT BURGESS OF AN INCIDENT IN THE MINES.)

"quicksilver masheen" when the "tamborine" again sounded; the door flew open, and in a few minutes the long, narrow, dining-room was crowded with at least three hundred miners, seated at a well-furnished table and enjoying the unusual luxury of a chair to sit on, with silver-plated forks and spoons, and other little knickknacks of civilized society. The dinner was really excellent, and every one appeared heartily to enjoy it.

When the edge of my appetite had in a measure been ground away, I took occasion to look up and down the table, and I could but wonder how I happened among such a collection of uncouth men. The contrast was certainly startling between the snow-white tablecloth, china dishes, silver forks and spoons, and the unwashed, half-famished, sunburnt crowd of hungry and bearded mi-

of the old adage that "dress makes the man," for I doubt if the whole world could present to a stranger's eye a crowd of rougher or apparently lower characters than were then seated around that hospitable table. And yet many of these men were lawyers and physicians, and the rest principally farmers and mechanics from the "States"; who now with their long beards and fierce mustaches looked anything else than the quiet citizens they were at home. Men who formerly were effeminacy itself in dress and manners were here changed into rough and swaggering braves, with a carelessness of appearance and language that a semi-civilized condition of society alone could permit.

Men pocketed their pride in California in those days. I met in the mines lawyers and physicians, of good standing at home, who were acting as barkeepers, waiters, hostlers,



and teamsters. An ex-judge of oyer and terminer was driving an ox-team from Coloma to Sacramento. One man who had been a State senator and secretary of state in one of our western commonwealths was doing a profitable business at manufacturing "cradles," while an ex-governor of one of our southwestern States played the fiddle in a gambling saloon. These things were hardly remarked. Every one went to the Slope with

the determination to make money; and if the mines did not afford it, the next inquiry was what pursuit or business would the sooner accomplish the desired end. Thousands who had not the necessary stamina for the vicissitudes of a miner's life, nor yet the means of going into any of the various channels of trade, were for a time compelled to serve in capacities far beneath their deserts, until time and means should justify them in choosing for themselves.

*Charles B. Gillespie.*



"BROKE."

## CALIFORNIANA.

### ANECDOTES OF THE MINES.

BY HUBERT BURGESS.

#### One Way of Salting a Claim.

To "salt a claim" is to sprinkle gold dust about it in certain places in order to deceive those who may be seeking investment. In this way in the early days of California worthless claims were made to appear rich, and were often sold for large sums of money. In the course of time this practice became so common that purchasers were always on their guard, and it was necessary to exercise much ingenuity in order to deceive them. I know of one instance where solid earth was removed to the depth of six feet and, after coarse gold had been mixed with it, was replaced and covered with rubbish in such a way as to look firm and natural. Soon after, a party came along who wished to buy, and judging from appearances they selected the very place for prospecting which had been salted for them, deeming it less likely to have been tampered with than the rest of the claim. Of course they thought they had "struck it rich," but they realized only the salt. Sometimes claims were pronounced worthless before sufficient work had been done on them. When these were salted and sold to persevering miners they frequently netted large fortunes to those who had unwittingly purchased them.

In 1851 a party of American miners had been working a claim near Columbia, Tuolumne County, California, and not having even found the "color" they became discouraged; the more so as a company of Chinamen a short distance above them were doing very well. The Americans having expressed a willingness to sell, one day three Chinamen went to look at the claim. They talked it over among themselves and finally asked

the owners at what price they would sell. Of course the Americans made it out rich and put a high figure on it, though in fact they were resolved to sell out at any price, being sure that the ground was worthless. It was decided that the Chinamen should bring their picks and pans next day to prospect, and if they were satisfied they would buy at the figure agreed upon.

The miners, thinking it would probably be their last chance to sell, determined to salt the claim. It was a large piece of ground and the trouble was where to put the "salt." One of the men soon hit upon a very ingenious plan. He took his gun and went, as he said, to get a quail or two, but in reality to kill a snake. As there were a great many about the place, he soon killed a large gopher-snake, which resembles the rattlesnake in appearance but is perfectly harmless to man. Putting his game into a bag, he returned to camp.

On being asked by his companions what he had brought back for supper, he shook out the snake and explained his idea thus:

"Now, boys, when the Chinamen come to-morrow, they won't allow any of us to be too near, because they're afraid of 'salt.' Well, Jim, you walk along on top of the bank and have that dead snake in your pocket. Bill and me will stay talking to the Johns, I'll have my gun over my shoulder as if I was going for a rabbit, only you see I'll put 'salt' into the gun instead of shot. We'll find out where they're going to pan out next, and you be looking on, innocent like, with the snake ready to drop where I tell you. When them fellers start to walk there, just slide him down the bank, and when we all get there, I'll holler 'Hold on, boys!' and before they know what's up, I'll fire the 'salt' all around there and make believe I killed the snake. How'll that do?"