

# **A Frenchman in the gold rush; the journal of Ernest de Massey, Argonaut of 1849, translated by Marguerite Eyer Wilbur**

A FRENCHMAN

IN THE

GOLD RUSH

THE JOURNAL OF ERNEST DE MASSEY

ARGONAUT OF 1849

TRANSLATED BY

MARGUERITE EYER WILBUR

SAN FRANCISCO

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

News of the discovery of gold in California, news that was flashed around the world in the spring of 1848, inaugurated a general exodus from the far corners of the globe to this new El Dorado. Ships flying the flags of every nation—English, French, Spanish, South American, and a host of others—were soon sailing the high seas, bound for the remote and alluring land of California.

Among them sailed many French vessels loaded down to the bulwarks with gold-seekers who left by the hundreds not only to fill their depleted coffers but also to escape the harassing political, social, and financial problems that were rife in France at this period.

The majority of these French emigrants belonged not to the lower classes—the French peasant clings primarily to his own soil and is not naturally nomadic—but to the intelligentsia; they were mainly younger sons of the nobility, lawyers, doctors, bankers, scholars, and political free-thinkers rather than men of brawn and muscle. Unsited to the arduous life of the gold-miner and the hardships of the California placers they soon drifted back to the cities. These were the men who formed the nucleus of the French colony in San Francisco and who, despite their inbred clannishness, contributed materially to the intellectual, social, and commercial growth of that city.

One of the younger sons of the French nobility who joined the gold rush to California was Ernest de Massey, a member of a well-known family who had lived for many generations at the Chateau de Passavant on the Upper Saône River near the Swiss border. In his youth, De Massey had prepared for a military life but had later abandoned this career to become a glass-manufacturer. This venture proving unsuccessful he then tried agriculture.

It was in an effort to recuperate the losses sustained in these two unfortunate ventures that De Massey decided to join the migration to California. With him came his cousin, Alexander Veron, and Pidaucet, a jack-of-all-trades who was to act as their workman.

During the seven months' voyage out and for more than a year after he landed in California De Massey kept a journal which was sent home at regular intervals to his relatives in Passavant, describing his experiences at sea, his impressions of South American ports, and his life as a pioneer in the new and remote El Dorado. The journal ends when De Massey after a seemingly endless chain of vicissitudes finally became a resident of San Francisco in the early fifties. Here he remained for some five years, returning in 1857 to his home in Passavant.\*

De Massey engaged in business as a bookdealer. His name first appears in Parker's San Francisco directory for 1852-3,—“E. De Massey & Co. French and Spanish library, 117 Commercial St.” In Baggett's directory of 1856

the firm is listed as,—“E. de Massey and Finance, 126 Montgomery st.” After that year his name is not found, and a note attached to the MS. indicates that he returned to France during the next year.

Ernest de Massey's journal opens with his departure on May 21, 1849, from Hâvre on the brig *Cérès*, that carried a full passenger list of emigrants bound for California. On July 25, the *Cérès* put in for water and provisions at Rio de Janeiro, remaining there two days. Heading south and safely rounding Cape Horn in a gale of sleet and snow the ship then made a safe and pleasant passage up the west coast of South America to Callao.

From October 3 to October 31 the *Cérès* rode anchor in Callao harbor. This lengthy stay gave her passengers ample time to visit Lima and browse about the surrounding country—a visit that De Massey describes vividly and succinctly in his journal. Then, taking on freight, fresh provisions, and additional passengers, the *Cérès* headed north again arriving early in December off the coast of California.

MARGUERITE EYER WILBUR.

SAN FRANCISCO IN 1850 Drawn by Léon Fleury, lithographed by L. Sabatier, and Published in Paris. — *From the Templeton Crocker Collection.*

**A FRENCHMAN IN THE GOLD RUSH** Translated from the Journal of Ernest de Massey

**A PORTION OF PART III** [ *Addressed to His Brother, Captain Aimé Marie Louis Adelstan de Massey* ] [ARRIVAL IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY] *Tuesday, December 14, 1849*

After passing a bad night, at eight in the morning we again heard the cry “Land.” This time it was not a myth but a reality. The weather had been perfect. Only about ten hours from the coast we were just passing the Farallones, and heading for the harbor. But before we had time to get our bearings, fogs, rains, and squalls came down on us, veiling the coast from view. Forced to tack, we were afraid, nevertheless, of going on the reefs and rocks.

Our situation is even more critical than it was yesterday, the wind being more violent. Had this lasted two hours longer we might have had serious trouble; the *Cérès* might have gone down and

all perished. But luckily at two o'clock a rift in the clouds gave us a chance to head for a point that Captain Rey—who had assumed command through this critical period in place of Messmaker though he is only a sub-officer and representative of the owner—thought to be the entrance to the harbor.

Just as we were making for this point which all the sailors on board said was the right entrance I overheard a conversation, carried on *sub rosa* between the two Captains, which indicated clearly that Captain Rey was not certain of his bearings or of being on the course; that it was only a guess on his part, and that anything was preferable to going on the rocks for, if doomed to perish, it was better to die under full canvas.

Notwithstanding, he has not given up hopes of making port safely and, in spite of such fears and premonitions, he is outwardly cool and collected. The seeming assurance with which he issues orders inspires confidence both in the crew and passengers. No one suspects the danger of our position. I have not breathed a word of what I overheard and though I feel far from composed yet I keep my worries to myself. I am prepared, however, for whatever may happen. But I take my hat off to Captain Rey who throughout the voyage 12 has acted like a first-class mariner. He is energetic, always ready, loyal, sympathetic, and far above his present position. While the owner has made him Junior Captain yet he is ably qualified owing to his long experience to be senior officer. Under the present trying conditions Messmaker would probably have lost his head and his ship. The courage and cool-headedness of Rey has saved us all and we cannot be too grateful to him.

Though only 4:30 it is now nearly dark. We are passing through the narrow entrance, only one and one half kilometers wide, which opens into Golden Gate Harbor. On both sides of the entrance rise picturesque hills covered with pastures where a few sheep, unguarded even by dog or shepherd, roam at random. On the right shore are discernible some stunted green oaks; on the distant mountains looming up far ahead of us are thousands of resiniferous trees forming great forests.

Goat Island, the largest island in the bay [!], is not prepossessing in appearance, its vegetation being very scanty. A few scrawny trees on the northern end afford the sole shelter the goats, for many

years the only inhabitants, could find. The smaller Bird [Alcatraz] Island, with its green summits, is well named, to judge by the flocks of feathered creatures who congregate here at sundown.

Carrying light canvas we came slowly down the bay, passing, off our port, the anchorage of the warships. Among them a French gunboat rode at anchor. Off starboard about a mile away in a southerly direction we could faintly make out the masts of the ships anchored below the village of San Francisco. Sudden squalls bearing down on us kept the breeze stiff and the seas rough enough to send us along at a merry pace toward our anchorage.

Little by little the bay opened up before us and, across the forest of masts, we caught a glimpse of the village with the emigrants' camps pitched on the sloping hillsides which overlook the bay, ocean, inlet, and the peninsula on which San Francisco rises. Two years ago this spot was almost a wilderness. Now, it is crowded with wooden and sheet-iron houses of every kind, shape, and description, and with tents of every color forming an amphitheatre. These house a population of adventurers, vagabonds, bankrupts, refugees from justice, merchants, deserting sailors, gamblers and vagabonds who have no home or country. Interspersed among them are some honest men, workmen, and speculators, who have come here from all over the world. This is what we see about two kilometers ahead of us—a great city in the making.

Around us ride three hundred ships or more which have arrived 13 or are just arriving, from all over the world. After unloading cargo, being unable to procure freight or sailors, they are forced to lie here idle through the winter season. Today, the fourteenth, at 5:30 P.M., the *Cérès* dropped anchor. It is now night and the panorama stretching out before us is sparkling with lights for several kilometers just as if every star in the heavens had been seized with the gold-rush fever and had migrated to the coast of California. This evening all these lights in the city, as well as those from the ships in the harbor, reflected in the waters of the bay, seem to have a supernatural and magical air about them—a welcome diversion after the trials and tribulations of the voyage. This evening after finishing dinner the officers of the *Meuse*, a ship from Hâvre which belongs to the firm owning the *Cérès*, came on board to greet us. As their ship has been lying here for three months

they are thoroughly familiar with local conditions. They told us many things which sounded so extraordinary that I was inclined not to believe them.

A house, or rather a wooden shack in a good district, so I am told, rents for 3500 piasters [Mexican dollars] (17,500 francs) a year. Eggs are worth 40 fr; a bottle of wine—and what we have here is most mediocre—from 5 to 8 francs; bread is 2 fr. 50 c. for a loaf weighing 14 ounces. Meat, the most reasonable commodity, as animals are plentiful in this country, brings from 90 c, to 1 fr. 20 c. a pound.

Wood for a shack 28x11 ft. is priced at 10,000 francs. Interest charges for money, securities, or mortgages, are at the rate of 6% a month. A canoe sells for 2000 francs; a visit from the doctor costs one ounce of gold-dust or 80 fr. Wholesale prices are much lower. Retail prices would not be so inflated except for the heavy warehouse charges, and the cost of labor and money.

At the placers, given the right season and perfect health, the average amount of gold panned per day is said to be one ounce. However, supplies are more costly than in the city. The cost of moving one ton 20 leagues beyond here costs twice what it does to ship it from Hâvre to San Francisco. A good carpenter or merchant is paid, according to the local rates, from 50 to 80 francs a day. The smallest amount possible to live on per day, excluding wine, is one piaster. An axe selling for 2 fr. 50 c. in France, is sold for 15 francs in San Francisco; this seems too good to be true.

New placers are opened up every day, gold being found in practically all the mountainous regions along most of the rivers. 14 Evidences of it are seen on every hand. Purses are emptied and refilled as easily and with as much indifference as if these conditions would last forever. Often in less than 24 hours gambling houses, cafés, and restaurants will absorb a large or small fortune some miner has spent months in accumulating. But yet he returns gayly to the mines hoping to make another stake—which is always a gamble.

Such is the picture the officers from the *Meuse* paint of this fabulous country we have just adopted. And I am reluctant to think they have been fabricating these tales just to play on our credulity. But now that we are actually here, tomorrow and the next few days will prove whether their information

is correct or false. Right here I may say that if any of you are astonished at these statements I am giving, the joke is on you. If any palmist had prophesied this strange adventure of mine twenty-five months ago I would have passed it off as absurd, and advised him to consult a brain specialist.

With all the Arabs and Moors you have over in Algeria you ought not to lack astrologers. Some day when you are looking for amusement have one of them read your horoscope and predict the results of my sojourn here in this land of nuggets. These are the dates of the main events of the voyage. On my birthday, June 1, we met an English ship, the *Caroline*, which, having run out of biscuits and water, was forced to get help from the *Cérès*. On July 25, St. Christopher's day we stopped at Rio Janeiro. On August 28, St. Augustine's day, and the birthday of my brother Ormand, we rounded Cape Horn. On Dec. 14, the birthday of my other brother, which fell on Wednesday, we reached San Francisco. A superstitious man might see something mysterious in these coincidences. To me they seem odd. This is why I am mentioning them and pointing them out to you.

#### **Anchored off San Francisco, Sat., Dec 15, 1849.**

After dinner the customs' officials came on board and stationed one of their men on our ship. Finding that a French boat was leaving for shore we took advantage of this opportunity to go over to the city. Local skippers charge from one to two piasters per person, the distance being about two kilometers.

The rays of the setting sun lighting up the amphitheatre on which the budding city surrounded by underbrush and green pastures stands made an impressive picture as we were crossing. The present site could easily hold from three hundred to five hundred thousand inhabitants with ample chance for unlimited expansion southward. No doubt in due season, as wealth and commerce multiply, all the 15 temporary wooden structures will be replaced by stone houses, hotels, palaces and public monuments. When this happens the panorama seen from the crest of Bird Island will be one of the most scenic in the world. But this will take at least half a century. There is a shortage of fresh water, however, and no one knows how or from where it can be brought into the city.



At noon the boat deposited us not on solid ground, but in the mud and slime which is everywhere. There is no quay, and only one or two landing-places for the ships. The streets, which are amply broad, cut the city up into right angles. Close to one hundred houses are being built a month, which are immediately rented. Scores of immigrants live in tents in the neighborhood waiting for more comfortable quarters. Comparatively few houses are built of brick. The most imposing edifices are two-story wooden structures painted in bright colors. Several are even elegant on the outside and luxurious within. But only millionaires are able to afford such luxury.

All the business streets are teeming with activity. In fact they seem as active as any in Lyons or Paris. Over here, however, the men seem more businesslike and in a greater hurry; loafing is an unknown quantity. During the day every one plows knee-deep in mud through the lower streets which get the heaviest travel for this is where the banks, consignment houses, and the important commercial establishments are located. All are bent on acquiring business and social prestige regardless of their qualifications and trying to amass the fortune which always is just within reach, but invariably intangible and evasive.

In the midst of this babel you can distinguish the jargon of many languages. Ask a question in English and your reply may be in German; if you speak in French you may perhaps be answered in Spanish, Italian, Russian, Polish or Chinese. This would be amusing if it were not such a handicap. However, those who can speak three languages, English, French and Spanish, can make themselves understood anywhere.

My first trip was to the post-office for news from home. After having been deprived of this for more than seven months it is an unspeakable pleasure to get word from relatives, friends and acquaintances. My trip was not in vain. I found a letter from you, my dear Adelstan, written from St. Hyppolyte and dated August tenth, one from Ormand, written on the fourteenth, and a third from my old friend Alphonse de Laboullage, of June fourteenth, sent from Hâvre. In it he mentions sending on some papers which have not reached me yet.

The standing population of San Francisco is computed at approximately fifty thousand. This number is doubled if all the floating population living in tents, ships, and even in all-night gambling houses, is added. These latter establishments which invariably adjoin cafés are surprisingly numerous and are popular as all-night resorts where patrons drink, gamble, and even go to sleep on the couches as the mood strikes them. Most of the *cafés-chantants* employ an orchestra and singers.

Croupiers even offer to their patrons, free of charge, anything they like in the way of food or drinks. This is done with an ulterior motive—and the trick is usually successful. Such a place is rented to a proprietor at the customary rate of \$30,000 to \$40,000 (around 200,000 francs) a year who in turn sublets all the room he can dispose of at so much an hour. This new tenant in accordance with his tastes and capital establishes roulette, monte, thirty-and-forty, baccarat, etc., paying in proportion to the amount of space he uses, from \$50 to \$100 an evening, and acting as banker if he chooses. However, he must have at least \$20,000 to \$30,000 before even attempting to run a bank.

The more piles of gold there are in evidence the more the passion for play is excited. With this end in mind a group of capitalists often form a company and pool their capital, some of their members act as decoys to the inexperienced, others keep an eye on the players who are apt to be numerous. It is a game where trickery and treachery are constantly pitted against inexperience and the gambling fever which seems inbred in human nature. This is how cliques assumed to be civilized make colossal fortunes and gain the whip hand. Though immoral and reprehensible, yet such is the case.

***At Anchor off San Francisco, Sunday, Dec. 16, 1849.***

Last evening fourteen of us hired a boat to take us off to sleep on the *Cérès*, but the sea was so rough, the night so black, and the currents so against us that the sailors who were rowing could not get beyond the *Georges*, a ship just out of Hâvre. The captain took us on board with generous hospitality and offered us supper, but, owing to a shortage of bunks, we had to spend the night dozing on chairs and benches.

The sea is still running high today; this combination of winds and currents makes the ships strain and drag their anchors so badly that we saw several collisions. From here we could see the *Cérès*, several hundred feet away from the ship where we had taken refuge, struck violently by three large vessels and a section of her stern caved in. She 17 also lost her bowsprit. We were obliged today to stay on the *Georges* until the sea calmed down along toward evening. Even then it took us an hour and a half to make six hundred meters in a boat manned by the best sailors of the *Georges*. Such was my first adventure on the soil of California; it augurs well for the future.

***At Anchor off San Francisco, Dec. 17, 1849.***

The bad weather still continues. After the *Cérès* had been so badly damaged by the English ship, the *Morrison*, the sailors were kept constantly on watch. The *Georges* has also her foremast, her main shrouds, and her fore-gallant-top sails damaged. About 3 P.M. the weather abated sufficiently to allow her to pull away from these dangerous neighbors. Anchors were weighed and she was allowed to drift several hundred meters. The damage to the *Cérès* is estimated at not less than sixty thousand francs. Her hull and freight were not injured, but taking into consideration the difficulties involved and the high cost of repair work she will probably be condemned and sold, some steps having already been taken to this effect.

***San Francisco Harbor, Tuesday, Dec. 18.***

Last night was quiet for the first time since our arrival and I was able to get some sleep and rest. Since early morning I have been on shore trying to rent a site for a shack. I was fortunate enough to find some land centrally located near Montgomery and Sacramento Streets. Though there were buildings on either side of the lot yet there was a clear space measuring some 28x24 feet available for my building. The piece belongs to Robert Wells & Co., capitalists and speculators, who speak perfect French and, what is even rarer, are gentlemen. The price agreed on, one hundred dollars, holds good until March first. I am paying it out at the rate of a little less than fifty dollars a month. I also have the privilege of building my store up against one side of his house—an arrangement

which saves me considerable lumber. I could not ask for a more suitable site at a better figure considering the limited funds at my disposal.

Later on in the day I visited the French commission houses and some others which, for one reason or another, are rivals but which stand high among my fellow-countrymen. One of them is run by J. J. Chauviteau, an ex-banker who had some severe reverses but who managed to gather together some more capital which he puts to many and often unscrupulous uses. He is suave, smooth-tongued, affable, and hypocritical toward any one from whom he hopes to extract 18 money, and haughty and cold toward others. He is always offering his services but never living up to his promises, and few admire or esteem him. In his place of business, while there is considerable talk of the dollar, it is rarely in evidence. It is my conviction, as well as that of many others, that his reputation for wealth and credit is largely fictitious.

The firm of [Aimé] Hugues and [F. L. A.] Pioche<sup>\*</sup> —Hugues came out on the *Cérès* with us from Lima—acts as agent for our vessel. They run a large and flourishing business, make everyone welcome, and look after all business carefully, but I am not sure how substantial they are. Most of their capital is tied up in a building site located in the heart of the city which has a wooden house on it. While their establishment looks prosperous what assets are there behind it?

Pioche, the banker, was said to have been a lover of great enterprises and a generous patron of the fine arts. The first railways in California—the Sacramento to Folsom and the Market Street railways—were organized by him. He engaged in hydraulic engineering projects and constructed wharves and buildings in San Francisco. He died by his own hand in 1872.

I also called on Leon Bossagige [Leopold Bossange<sup>\*</sup>] and Co. This name recalls the famous theft of the Queen's necklace years ago in which one of his relatives, a jeweler, was the hero and victim. His father is well-known in Paris, being head of a book-store. Out here the son runs a commission house for miscellaneous merchandise. He is a typical Parisian, a bon-vivant, obliging and well-mannered, easy of approach, animated, light-hearted, and always making things pleasant for everyone around. He is the only man of affairs among my fellow-countrymen who has the hallmark of a gentleman.

This name appears in one account of the theft of the Queen's necklace, as Bassenge. In some of the California records it is spelled as above.

The fourth and last both as to rating and standing is the firm of Mulot [Mullot] and Callot. Where have these rustic field mice come from, with their coarse manners, and red noses, their cheap language, and their constant gesticulating over the sundry articles in their store like so many angry men who believe they are accomplishing something just because they are making a noise? I know nothing about them or their connections. If the saying, "as a man acts so he is," holds good, one reveals the other.

Callot began life as a strolling actor in Paris playing minor rôles in the Petit Lazare, a mediocre theatre in the Latin quarter. After a long apprenticeship he passed on to the Varieties where he played third and fourth class rôles. Finding his income inadequate both for his tastes and ambitions he finally realized it would be wiser to abandon this irksome and impecunious calling. That is why he broke away from it.

About this time a daring diamond robbery had been perpetrated on a Mlle. Mars, a popular actress, in Paris. For a long time the papers were full of this audacious crime and how it had been accomplished. In some mysterious way Callot came to be embroiled in this affair, either as a trusted employe in the house, an actor, or an accomplice, or a fence for stolen articles. Anyway he was so seriously compromised that he had to get out of the country immediately and so left for America before further complications came up.

To avoid all chance of being apprehended by the authorities he put between himself and his accusers the whole width of the Atlantic, the American Continent, and the Pacific Ocean, finally locating in the Hawaiian Islands. Out there he heard of the gold discovery in California and, leaving the Islands early in 1849, he started over to the new El Dorado with a cargo of local products. These he sold upon arriving for their weight in gold.

Purchasing some land at Sacramento he built a house, found a partner, and posed as a prosperous, honest, and reputable citizen. But he had not counted on the influx of French immigrants who recognized him, and who did not like his haughty manners. A few gossips exposed the story of his

past which was soon known all over Sacramento. Here you have the inside history of one of our most prominent French financiers in San Francisco.

Our remaining compatriots are merchants and owners of cafés, cabarets and restaurants, and do not bear close inspection—although I know very little about them. Of the restaurateurs the best known are these two: Louis Burtney, from St. Louis, in the department of the Sûre (Upper Saône), who is called Baltimore because he used to cook there, and who now runs the Baltimore Hotel; and a Mr. Mondalet who also owns a restaurant. To-morrow I am going to tell you about our titled aristocracy. I have already met several typical ones.

***Wednesday, Dec. 19, San Francisco Harbor.***

Among my compatriots I would give the highest places to the Marquis of Franchlieu who is connected with a family in Senlis, to Count Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon,<sup>\*</sup> a native of Avignon, and to Mr. de Bedoux, son of an ex-admiral and a passenger on the *Cérès*. All these, particularly the two former, are men of honor, courage, intrepidity, strength and intelligence. Endowed with initiative, like so many others they have been cast by the hazards of revolution, dreams of fortune, and ambition, on the shores of California.

A notorious adventurer famous for his filibustering expedition into Sonora. Cf. Daniel Lévy, *Les Français en Californie*, San Francisco: 1884, p. 132.

While waiting for the time to be ripe to leave for the placers they have been organizing hunting parties and selling their game at advantageous figures. They have also secured a boat and have started a ferry service back and forth across the bay from the ships to the shore carrying freight and passengers. While very fatiguing, this work is highly remunerative. I may be able to tell you more about them in the future; this is all I know for the time being.

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A far more dynamic, loquacious, and brazen type is the Marquis of Pindray.<sup>\*</sup> He is a weather-beaten man of fine build and regular features, muscles like iron, and the fascinating look of a bird of prey. He has all the earmarks of a strayed sheep of the aristocracy about him. Haughty, indifferent

to human beings, the law, his own life, and that of his associates, he is a dangerous bully always ready with his sword or pistols. Courageous even to recklessness he is cold and cruel in his daily dealings, but he also knows how, when the mood moves him, to be insinuating, ingratiating, and sugar-coated if it will serve his interests, his greed, or his pleasures. He has a loud voice and a ready wit and expresses himself correctly in Spanish, French or English,—more than he needs to stage his exploits.

Said to have been of an ancient noble family in Poitou. In 1851 he enrolled eighty compatriots and others for an expedition into Sonora to work the mines in the Apache country. The venture turned out badly on account of Indian troubles and he finally established an agricultural colony at Cocospera where he soon afterwards died. Cf. Saint-Amant, *Voyages en Californie*, Paris: 1854.

With all his traits and faults he was born to be a popular demagogue, the general of an army, a great lord, or perhaps a bandit of the lowest order. It is this latter rôle that he elects to lead here when hunting. After a day passed in killing game he will go to one of the ranchos belonging to a native Californian who is not too particular. Here he is made welcome for his charming manners and his ready conversation.

After considerable eating and drinking he will propose a game of monte which is eagerly accepted, all the Californians and Mexicans having a passion for gambling. Close to daybreak he returns to San Francisco in his boat, after winning from one hundred to four hundred dollars from his host. Once in, he walks boastfully up and down the streets, deer horns hanging from his neck, rabbits, ducks, a revolver and a sword dangling from his belt, and a gun slung across his shoulder. He wears heavy boots, fawn-colored trousers, and a wide hat. Often he is followed by a dead bear, pulled on a hand-cart, victim of his prowess as a hunter. This wins him universal respect and admiration. He is greeted and congratulated on his valor, his luck and his winnings. All this is followed by a round of dissipation, lasting several days and nights, in the popular restaurants and cafés with gay women, and in the gambling houses. Here it comes to an end when he loses to a worse rascal than he is, what he had taken off the innocent *ranchero*. To be a *ranchero* is to be hunted as well!

In the city he is usually accompanied, or rather followed, by two satellites or parasites who live off him by flattery and adulation; men who are wholly depraved and vicious, whom this master of the

fine art of filibustering treats like valets, using them in operations unworthy of his superior genius. These two brothers came from La Chapelle—petty lordlings of mysterious ancestry—who appear to have descended from the lowest rung of the social ladder.

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If the Marquis de Pindray creates a sensation in California as an eccentric character what a scandalous past he must have had in France! According to reports circulated toward the end of the reign of Louis Philippe, a group of impecunious dandies were apprehended counterfeiting notes on the Bank of France. For some time the scheme worked smoothly and the instigators led a circumspect life, but the police, warned by the repeated complaints of the victims of these bold speculations, and thoroughly aroused at last, scoured France from one end to the other even carrying the search into foreign countries. In the end the building, the presses, and all the accoutrements were discovered.

Among this group was de Pindray. Several escaped, one of them being the Marquis, who, thanks to his herculean strength and the fight he did not hesitate to put up, broke away from the police and so escaped prison and the court of assizes. The affair caused a furore. Some of the culprits were condemned to hard labor; de Pindray managed to escape paying the ultimate penalty.

Meanwhile, he traveled under assumed names in various countries trying to evade capture, or possible extradition which the government might have substituted out of consideration for his family standing. From then on to 1849 his nomadic life is a mystery. Early in that year he learned of St. Joseph, in the United States, a new village just being opened where speculation in building sites was rampant. Lured by the news of gold in California he came overland from there to San Francisco, believing that this melting-pot of outcasts from everywhere would be a field worthy of future exploitation.

Perhaps I shall have other opportunities to study this sinister character, but if I do not I want to say, my dear Adelstan, that I think he is the same de Pindray whom you knew as a boy in Senlis from 1817 to 1823 as pensioner at the College of the Knights of St. Louis. What you have told me about



the gloomy, moody, haughty and rebellious character of that schoolmate coincides perfectly with his character as I have just described it to you.

*San Francisco Harbor, Dec. 20, 1849.*

In accordance with arrangements I had previously made for an extra fifteen days' board on the *Cérès*, Veron, Pidaucet, and I have the right to remain on her, and have food and lodging for that period without an extra drain on our purses. This enables me to make preliminary preparations without heavy expenditures. Notwithstanding, I have already spent one night in a tent where I slept on the ground. Even so, when fatigued after a long day, sleep comes readily.

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I have put Pidaucet to cutting down some logs in the woods nearby and preparing the lumber needed to build our shack. This building will be used not only for a store but also for sleeping quarters by putting in a platform a few feet off the ground large enough to hold Veron, Pidaucet, Vallet, his associate Blanc, Adolphe de Finance, Dr. Daing, and me. Dr. Daing will live with us free of charge through the rainy season. It is virtually conceded that in the spring we are to leave together for the placers and that we are to form a small company to go into anything that looks profitable. I should have liked to include Dr. Briot in our association as well, but as he wanted half of our premises for his exclusive use our restricted quarters made this out of the question.

Here, for your edification, are the current quotations on staples in San Francisco. These prices were quoted to me this morning. Wine of the most ordinary quality, one piaster a bottle; bread, half a piaster, or 2 fr. 50 c, for a 14 ounce loaf; one small bottle of whiskey, one quarter of a piaster; meat, average price, 1 fr. 15 c; onions and potatoes 1 piaster per pound; a dozen small cabbages, 80 fr.; 110 pounds of hog, 80 fr.; sugar, 3 fr. 75 c per pound; candles, 10 fr.; fresh eggs, 30 fr. a dozen; preserved, 15 fr.; milk, 5 fr. a bottle. A pair of boots worth 15 fr. in France costs 60 fr.; one worth 20, 80 fr.; raincoats sell at 300 to 400 francs. Furniture and household goods are scarce and very high. To-day I was offered a building 20x40 feet for 3000 piasters, spot cash, excluding the land. A few months ago a certain business man invested in a building lot in a good location paying \$4000

on which he built a store with \$2000. Today he can clean up a net profit of \$10,000 on the whole thing.

*San Francisco Harbor, Dec. 21, 1849.*

Veron has been on shore only once; he is staying on the ship again to-night. I go ashore daily, often spending the night there, but it is not pleasant with only a tent for shelter. Pidaucet is staying with one or two congenial passengers whom I have assisted, while waiting for our building to be ready. I am architect and contractor, Vallet is supervisor, and Pidaucet and Blanc are acting as workmen. Within a few days it will be ready for occupancy.

The lumber purchased at Peru has proved a first-class and economical investment and will be adequate. Here \$300 is the rate asked for a thousand feet of lumber which in France would be worth from 50 to 60 francs. My Peruvian dealings with Mr. Vallet, however, have not proved so fortunate in other respects. The boat we purchased at half price was let down into the sea by the Captain the 23 day after we got into port, to clean the decks. This was done without my knowledge and permission as the ship had not passed the customs formalities. As a result this skiff which I had counted on to transport my wares was knocked to pieces in the same storm, on the fifteenth and sixteenth, that caused so much damage to the *Cérès*. Between you and me the Captain is legally responsible, but as it involves fifteen hundred to two thousand francs he will never pay, unless compelled to. Yet I am hoping to collect damages. Though we bought the boat largely on his recommendation, nevertheless, I have learned lately that he has been bragging of having advised the purchase to get freight and that, in his opinion, the skiff was worthless to use around San Francisco. Of this none of us is convinced; but he will be made to suffer for this deception. Bad faith and stupidity ought to be properly punished. Let him laugh with his officers at our credulity and lack of knowledge in maritime matters. Some day he will find out he too has been duped and that the joke is on him.

*San Francisco Harbor, Saturday, Dec. 22, 1849.*

The present provisional capital of California, which has not as yet been admitted as one of the States but is still a territory subject to the governor-general who resides at Washington, and which for this reason cannot make a constitution or enact legislation except for its individual cities, is the small town of San José. This town, which is South of here, is located about ten kilometers in from the bay and about 50 kilometers from San Francisco. It is reached by land, or even more comfortably, by water. Its population is around twelve hundred.

Under Mexican rule it was the most northerly outpost [!] in California. The only settlements beyond it were Santa Clara Mission, Mission San José, on the site of a hot spring, and Mission Dolores near San Francisco which was then nothing but a hamlet or whaling-station where an occasional whaler came to trade hides and fresh meat for the products of his own country. The usual currency in such transactions was the hide of a cow or steer which represented one piaster.

Here and there at intervals of six leagues or so are located *ranchos*. Most of the *rancheros* are born musicians. For servants they have Indians. Usually they own many square leagues of land around their houses. On these lands graze millions of heads of cattle, sheep, and horses. Some time I may be able to give you a more detailed description of this variety of the human species—a cross between a pure-blooded savage and civilized man.

24

The preceding is merely a résumé of conversations I have had with various acquaintances who have already been over the country. While I am waiting for business to pick up I wander around, ask questions, and keep my eyes and ears open.

***San Francisco Harbor, Sunday, Dec. 23, 1849.***

I understand that nuggets of gold weighing from twenty to forty pounds are sometimes found. This may be so, but up to the present the heaviest I have seen with my own eyes and touched with my own hands weighed forty ounces. It was artistically marked by the pickaxes and looked like a tiny piece of metal cast in a piece of rock. Gold dust, commonly used in commercial transactions, does

not seem so much like heavy or fine sand as it does like coarse bran. In color it is closer to a dull yellow-brown than to a natural gold.

One ounce passes for sixteen dollars, somewhat less than its actual value. Add to this the fact that the merchant's scales are not always accurate and you can readily see how the miner is frequently, if not invariably, short-changed. Often, to counterbalance this, he attempts to doctor his gold-dust, or clean it badly; but the trader is always on the lookout for such gold and will not pay full price for any that looks black, or too heavy. Usually only half price is offered to anyone who tries to fool them.

Today the customs officials confiscated the *Cérès* for carrying contraband on the grounds that foreign vessels plying on the Pacific Coast have no right to take on merchandise at intermediate ports of call. The *Cérès*, having taken on freight at Lima, had violated this agreement and so was seized. Seventy-five other ships, among them two French vessels, which are lying here in port are victims of this same fate.

The Captains' agents and the consul are protesting vigorously, but the omnipotent head collector of customs is obdurate. Each side claims to be in the right, and the affair threatens to take on the aspect of an international disagreement. I am informed that a ship can only carry goods from her home port as authorized by owner and captain, who are held responsible for any infringement of this regulation.

But in a country like this where loyalty is an unknown factor, and where the wheels of justice grind slowly, legal costs are apt to exceed the value of what is in litigation. And so, before filling the attorneys' pockets, it is well to know what you are doing. If our own goods are confiscated our only redress will come from Joseph Lemâitre, owner, and Captain Messmaker. This episode is the beginning of trials and tribulations for those fine gentlemen and, whatever the penalty may

Title and signature in the handwriting of Ernest de Massey. Portion of page 226 of the MS. Journal.

25 be, there will be few if any of the passengers—whom they have exploited for seven long months—who will say a good word for them.

***San Francisco Bay, Dec. 24, 1849.***

Out here no one is ashamed of what he is doing no matter how humble it may be. From day to day I see fine fellows from Paris, London, and New York carrying heavy trunks on their backs for persons whom, a year ago, they would not even have had as servants. Lawyers, doctors, capitalists, and merchants who have no clientele, consultations, legal matters to attend to, or adequate credit, are forced, if they would eat or speculate, to black boots at the door of a restaurant or popular café, cook, or wash dishes. At such tasks they can earn from twenty to fifty francs a day. On this they can live in moderate comfort, if they are economical and industrious.

Another business consists in going out and cutting wood in the little forest on the outskirts of the village, which seems to have no owner and not to be under the supervision of any forest ranger. Here anyone knowing how to handle a hatchet and saw can cut down about five loads of wood a day. This is sold in the city at the rate of a dollar a load. While I admit it is fatiguing yet the freedom of this life is ample compensation.

What will become of all our good friends of the *Cérès* in this letting down of all social restraints and barriers? What if their plans miscarry? I have already seen several of them looking worn and worried. Men of intelligence eventually come to realize that the strong arm of the worker, plus the brains of the business man and capitalist united with order and economy are the basis of future prosperity in this new country. That motto of the National Workers of Paris, “All for the Union,” is interpreted out here as “Everyone for himself.”

Pepin, who won a first prize given by the University of Paris for excellence as a plasterer, together with [Vicomte Jules] de France<sup>\*</sup> who says he is descended from Robert the Brave, are planning to put on a skit with an actor from the Varieties called Jourdain who came out on the *Edouard* and who, in the interim, has gambled away his last piaster and is piling up bills at the hotels.

See page 27.

Dr. Briot, assisted by Blandeau, son of a deputy from Doubs, Boillon, son of a manufacturer, Pepiquignot, called Grésely, and Parisot—ancestry unknown—are attempting to manufacture lemonade and sell it at a fabulous figure.

Theologne, who comes from a line of Oriental scholars and who recently served as secretary to ex-minister Montalivet, is peddling oranges, cigars, matches, and other sundries. With him is Fichaux, 26 once popular at Parisian social functions, who is now waiting for something to turn up.

De la Mollère, an ex-cavalry officer has organized a company to do joiners' work. De Bedoux whose father is an active, not a retired admiral, together with several friends has purchased a boat and is making trips around the bay and plying between the far side and Contra Costa, a wooded plain as yet comparatively undeveloped.

Charbonnel, the unfortunate manufacturer, together with several workers from the ships—one of them is Bouret of the Parisian firm of Rosa, Bouret & Co.—publishers of Spanish books—is once more attempting to make the fortune that has so often evaded him.

Guillocheuse-Parret readily accepted work as a cook though he seems ambitious. The flighty Estelle has found an easy berth. Women being at a premium she accepted a place as chamber-maid at the home of the bachelor Leon Bossange, with large wages paid in advance.

The group of immigrants known as the Nationalists, organized and directed by a man named Blanchot in Paris, are camping over on the hill. They have no supplies, capital, credit, or friends of influence. In the meanwhile the home office keeps the money of these simpletons who left home and country on the strength of idle promises. This Blanchot must be an infamous aristocrat; no plebian would conduct himself so outrageously.

The seventeen remaining members of the Society of Thirty-two are living frugally on what little they have left while trying to find some occupation. So far they have been unsuccessful due to the constant rains we are now having.

The firm of Massey, Veron, and Co. is still intact despite the attempt made to stir up discord. As soon as our shack is completed—possibly tomorrow—we will make it our headquarters together with those to whom we are offering hospitality. We all mean business with the single exception of Blanc, the slave-dealer and nephew of Baron Blanc, an extremely rich aristocrat from Savoyard who is unloading his merchandise and is trying to sell it between now and March first. When this is accomplished he hopes to go into something else.

As my time will be pretty well taken up with business my daily journal will have to suffer for the time being. That is why I am bringing the third section to a close, and sending it on to my brother, friends and relatives, who may be interested in knowing what I am doing.

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**PART IV *To My Cousin Charles de Finance* A WINTER SPENT IN SAN FRANCISCO IN THE YEAR 1850. *San Francisco, California, Feb. 1, 1850.***

Courage, ambition and energy are not enough, my dear friend, to carry one on to his goal; luck must also be with you. In this, at least for the time being, I have been unfortunate. On January first my shack was completed on the site of that great and growing cosmopolitan city called San Francisco. There I installed myself with my associate Veron, my workman Pidaucet, and two other passengers from the *Cérès*, co-owners of the shack. We also offered hospitality to your relative Adolphe de Finance, and to Dr. Daing, who accepted.

We unpacked our trunks and several small cases of merchandise and provisions which had come through the customs who very considerately passed them without inspection. As for the main bulk of my wares shipped out as freight, that is another story! We had to lose over eight days and make trip after trip through the mud and rain looking after them. When you believe everything is perfectly legal then they refuse to pass your goods through, due to the omission of some formality the head customs-officials had neglected to point out.

The inspector of customs here is a Mr. St. Collier [Col. James Collier], a heavy-set busy-body, who by nature, or possibly from motives of personal interest, stands in with the assistants and agents who unite to squander money and discourage the importation of foreign merchandise. Those who know American and International law are convinced he is over-stepping his legal rights. It must be very expensive for the United States to have so rapacious a rascal at the head of the local customs.

Meeting with little success at the hands of the agent, a dyed-in-the-wool Yankee, who seemed to want to make me dance, I went to another agent who came of French parentage, but was an American from New Orleans. He was well-mannered and spoke perfect French. Being what the Yankees call “a very smart gentleman” he knew how to handle my matters.

My gravest obstacle was to provide proper security for the paying of duty on the goods I had left in the customs house, as I did not have funds enough to take them all out at the same time. Their way of putting up a bond confused me as no one had told me how to arrange it. In my ignorance and lack of knowledge I should never have been able to procure proper security. My new friend, Mr. de Peru, to whom I had made my position clear told me that, for the sum of two dollars, he would arrange it. He found proper backing and relieved me of all responsibility.

Having thus fulfilled all requirements, I was permitted to take out what I thought I could sell, together with samples of what remained. It was a relief when the trouble was over as I was growing gray-headed, and losing my appetite over it. Much of my capital has gone into the coffers of the customs officials, and the unavoidable incidentals arising out of the customs. As this must be built up again we shall have to sell everything we possibly can, even down to our personal belongings.

Of what use are overcoats, heavy coats, and riding coats, when a woolen shirt and a jacket will meet all requirements arising out of our present mode of living, a mode which, both physically and morally, is on a low level—without family, friends or even pleasant acquaintances, without wives, or the comforts of home, and surrounded by hotels, gambling-houses, and *cafés-chantants*.



Whenever we meet a man of fine appearance he is apt to be a banker in a gambling den, a croupier, an accomplice, or a swindler. Now and again happy miners are seen, men who have burned their bridges behind them and are returning to their own country by the first out-bound steamer.

I spend my days mainly at the store, waiting for customers. I have enough spare time to separate my thirty-six per cent brandy and make kirsch and cognac, bottle them, and box them for the convenience of patrons. The bottles and cases cost nothing. All we have to do is to go out and gather them up off the main streets where they are thrown as a way of getting rid of useless and cumbersome articles, take them in, wash them, and pack them. This is Pidaucet's task, in addition to collecting fuel. Every morning he makes the rounds, bringing in cases, bottles and enough wood to carry us through the day.

To me falls the duty of transacting any business in the city, as no one else understands a word of English. What little I know is a great help in getting around. Veron has taken over the culinary department, keeping it, as well as the establishment, tidy. To cook our food we improvised an oven out of earth where we prepare our daily repasts—Vallet, Blanc, de Finance, the Doctor, my two associates and myself—as best we can. When the oven is not being used it serves as a place for carrying on my occupation of brandy-making.

Our food costs us very little. We have one hundred kilogrammes of lard and bacon on hand, three hundred liters of wine, tea and coffee, sugar, vinegar, and olive-oil! So all we need to buy is meat or bread occasionally.

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In the evenings we lay in a supply of trinkets, cutlery, haberdashery, matches, and sundries, close up shop, and go over to the gambling dens and *cafés-chantants*, which are crowded with patrons. There we try to sell our wares at exorbitant prices. In this way I have even sold matches worth ten centimes a box in France for two francs and a half. Recent comers sell off whatever they do not want to take on to the mines as soon as possible, and in these establishments there are often more sellers than buyers.

It is a strange spectacle to see the tense animated faces, to hear the babel of foreign tongues, and watch the different races and the strange costumes. It is all like pandemonium let loose, a fair, or an exchange, as well as the gathering place of gamblers, high-livers and heavy drinkers, sharpers, knaves, rich men, and, now and again, an honest citizen. Often, to break the monotony a fight starts, swords and revolvers are flashed, a pick-pocket is caught and arrested, or a ruined gambler commits suicide.

Even after some such dramatic moment, things soon become normal; the orchestra plays its liveliest polka, the singers air their most lurid songs, accompanied by suggestive poses, while the voice of the croupier is heard calling out at regular intervals his usual refrain, "Place your money, gentlemen, the play is about to start." Anyone just coming in would never believe that only a moment before this blasé crowd had witnessed a tragedy and that one of their members had just been carried out dead or dying from the center of this gay crowd to the police-station or the office of the coroner.

In addition to studying these eccentric customs, the most important result of our evening's trips to these haunts of vice is the sale of from fifteen to twenty francs worth of miscellaneous merchandise, about two-thirds of which is net profit. Around midnight we return to our shack where our companions in misfortune, who have been left to guard our establishment, are already lost in slumber.

Morning finds the seven of us on the platform two and a half meters off the floor, each on his mattress, speculating on the past, present, and future, but without coming to any definite conclusions.

[S.] Langlet, who is twenty-six, prefers loafing to hard work with no pay. After he had been with us a few days he decided to take over a cabaret with Widow Perret, aged forty-six, who has a supply of watches and a little money. Now he plans to marry her. I do not know whether he is joking or serious. The object of his choice has improved since landing; her complexion, whether by art or nature, has taken on more color. By the side of her plump, pink-cheeked husband what a fine

appearance this old crow with her scarred face, 30 her wrinkles and her toothlessness, will make. How long will peace and harmony reign between them, I wonder?

I am looking up several addresses I brought along from Paris of friends who are supposed to be living here in California. First there is Mr. Langlois, who is the brother of the director of the post at Hâvre where my friend Alphonse de Laboullage is assistant inspector. I have heard that this gentleman, who held a very fine position, was taken seriously ill at the village of San José, that his business became entangled, and his fortune heavily mortgaged. Apparently his brother at Hâvre knew nothing about it.

I am also going to see Dr. Chevalier, son of a highly respected citizen whose place of business is in La Place de la Loge at Langres, when I can find out where he is living. Some say he has gone to the mines; others that he is living at Mazatlan, Mexico, and practicing his profession. The last one is Mr. Praieur of Franche-Comte of whom I have not been able to find any trace.

Taking my letter of recommendation from Mr. Buffet, I went to see Mr. [Abel] Guy, our consular agent. Unfortunately he is head of a colony of immigrants and more interested in his own private affairs than those of the consulate. He barely read my letter—a very gracious and explicit one from the minister who had written him personally at the solicitation of our mutual friend, Edward Cournault of Langres, assistant prefect at Mirecourt—then dismissed me courteously but with finality.

I am now quite convinced that I am absolutely alone out here and must rely on my own initiative. What a curious thing confidence is; it gives energy, pride, and spirit. Otherwise I might readily lose all initiative and be entirely dependent on others. This is my situation as I am about to make my *début* in California; it is now up to me to use my own judgment.

On December twenty-fourth a fire completely destroyed one of our streets; all the wooden houses burned down like so many matches. If this happens in the rainy season what must happen in summer when, for eight months, no rain falls, and the strong winds blow daily from eight in the

morning to five in the evening. The outlook is far from reassuring for the proprietors of all these little shops so poorly constructed and yet so costly and combustible.

But one calamity more or less seems to make no difference to these Californians. Far from seeming discouraged, their faces do not even show the slightest emotion when they see their houses and wares reduced to ashes. Barely are the embers cold before they begin rebuilding. How and where do they get credit, when nothing is left out of the 31 ruins? What goods are saved often have to go to the creditors, and goods are usually only on consignment. The loss probably has to be borne by the owners abroad, while those who were burned out often find themselves better off than before. But despite these risks there will be no way of safeguarding property until the city is built of brick and stone—a matter of many more years.

The day after the disaster a group of workmen cleared off the debris and rubbish, and new houses of the usual wooden type soon sprang up as if by magic. Within ten days no one would have ever known a fire had been there.

The amusing romance which began on board the *Cérès* between Lieutenant Simon and Estelle has been revived again in as odd a manner as it began. Leon Bossange having made some proposals to the woman, which did not pass by unheeded, Simon grew mad with jealousy and tried by a *cup d'état* to win back his fickle companion by promising to marry her.

Estelle accepted the proposal and, forty-eight hours later, became Mrs. Simon in the eyes of God and the Law. Fifteen days later she accepted a position as actress in a local theatre—as an *ingénue*, I have no doubt. Then she got a divorce and returned to Bossange, whom she found more amiable and less brutal. This poor strolling actress, mistress, and heartless woman, has chosen her path in life; the theatre, the street, and the alcove. This she may be able to follow for many years to come, for the stores carry chiffons, wigs and curls; the dentists teeth; and the perfumers, rouge to replace what is missing. But what will be the ultimate outcome? The Californians, however, have not yet reached the point of being overly particular.

While all this has been going on Adolphe de Finance and Dr. Daing have been visiting down in San José, the provisional capital. There they got into touch with Mr. Langlois who welcomed them most cordially because of the message I sent from his brother at Hâvre. He gave them all the information they asked for, but he can be of very little use to them, owing to his present depleted financial situation through poor investments, and the paralysis from which he is a constant sufferer and which may, at any time, prove fatal.

There is no activity in the capital other than commerce and agriculture. Most of the population consists of Californians, Mexicans, Chileans, and half-savage Indians. Spanish is the predominating language and the principal business transactions are carried out in that tongue. As their tastes and habits differ materially from those of the Americans and Northern Europeans, what would readily sell in San Francisco would not be marketable in this village.

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They also met a Frenchman, of Besançon, and an acquaintance of Dr. Briot, by the name of Jourdain, who runs a local hotel and restaurant. He had been in Mexico on some personal matters where he came to know a man called [Joseph Y.] Limantour who claimed he was grantee, by an act of the Mexican government prior to the annexation of California, of a large section of land, on a portion of which San Francisco is now located. Jourdain is making his home at San José where he is supposedly representing the rights and interests—true or fictitious—of Mr. Limantour, whose property will soon become immensely valuable. More than likely he is making his money out of the kind of gold-mining indulged in by judges and lawyers out here who command exorbitant prices.

Since our arrival three of the former passengers on the *Cérès* have passed away. The first to go was Theodora Shultz, the young German consumptive, who rallied slightly during the last months of the voyage, but who could neither live nor die. The second is Bois de Latour, of whom I know practically nothing as there was little about him, no salient trait or characteristic, to make him stand out from his fellow-passengers. The third is Gosselin, the former owner of a café at Hâvre, and a friend of de France and Lamolère,\* a noisy, awkward, heavyset fellow who would be more at home in the steerage than the salon. While acting as waiter in a café he fell a victim to his own greed and

intemperance, his desire to live his youth over again, and while intoxicated fell down the stairs, broke his neck and, after fifteen days' suffering, died in an attic infested with worms and vermin.

Previously spelled De la Mollère: de Lamolère appears to be the correct form.

De France has tried to launch a newspaper—buying an autographic press from Dr. Briot for the purpose—and after purchasing some paper on credit, published one edition.\* It failed to sell, however; yet a few debts more or less mean nothing to this gentleman. He suspended publication for fifteen days then found a new money-lender; but his second venture proved no more successful. All this, nevertheless, fails to dampen his enthusiasm. He has about one hundred different schemes in his head, all more or less visionary, for living in luxury at the expense of any simpleton who comes along. The only things he expects to pay with are promises, flattery, or insinuating remarks. This is a currency, he is clever enough to know, that never depreciates wherever it is used carefully.

The first French newspaper in California. Undoubtedly this was the paper called *Le Californien*, which was said to have been “lithographed on a sheet of foolscap paper” and published on January 21, 1850. It was said to have been resumed on March 28 of the same year and yet there is no definite notice of its having done so. The place of publication was the “Maison Chauviteau” on Clay Street (see not 9). On June 7, 1851, De France published another sheet, entitled *Revue Californienne*, only one or possibly two numbers of which were issued. Cf. H. R. Wagner, *California Imprints*.

New ships are entering the harbor daily. They come from all over the world, and are loaded down with freight and passengers. Usually they are unable to leave immediately, once they have entered, for the crews, as a general thing, desert, and no freight is obtainable. As a result San Francisco presents to the eye the appearance of a 33 magnificent forest of masts, from which float the many colors of various maritime nations.

One of the latest arrivals is the *Cachalot* of Hâvre, Captain Le Grand. The passengers on this vessel are so dissatisfied that they have taken vengeance for their bad treatment by denouncing the cargo as contraband. This is bringing on legal proceedings which will force the owner to pay a heavy fine and probably cause the ship to be confiscated. Everyone is laughing about the way Messmaker and Le Grand are being punished in the same manner, and how they are condoling with each other.

The *Succès*, a ship from Bordeaux, has just pulled into port. Among the passengers on board is Oscar de Gaulne, who is bringing in some valuable merchandise. Several years ago I met him at the

home of Mr. de Houx of La Rochère and later he called on me at Passavant. His father is a wealthy ship-owner at Bordeaux, and an old friend of Mrs. de Houx, the daughter of the Count de Grivel of Perrigny. At the time he impressed me as being a foolish, weak character, a bon-vivant, and rather forward.

At that time I was told he was not on good terms with his father, who was avaricious, egotistical, and wedded to business, not pleasure. The old gentleman watched his son's foolish expenditures regretfully, and, though he gave him a generous allowance, he refused to loosen his purse strings for promiscuous expenditures. So I surmise the little scapegrace has left Bordeaux, Franche-Comte, where he was neither wanted nor needed, concluding to put an end to all paternal remonstrances, and the annoyance of pressing creditors.

My first impression of him here in San Francisco was that he had not changed, but after several meetings he told me his history with such frankness and such seriousness that I thought he had improved considerably. He told me his goods had cost him nearly eighty thousand francs; that he intended to sell them off and open up a branch of his father's house in San Francisco; that he planned to represent several large houses in Bordeaux, and that every in-coming ship was bringing him fresh merchandise. He also told me Mr. Chauviteau<sup>\*</sup> was very close about money matters, and that he had had some excellent offers to go into business.

J.J. Chauviteau had a store on the Clay Street wharf at the end of Leidesdorff Street in 1850.

While not wholly convinced yet I was somewhat impressed by his conversation. But if he already has a desk in the office of his future partner who has come to an agreement with him, why is he living in idleness and spending the evenings at roulette—haughtily throwing a dollar on the red-and-black like an amateur for whom the dollar has no value—and then posing as a man of affairs before everyone who might be interested in studying and knowing him? Between you and me this young man de Gaulne has changed very little; his youthful traits still seem to predominate over those of his maturer years.

If I digress at some length to discuss this young man who would perhaps otherwise pass by unnoticed, it is because in my present isolated situation anyone whose family, social standing, or education makes him stand out from the crowd, or whom I knew, arouses a feeling of affection in me which draws me to him and gives a sense of confidence and almost of friendship however superficial or notoriously eccentric the person be. This is all I have to say about him for the time being, but without a doubt I shall have occasion to speak of him again later.

Every Sunday is a holiday out here. The shops close and wherever one is open you may be sure it is run by a Frenchman. We ourselves profit by this day of rest to take short trips in the neighborhood. Occasionally Veron and Blanc go out hunting and bring in some birds, duck or quail, which serve to vary our usual monotonous diet.

On one of our walks our goal was the presidio, which lies some six kilometers beyond here, near the entrance to Golden Gate Harbor. Long ago this was a Mission, but the few buildings which now remain serve as barracks for the hundred artillerymen who have charge of twenty dilapidated cannon and who represent the sole force available here to defend the rights of the Americans in California.

The route, a well-travelled road leading to the presidio, was sandy, rough and uneven, though passable for vehicles. We frequently passed small green valleys where little brooks, which dry up in summer, wind in and out in winter. We also passed knolls covered with shrubs, green oaks and wild roses. Near the sea were several lakes of fresh water. A few wooden houses were seen set back in the center of enclosures which in the springtime become gardens. In the fields steers, cows, and horses, roamed at random. Such is the back-country of San Francisco.

The entrance to the harbor lies on the right, with the lagoons opposite. On the left is the Mission or rather barracks. The mainland comes close to being an island. It is about one hundred kilometers in length and is surrounded by the ocean and the bay. The presidio lies in its most northerly extremity. At its southern apex is Santa Clara Mission. A chain of mountains parallels the coast, running from north to south. These are broken up near San Rafael, which lies in a peninsula or a cove.



A geologist would say these ranges had not always been in existence; and that, sometime in the past, the great bay of San Francisco spread 35 over all the low country as far as San José on the south, east as far as Mt. Diablo, covering the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys and forming an inland sea more than one hundred leagues in diameter. In some prehistoric upheaval the rivers came into existence; while the general character of the land underwent a complete metamorphosis. Mr. de Blangy, whom I have not met as yet but whose address has been found, will probably start for France at once to receive the inheritance left him by his father—some three hundred thousand francs or more—which he expected to have sent out to him here.

I shall take this opportunity to send you some letters, papers, and other items of minor interest. Among these I am sending the reply I got from Mr. Langlois in San Jose& to a letter which I sent him inclosing one from his brother who is in the post-office at Hâvre. In it you will find considerable information about the country, written by a man who has made his home here for a number of years. You can send it on to his brother as it may be the last time he will ever hear from him, for he is slowly dying.

His last days have been spent in untangling legal problems, between the Captain of the *Georges* and its owner Mr. Lamoisse on the one hand, and the ship's passengers on the other. The owner at Hâvre has been sentenced to pay a fine of one hundred dollars, with interest, as damages to each passenger. This makes a pretty penny for him to pay as there are from eighty to one hundred passengers in all. Why could not the other passengers, who have equal grounds for complaint against their Captain, profit by this lesson? Those on the *Cérès* could easily claim redress, and if this were done often enough by passengers it might be of value to future travellers.

My fellow-passenger, Dechanet from Langres, is not finding San Francisco a bed of roses any more than the rest of us. He accepts whatever he is offered. Something seems wrong with him. For one thing he is quite upset over not hearing from his wife who is the only soul in France who knows where he is, although outwardly she pretends to know nothing of him. He will be agreeably surprised to hear of the inheritance that has just come to him, and of which I have been instructed to inform him. He may not be as happy, however, to hear that he has recently become a father, for this

is a situation in which he can claim no rightful part. This new arrival at Cisey seems to explain why his wife has been so silent. Nobody is perfect; the wife of this poor fellow is just another instance of what is found everywhere.

I have not been lucky in my choice of acolytes for my commercial dealings. Alexander is energetic enough but he spends most of his time doing things that are useless, and the slightest remonstrance 36 exasperates him. Pidaucet has no initiative; he is as helpless as an infant and requires constant supervision. When business takes me into the city I have to close up shop as I cannot be everywhere at the same time. Nor do I see any way out of this unpleasant situation but to put up with it, and take the consequences.

We are having alternate spells of good and bad weather. These often last three days at a stretch. When the weather is clear we get a crisp frost in the morning but by the middle of the day the sun is hot. The rains frequently come down in torrents and even when the wind is not blowing we have to sit idly indoors musing over our past, thinking about the present, and dreaming vain dreams of the future.

As last Saturday was a glorious day we walked over to Mission Dolores which lies about five kilometers south of San Francisco. It will not be long before all the intermediate country will be a part of the city proper. Even now the woods and fields are being cut up into lots, which range in size from one-half to one-quarter of a hectare, for speculative purposes.

The trees in the woods through which we passed were not large. Frequently they were gnarled and bent by the steady winds which sweep over them. The leaves were still clinging to them, winter differing from summer out here only by the slight variation in color of the foliage.

The country beyond the forest was cut up into little hills and valleys; in the latter stood small pools of water, the rendezvous of great croaking frogs, four times the size of ours in France. They are not often found here, for these little waterways and ponds dry up in the summer season. Here and there in the meadows grew mushrooms of a pinkish color.

Finally, after an hour's walking we reached the site of the old Mission, fifty years ago at the zenith of its prosperity with its rich and cultivated fields, its live-stock, and its fruit orchards, but now abandoned, neglected, and almost in ruins. When the war of independence was over the Mexicans confiscated the Missions and dismissed the Franciscan Fathers on the grounds that they were implicated in politics in Madrid. In reality this was only a pretext to seize their immense herds of sheep and cattle.

The many Indians whom they had partially civilized and who lived nearby tilling the Mission lands, no longer having a guiding hand over them, returned to their state of savagery. The lands were left idle, the properties fell into ruins, and the buildings crumbled from lack of attention.

These despoilers, in the main Mexicans, being soon replaced by the 37 victorious Americans, were unable long to enjoy the fruits of their plunder. The immense herds that were confiscated—the most tangible assets of this unjust procedure—soon died from exposure in the rainy season, while agile outlaws of many nationalities did not hesitate to shoot them down and sell the hides under the very eyes of the local police who were incapable of suppressing this petty thievery.

In connection with Mission San Francisco Dolores there is a dilapidated chapel or shelter that is notable mainly for its three crumbling adobe pillars supporting the pediment which adorns the facade. This is now occupied by a Mexican priest and a French vicar from the diocese of Paris who are connected with the Association of Foreign Missions. The curé is devoted to the Church as it was the former residence of the Franciscan Fathers.

I went inside and chatted for a time with the vicar. From him I learned that a suit is now pending between the California Missions and the United States Government relative to the properties that are still in the hands of the Catholic Church—a suit they have slight chance of winning since the decision rests with the United States Court.

About one hundred and twenty persons live around the Mission. Most of them are Mexicans, Indians, or half-breeds; Europeans and Americans are in the minority. There is no business activity

here beyond the raising of garden produce which brings in quick returns. Everything else is at a standstill. An *alcalde*, a combination of mayor and justice of the peace found in Spanish countries, is the sole person in authority.

A little brook, green with water-cress, ran through a field where narcissus and violets grew up around the houses. From idle curiosity and as a concession to our future rôle of gold-diggers, we attempted to wash some sand dug out of the brook. While the attempt was harmless enough yet it was fruitless, for we found only a few glistening grains of yellow mica.

On this trip I had a chance to talk with an Indian who spoke French as brokenly as I did Spanish. He offered to act as my servant saying he could garden, lasso horses and wild cattle, and tame them—all for the sum of thirty dollars a month. He also told me that a good horse could be bought for sixty dollars. This is not dear in comparison with other prices. On the other hand some lands near the Mission and capable of being cultivated—some fifty acres in all—have just been rented for the unprecedented amount of forty-five hundred francs a year by the *alcalde* at the Mission.

After this pleasant day spent out in the open under a radiant sun such as we have in France during May, we returned in the late afternoon to our dwelling ready again to resume our life of drudgery and to mark time in the deadly mire of San Francisco. Most of our passengers on the trip out who are living here have been ill in one way or another, mainly with fever and dysentery.

The change in climate, food, and occupation, camping out in the rainy season, intemperate living, and the unhealthy conditions of the streets—twenty thousand citizens throw their refuse out into the mud and slime to decompose—are quite enough to make serious inroads on the constitutions of even the strongest. Our own small group has been fairly immune, thanks to the hygienic way in which we live, to the medicine we take, and to our diet—chiefly of rice. No one has been seriously ill.

To-day is the fifteenth of February, 1850; just two months ago I first put foot on this promised land of California which, in these two long months, has failed to fulfill any of its promises. These have been trying months both for body and soul. In the main they have been spent in searching, though

ineffectually, for my dream-castles in Spain. All my hopes and my resources, as well as those of others entrusted to my care, are fast disappearing. My hair has grown quite gray, a thing which makes a young and energetic man appear ridiculous. On the long voyage out, however, I turned this whole situation over in my mind and was prepared to struggle; and struggle I will!

I have just written Armand to sell everything I own and liquidate my French securities. I can now see that I may have to stay here longer than I had expected. Who knows from the way things are now going when I shall ever return, for I will never come back unless I can make a success of this undertaking.

***San Francisco, March 15, 1850.***

I spent the last fortnight in February auctioning off all the merchandise I could sell at retail before March first when the ground-lease on the site where I built my shack expires. This method of liquidation is always disastrous. We also sold off whatever personal belongings we no longer needed to the miners, who are always our best customers. I first planned to store away most of our things in trunks and leave them behind until we got back from the placers, but our urgent need of money, the fear of fire, and the cost of holding them made me change my mind.

I left with the customs all our tools and about nine hundred liters of kirsch, at present unsalable. I still have eight months to get them out again—and many things can easily happen in the interim. The lumber in our buildings was sold off for sixty-five dollars and the 39 proceeds divided between Mr. Vallet and our company. Mr. Vallet and Dr. Daing have just left on a barge for Yuba; they ran into some very heavy weather. News from the placers on this river is decidedly encouraging; but then, as you know, bad news never leaks out.

Recently I have struck up a friendship with the young Abbé Doubet whose home was originally on the coast near Sûre (upper Saône). He is a fine fellow, and a typical ecclesiastic. I cannot imagine why he has come out to this remote and wild country. Apparently his goal is to establish a parish at San Rafael, a budding settlement seven leagues from here on the far side of the bay. But where will he get his parishioners from? The tide of immigration will not flow over across the bay while

the mining-fever lasts. If he could only find some devout, rich, and generous miner who would support his church this, no doubt, would satisfy, for the time being, his ambition, his zeal, and his frail health. He has the air of a poor but honest man. I have sold him some goods outright and have given him some more on consignment, which he will sell and credit to my account, such as rosaries, medals, and images.

With the profits there ought to be enough to buy a building site in the growing section of the city on which we could pitch a tent by way of indicating that we are about to take possession. I furnished him with enough cloth for this purpose. We have been given a building lot in the projected Stanislaus City which carries a clause with it making the donation null and void if we have not put a six-hundred dollar building on it within six months. I accepted it, as I was not committed to anything.

The property is 240 x 80 feet and faces on three streets. We have bought another lot near San José measuring 100 x 100 feet. It is unrestricted and cost thirty-six dollars. Every day hundreds of lots in new subdivisions which exist only on paper are sold off at auction. In this way fortunes are both lost and gained; it is all a lottery. But this is the way a number of cities, many of them now quite prosperous, sprang into existence. At places like Sacramento City, Marysville, Eliza City—the two latter being named for Captain Sutter's daughters<sup>\*</sup> who owned the land on which they were laid out—Stockton, and Joaquin City, the shrewd capitalists who bought up lots at the opening have since realized enormous profits.

Marysville was named for Mary Murphy, a survivor of the Donner party.

To-day reckless speculation is going on in San Francisco down by the water-front along Montgomery Street, which is so near the bay that the water comes up all around the last houses on the east side of the street. Furthermore, a plot of the city shows these lots to extend for three hundred meters into the bay. Every day building lots are sold which, at high-tide, are from one to three meters under water and 40 at a price from fifty to one hundred dollars, according to size and location. And the purchaser thinks he has made a fine purchase!

But he will find he needs several well-filled pocket-books in addition to his initial purchase; one for the pile work, one to fill in his land with dirt, and one to pay his construction costs. In all a total of from ten to twenty thousand dollars will have to be invested in less than two years, and this if he has no fires.

On the west shore of the bay, located on a steep mountain which overlooks the city, are some mounds of shifting sands which are difficult even for pedestrians to climb over. Here a flurry of speculation is going on, with the difference that prices are lower here, for this is not a business section but is being held for private residences, cottages, and small houses.

Levelling off mountains and casting the debris into the sea is becoming less and less costly in such projects, however, under the skilful handling of the Americans. In the last few days I have come across an excellent instance of this on a street running into Montgomery which will be the main artery of San Francisco for some time to come, which had been blocked by a series of shifting sand-dunes, varying in height from ten to twenty meters. These had caused building activities to shift over to a location about one hundred meters south of Sacramento Street where my little store stood.

Recently a steamer brought in a gigantic shovel with an enormous capacity of sand per minute and, in less than a month, a street [Sansome?] fifteen meters wide coming into Market Street—which runs up from the bay—was built with a quantity of transported material. If this goes on, in a few years there will be double the number of building sites along the bay, hillsides will be excavated, and the seemingly impossible accomplished which will make the value of these lands increase ten times over.

Since March first I have been renting a room near the site of my store. Here we are now living while I make final preparations and lay in supplies prior to leaving for the placrs. We are selling out at any figure whatever we cannot or do not wish to keep permanently. In the meanwhile Pidaucet has been building a little boat capable of navigating the rivers—provided there are any rivers in the bay for which we are heading. One of my little hobbies is a longing to be captain of something, if only of a nut-shell. An alienist would diagnose my case and probably cure me of this maritime

folly, by making me swallow a large quantity of sea-water. But as yet we have no specialists out here, and so my malady runs its course.

I am writing this on March nineteenth in my room at 3:30 in the 41 afternoon sitting, or rather doubled up, on my mattress which serves as a sofa. An old box acts as table. Naudet and Veron, one on my right and the other on the left, are each making a tent out of the bedding in imitation of the way we shall pitch our tents out at the placers—probably those on the Trinity River.

These lie about sixty leagues north of the coast on a bay bearing the same name. This entire region is reputed to be rich in gold and is virtually virgin country. It is inhabited by some inferior savages given to plundering and petty thievery. It has at last been decided that Veron, Pidaucet, and I—as well as Naudet who asked to join us—are to go out and mine together. A few ships are already preparing to sail when they have adequate freight and passengers. But all this will take time, as no one as yet has any definite news about this unexplored region.

Now and again in the gambling houses, we run across a certain person who is known as the Count of Campora and who claims to have been a Lieutenant in the Fourth Hussars. With him is a young girl, or woman, whom he introduces as the Countess of Campora. To judge by her charms, her conversation, her occupation—she is a croupier in the gambling dens—and the anecdotes circulating about her, she is far from being a Countess.

But she is generally accepted as the Countess, and is known as *La Campora*. She is said to come from Chambray where she was brought up in some obscure convent. If her appearance were more prepossessing she could make a fortune. Her psuedo-husband is most amicably doing nothing, and leading a care-free existence. Chambray is another gentleman who makes holes in the moon in anticipation of arriving there in the future.

Captain Sutter, to whom we owe the discovery of gold in California, owns an immense stretch of land along the Sacramento River and its tributaries. He has brought his family over from Switzerland. The towns of Marysville and Eliza City, named for his daughters,<sup>\*</sup> are on his property.



If he had more of the Yankee in him he today would be one of the richest capitalists in the whole world; but unfortunately much of the vast fortune that seemed to turn his head got away from him. His followers have tricked, deceived, and plundered him; taking advantage of his weakness for drink they have persuaded him into making transactions involving land-concessions which contain clauses so cunningly worded that they have brought on ruinous and endless litigation. According to local opinion within a few years he will be completely ruined by those whom he formerly aided.

Marysville was named for Mary Murphy, a survivor of the Donner party.

The United States Government owes to him much of the recent prosperity of California—the new star that will soon appear on the American flag—yet it is disputing his titles of ownership and is trying to get away his lands. In this war of avarice, which is being staged at local courts with the ultimate conflict to be held at Washington, the Captain is waging a fight single-handed.

To try and save some of his properties not in litigation he is obliged to sell or hypothecate other properties. Thanks to the money lenders, the lawyers, the business men, the judges, and all the vultures who surround him and fight for his fortune, it runs the grave risk of soon being dissipated.

I had thought of arranging for an interview with him to ask him for a concession in case I was unsuccessful at the placers, but after I heard about his embarrassing situation and his following I gave up the idea.

Mr. de Lambertye, a resident of Angoumois, has arrived here with de Gaulne on the *Succès*, with a shipment of wares. Unfortunately shippers seem to imagine that the climate of San Francisco is like that of Provence and have shipped out an avalanche of summer garments that have no market. Even at the mines, where the heat is intense during the summer season, trousers, and a woolen shirt, constitute the typical miner's costume. Here the weather, while never actually cold, is crisp all year around and those who are used to it do not even wear overcoats.

Mr. de Lambertye seems to be a sensible and well-educated man. These many new arrivals in this country give the impression of a kind of crusade into the Holy Land, present-day California; faith is

love of wealth, and the sepulchre is the mountain that holds the native gold in gigantic blocks—now in the hands of infidel Indians.

In the past, as in the present, the mass of crosses might well be the graves of all classes of society. Man, as a general thing, does not leave hearth and family to seek adventures in foreign lands unless consumed by ambition, love of gold, science, or religious ardor, or unless he has some duty to fulfill, some disaster to repair, some fault to forget, some sin to hide or, perhaps, some rope to evade.

On April first I received a bundle of letters from France. Among them was one from Adelstan written at Lasnes and one from the family at Passavant, together with a dozen packages of papers on which the postage must have come to at least two dollars. How was it that the letters I sent should have cost nearly thirty francs in addition to what I paid out at this end? Your letters were slow getting out to me; the post-mark showed they were mailed last December and January.

My mind is already made up, in a few days we are going to start 43 for the placers of Trinity River. I do not know how far they are from San Francisco—some say one hundred leagues, others one hundred and fifty—but they cannot be far from the Oregon frontier. Ships are leaving every day for this country; it is all the rage at the present.

The Government has sworn in one hundred men at ten dollars a day to keep off the Indians—scant protection against several thousand savages for the hundreds of camps situated along a stretch of at least fifty leagues. To-day we gave notice to Mr. Ward, from whom we rented a room for a month at one and one-half times the usual rate, that we were going to leave and now we are living in a tent until time to start for the placers.

Even now it is so warm that I have retired to the office of de France—which fortunately costs him nothing—to write this. He already owes rents to Mr. Chauviteau, which he has promised to pay when he has funds. But as he will never have any this proprietor will probably have to wait with the others. Much to my surprise this rascal was not malicious and cruel to the curé.

I wish you could have seen what I saw to-day at the offices of Green & Hodden, San Francisco business men, and jokingly called a California vegetable—a gold-nugget found in the Sonora placers weighing 22 pounds and 2 ounces. It was purchased for ten thousand dollars. Out here, at least, they lose no time!

Fitzgerald, a passenger on the *Cérès*, who took Valet and Dr. Daing to the mines located on the South Fork of the Yuba River, got back to-day and when I ran across him on the streets he told me he had seen a mule loaded with two hundred pounds of gold that a single individual had taken out in a few months. I am surprised all heads are not turned at such amazing opportunities. True, this is exceptional and in addition to this fortunate miner, Fitzgerald, there are many others less robust, less lucky, and less energetic whose day's work runs from one ounce all the way down to nothing. In the majority of the placers the daily profits of a miner are computed to be from four to five dollars. A tragedy that has just happened in one of the most influential American families in San Francisco has cast a pall over the entire city. I heard the details from the curé on whom Oscar de Gaulne and I were calling. Several years ago Frank Ward, a member of the Ward family of New York consisting of three brothers, Frank, James (whose room I rented) and Charles—fell in love with a rich New Yorker, whom he could not marry because of the difference in their standing. Disheartened, deeply in love, and full of ambition and courage, he left for Mazatlan, Mexico, with his two brothers. There he established a banking house which prospered from the 44 day gold was discovered in San Francisco [!]. Chartering a ship they came up the coast and landed in San Francisco with a load of provisions and a supply of currency at the most opportune moment. Speculating in lands toward the end of 1849 the three brothers found they had amassed a fortune of several hundred thousand dollars.

Frank then returned to New York and offered the young lady his heart and fortune. This time both were accepted. Not long after the marriage was celebrated the happy couple came to San Francisco. Within two months the young bride died, leaving the husband inconsolable. Three months after this tragedy land values began to drop, and Frank suffered severe losses. In a moment of discouragement he shot himself in the head. The doctors say he may recover but even so he will

lose an eye and be permanently disfigured. Feeling over this grave tragedy has run high particularly as there have been few deaths in the American colony. In most instances a death or complete ruin would not ruffle them; they would simply go out faster than ever after another fortune and another woman.

My friendship with Abbé Doubet has been kept up as much through sympathy for him as for self-protection. He has merchandise of mine worth ninety dollars which he hopes to pay for when I return from the placers. In selling goods off hurriedly it is necessary to run some risks. What he has are mainly images, crosses, rosaries, medals, tacks, nails, and bedding. I also got him some workmen to help build his San Rafael parish.

He is so intelligent I cannot help but believe he is honest, that he will succeed, and that I will be paid off. Otherwise this merchandise will be a dead loss, for it has no market out here, and will have to share the fate of the rest. Before he left to build up a parish and a following I invited him to breakfast. I do not expect to see him again for another six months when I go to collect for my trinkets.

Every day I meet some new refugees, stranded out here in California. To-day I met a Mr. de Homfrey, a gentlemanly Englishman. Misfortune seems to breed confidence. At a first meeting and upon the slightest acquaintance you will be told an entire life-history—true or false—and why France was left. Usually the sons of good families, men who have been more or less well brought up and educated, feel they must justify their presence out in a country which is the refuge of filibusters, outcasts, and scoundrels of all nations. Though natural enough this is utterly useless, for troubles too frequently fall on indifferent or even incredulous ears. An outstanding fact about all these emigrants is that while they leave their country regretfully and affectionately yet they always bring their conceit with them.

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All this is ably confirmed by the following story of a merchant out here who in 1838 left home—he did not say whether it was due to politics, passions, or financial troubles—and went out to Egypt

at the head of a party of Maronites and made war against the Pasha. For his courage and services rendered in this insurrection he received from the local government the title of Emir and in 1840 was employed by the sultan against the Egyptian Pasha.

But subsequent treaties wrecked his career which, if not bereft of danger, at least had its picturesque angle, stimulating his ambitions and satisfying his longing for activity. He returned to France where, up to 1849, he lived an obscure existence which he never mentions.

Toward the end of that year he came to California with a capital of some two thousand dollars. He tried his hand at everything. At the placers his mining was a failure. Out there he fell ill and, having exhausted his capital, returned to San Francisco, broken in mind and body. He is now leaving for the Hawaiian Islands where he hopes to develop and plant some acreage for the ruler of Hawaii and instead of being Emir he plans to become a gardener.

This same Mr. de Homfrey, who is quite distinguished looking, must have had great sorrow in his lifetime to judge by his slow steps, his bent figure, and his face which bears the marks of sorrow and disappointment more than age. He has an air of resignation about him much like that of a man who is about to put his last penny and his last drop of blood on the red or the black. May the wheel of fate be propitious, for his appearance and his voice arouse sympathy in me which I cannot evade.

Quite the opposite feelings were inspired by the tales of Mr. de Lamolére of the *Cérés*. He must lack judgment, or be devoid of common sense to discuss his past as naively as he did with me recently when he told me he came to California because his father was in love with his mistress and that he had been forced to leave the paternal roof. A quarrel having come up between him and his father the result is that he is going to lose the major portion of the paternal heritage which he had counted on to make up the losses he had suffered in some agricultural venture. This fact is not in itself surprising, but what does astonish me is that he tells a stranger about it.

Our own dailies are full of worse scandals than this, yet details are not known to the public; it is considered cowardly to air family skeletons, particularly for a son to accuse his father and discuss his private affairs with a stranger except under extenuating circumstances, even if Lamolére Senior

is brutal, bitter, bestial, and careless of his words and deeds. I predict that the young man cannot carry on a successful business out here.

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Our Consul, Mr. Guy, has neither the funds, time, nor character honorably to hold the position he is occupying. The customs have seized goods of his valued at three hundred thousand francs, so it is rumored, and are keeping one-third of it. Another third has been broken or damaged, while the remaining third, though salable, is of little value owing to the fact that business is dull and so many large shipments of foreign merchandise have come over.

As he must keep up his position and needs from thirty to forty dollars a day for running expenses, his salary is hardly adequate. For this reason he has had to raise money from outside sources. It is now said that he is ruined and that he leaves on the next steamer for Panama, both to get away from a disastrous bankruptcy and an onerous consulship.

Before we start off for the mines we shall have a chance to participate in one of the municipal election battles and see how officials are elected. For the past few days the city has been in an uproar with mass-meetings, public speeches for and against candidates—where there is tremendous applause or long drawn-out hissing—and processions flying banners bearing the names of the favorites. The day after there is equal enthusiasm for opposing candidates and, as the mob is made up largely of paid and half-drunk supernumeraries, many of them cheer the candidate of both parties.

You might think these drunken inflamed crowds parading, carousing, quarreling, eating and drinking night and day, were either inseparable friends, or irreconcilable enemies. Such is not the case. They were merely being paid to walk, shout, and get drunk and so they paraded, shouted, drank, and jostled the crowds. But after this was conscientiously done, the election over, their wages paid, and the wine put away, the city resumed its calm and everyone went about his own business. The opposing factions in the city extended the olive branch while promising to repeat the semi-comedy at the next elections. However, by that time popular opinion respecting the candidates

will no doubt have shifted and the hero of to-morrow may perhaps be the very one who lost heavily at to-day's elections.

My party is finally ready. Our location has been selected as well as the ship on which we have booked passage. We are going to the Trinity River on the ship *Hector* of one hundred and fifty tons, owned by Sullivan and Booth. I have guaranteed to furnish the passengers. Five of us are starting off together, our one idea being mutual aid and cooperation in working the placers if it seems expedient. These arrangements were made largely for Naudet who wishes to join Veron, Pidaucet, and me. Whatever motives I might have for leaving these 47 fellow-passengers from the *Cérès* I shall never abandon the last two members despite the erratic character of my cousin and the inherent worthlessness of my workman.

Having laid in our slim supplies of provisions, tools, ammunition, arms, camping equipment, a boat worth about two hundred and fifty dollars, and the sum of one thousand francs which we are taking along for emergencies, we are now ready. In addition we have some two hundred and eighty dollars worth of merchandise left which could be cashed in for at least one hundred and fifty dollars, and two lots of nominal value.

After talking with de Gaulne I gave into his keeping our surplus funds and our valuables. I also gave him the right to take in any goods that might arrive while I am away at the mines on this one condition: that on any funds he is obliged to advance me on short time, commensurate interest will be paid for the time the money is in transit at the rate of 6% a month. As a rule the current rate is 10% a month, with a security of buildings or merchandise. So I think I have made an excellent and far-sighted as well as a safe arrangement, for it is well known that de Gaulne and Mr. Chauviteau are about to form an association.

I am leaving for an indefinite period in which many things may happen and as I may never return alive from this wild and savage country I thought it best to give you some addresses in San Francisco where you could write in case of emergency and get some trace of me. They are as

follows: the Consulate; the firm of de Gaulne and J. J. Chauviteau; Pioche and Bayerque; \* Mullet and Callot, L. Bossange and Colliard; and Gardet at San Francisco.

Pioche and Bayerque had their store on the north side of Clay Street just below Kearny.

The *Hector* sails tomorrow morning. Adolphe de Finance is preparing to come overland in a short time and join us. He is detained here for the present. This will be a hard trip for him with no roads and guides and over an unknown country. I offered to advance him the price of his ticket on the *Hector*, but he is so diffident that he will not accept.

So far, dear cousin Charles, I have given only a brief sketch of the more superficial aspects of this future Queen of the Pacific during the winter of 1850 when she was making her bow to the world. I cannot say whether my sketch is an absolutely true one but if the original is not flattering do not blame me, for this is exactly the way she appeared to me from my particular point of vantage. But in all fairness I must praise, in concluding, the saner side of this young and eccentric city.

Some Jesuit Fathers who came out here in 1842 [1848] conceived the idea of building a Catholic Church as the population, already large, had no suitable place of worship. As lands were high, wages out of sight, and money scarce, as soon as they arrived they started a subscription list which met with unexpected success. Among the subscribers the Protestants contributed one thousand dollars. Where, in old world annals, could you find a similar instance of religious tolerance?\*

Fathers Langlois and Blanchet founded St. Francis Church on Vallejo Street in 1849.

With this pertinent question and with my own personal admiration for this new city I must bring to a close this fourth chapter of my adventures. I am beginning to feel the need of coming into closer contact with nature to heal my wounds, born of the trials and tribulations which have beset me since the day I landed in San Francisco, and I hope to acquire fresh strength by coming into contact with Mother Nature in her most primitive state, to study the Indians who are our closest representatives of pre-historic man, and above all else, to search for and find some gold-nuggets.



**PART V.** *To my dear aunt, Marie-Colombe Arulith de Massey, née Barthelemy. In memory of my uncle, Alexandre Frederick Auguste de Massey, whose memory I shall always cherish in consideration of his constant affection for me, I am sending you, without any preamble, this account of my trip to the placers of Trinity River, the most picturesque and most checkered, though perhaps the saddest and most unpleasant part of my adventures.*

### **SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS SAVAGES, MINES, AND MISERY.**

On Wednesday, April 3, 1850, we sent our baggage on board the *Hector*. She was to take us to the Trinity for the sum of thirty-five dollars apiece and forty-four dollars for all our freight. Under the agreement we had the privilege of staying an extra forty-eight hours on board. The statements, made by the owner and captain of this vessel, which had been posted around the town and inserted in all the dailies, praised her in glowing terms as “The Splendid Bark Hector,” though actually she is the worst ship in the harbor.

She leaks all over and has inadequate accommodations for carrying passengers. Though she was built to carry a maximum of thirty passengers yet there are sixty-six of us on board without counting the crew, most of whom are French sailors. Among the latter are the son of Admiral de Bectoux, who was a passenger on the *Cérès*, and Mr. Villeneuve, who is also the son of an admiral. But anything is possible in this amazing country of incongruous situations and strange customs.

Oddly enough I ran across Mr. St. Cintin de Baudry here on board. He is a man of good character, but improvident. He knew one of Charles de Finance's friends out in Africa, a painter called de Proux from Versailles, a man of legitimist leanings. In 1848, while travelling along the upper Saône, he dined with Mr. Dégène de Jonvelle who made him a present of several antiques. This drew his attention to art and he began to pose as an artist and an art collector as well, going round with a palette and brushes. To-day these have been replaced by the pick-axe and shovel.

Another odd type here on board is a dramatic artist from Paris who acted in a small theatre there and who has plenty of nerve, courage, and self-confidence but is so careless and light-hearted

that any one might think he held a contract as an important impresario. He will be able to give the savages some first-class skits even though he is living a life of hard manual labor and perhaps misery. From force of habit he is always the comedian, even here on board the *Hector*. To 50

Advertisements of vessels sailing for “Trinidad Bay,” published in the *Alta California*, San Francisco, March 21, 1850, and another advertisement of “The Splendid Bark *Hector*” from the *Alta California*, March 28, 1850. (Courtesy of the California State Library.)

51 my way of thinking this man—who is known as De Lamarre—is endowed with a most fortunate character, for he bears misfortune cheerfully. I prophesy with a certain feeling of assurance that he will never be very successful. With him is associated a Mr. Peron, formerly a merchant in Paris, and who has now barely what he needs for mining.

All the Frenchmen who are travelling on the *Hector* came to San Francisco either on the *Edouard*, the *Souffrey*, or the *Cérès*. Of them all by far the most amusing, the drollest, the most ridiculous, the most often drunk, and the most repulsive is a man named Campbell, who hails from Sydney and who may possibly be an escaped convict. As he does not speak French he is not aware how generally he is disliked by everyone.

The Master, after God, of our little ship and our small world is Captain Kempt. This commander, in whose hands providence has placed us, is a man close to thirty. Inclined to corpulency and with the jovial air of the gourmand, the *bonvivant*, he represents the lowest type of pure-blooded Yankee, a man equally careless of his own life, the lives of his passengers, and the safety of his vessel. He sleeps or drinks all day long and drinks and gambles through the night. While never actually drunk, yet he is ugly and cruel to the crew and even to the passengers who join him in his nightly dissipations.

His one aim is to relieve them of all their money before drowning them, wrecking them on the coast, or forcing them off the ship—who can tell what might happen with such a captain? A sailor by accident, he is indifferent to his tasks and responsibilities. I even long for old Captain Messmaker of the *Cérès* who, even if he cared little about the welfare of his passengers, cared so

much for his ship that he could not rest when she was in the slightest danger. He was also sober—luckily for the owners, shippers, and any travellers who were crossing on her.

Our present situation is very different. We are starting off for the unknown with a wild adventurer who cares nothing for his own skin or the lives and property of others. Everyone is finding quarters wherever there is any free space available; the best goes to the first arrival. I do not know what difference there is in price, but I do know there is practically no difference in the comfort of the accommodations.

My own living quarters are on the lower deck opening off the main cabin. The Irishman [!] Kempt has installed himself over me so that I am exposed to all the trials and tribulations of his constant intemperance. Even if I escape sea-sickness how can I escape the results of his drinking? My one hope is that the passage will last only eight days; in this lies my one and only consolation.

On Thursday morning we finally got under way, but as there was 52 no wind we made about two miles, then came to anchor. The Captain and the lighter-hearted and more jovial of the passengers passed the night drinking and singing. I am afraid I have very little sympathy with them.

Friday, April fifth, at ten in the morning, we passed out of the Gate under a good stiff breeze. A number of ships were coming into the harbor; the lure of California, it seems, is as strong as ever. Among these vessels we passed the *Civilian*, one hundred and forty-three days out from Boston with a full passenger-list.

On Saturday, April sixth, we had a brisk favorable wind in the night with fog in the morning. My travelling-companions, Veron and Naudet (called de Courcelle) are both sea-sick as usual, while I have a slight headache. On a ship like the *Hector*, (and it is not the only one) this is the kind of food we have: no bread, no wine, no brandy, salty bacon and beef highly seasoned with pepper, salt, and spices. Three meals a day are served. For breakfast and lunch we have our choice of tea or coffee, sweetened with a poor grade of brown sugar. Our third meal consists principally of biscuits and water.

This evening the Captain got up a game of monte—a Spanish card game—and lost several hundred dollars; the Captain is an expert gambler and many will soon find their purses empty with such sharpers—men whom they do not know to be honest—and where cheating is so easy. Plain common sense and not virtue warns me to keep away from it and watch from the side-lines, as Veron and I are now doing. The Captain has just lost quite a considerable sum of money but, sly player that he is, he has done this to entice the foolish to join his gambling table.

On Sunday, April seventh, I saw a Cape off toward the east which proved to be Cape Mendocino. Advising the captain of my discovery he veered off a little from the route—though he acted as if he did not like to bother with such trivial matters. The wind being contrary we made little headway.

We sighted land two miles away on Monday, the eighth. From the distance it looked partly barren and partly wooded with several snow-covered peaks in the distance. At four in the afternoon we headed off-shore. After dinner a game of monte was started, the banker winning one hundred and fifty dollars, a sum large in proportion to the pecuniary resources of the players.

Naudet, though invariably stingy and mean under all conditions, is one of the most ardent players. Evening after evening he risks relatively important sums of money. Such conduct makes me suspect that our partnership will be of short duration. The total capital he is gambling away is some six hundred dollars according to my estimation, at least a part of which ought to go toward purchasing a horse to carry our supplies from the port to the placers. But I am afraid his capital will be materially reduced if not entirely wiped out before the voyage is over. I am beginning to understand why he came to California: because of gambling and women.

The sea is rough; we are shipping considerable water. Many of the passengers who have been unable to get better quarters and are sleeping in the hold are being forced to take a bath of a most unwelcome character. Whales are common in these waters; three of them have been frolicking around our ship. We have also seen porpoises, “shoemakers,” and ducks; these are the only other wild creatures encountered. We are having plenty of cold weather. A ship hove in sight today, coming down from Oregon no doubt and bound for San Francisco.

On Wednesday, April tenth, and again Thursday, the eleventh, at the same hour we again caught a glimpse of Cape Mendocino. We are keeping about twenty miles off the coast, however, as the fog is thick. When we are heading in toward the coast, Mendocino lies off starboard and Trinity Bay off port. Everyone is getting restless. This, however, does not prevent a certain few who are indifferent to the future from singing, drinking, and enjoying themselves as gayly as if they were off on a vacation.

The comedian De Lamarre and Peron furnished the music; Campbell, the man from Sydney who was so drunk he could not stand up straight, was the clown of the party. Our ship's cook who was badly intoxicated, and who did not dare sit down at the table where the Captain was playing and win some money off him, begged me to play for him. This I declined to do; but he was so persistent and had such a pleasant way with him that finally I gave in. He handed me twenty dollars which I placed. This was lost at the first round. While his expression did not change in the slightest, yet, fortunately he did not try again, for the Captain is out to ruin everyone and would not have stopped even at his cook, even if he had been a white man; being a negro, the barrier between the Yankee and him is insurmountable.

One of the gravest inconveniences of this voyage is having a drunken or seasick man over you; and I have had a sample of both. Veron is again in the throes of *mal de mer* just as he was on the *Cérés* every time we had bad weather, and Campbell is always drunk. Night after night as I sleep below them I get little rest or quiet.

Again on the fifteenth the bad weather was still with us but on the sixteenth the sun came out, the wind turned in our favor, and the 54 Captain finally deigned to look for our harbor. We have been making six knots towards the northeast. The evening games have grown very animated and over four hundred dollars has been lost at a sitting. Several players are completely bankrupt; others have lost a half or three-quarters of their capital. Our friend Naudet has left about three hundred dollars on the green carpet of the *Hector*. Though it is now impossible for him to fulfill any of the promises he made me, yet we are still associates while at sea.

On Wednesday, April seventeenth, we sighted the coast about five miles away. Toward the north we could make out Cape St. George[?]; it is very wooded and hilly. The Captain lowered a boat to reconnoitre along the mouth of the Rogue [Klamath?] River—a name full of promise—but the skiff leaked so badly that after two hours of ineffectual effort they were forced to head about and return to the ship.

With such equipment as the *Hector* carries and with a Captain like Kempt who runs any kind of risk, I cannot help thinking that the owner and Captain are working against the insurance companies who cover the passengers and cargo, and that what they want and hope for is a wreck.

Thursday, April eighteenth, in spite of the rain that hid the horizon as luck would have it we pulled in to a bay in front of what looked like an island. Behind this island rose a plateau covered with virgin forests; the surf and the rocks were in the foreground. The more optimistic passengers thought this was Trinidad or Trinity Bay. All the skeptics doubted it. However, two small cannon were shot off—they were weather-beaten from being out on deck—by way of saluting this virgin country and announcing its invasion by vagabonds and outcasts from the Old World.

It is now nine in the morning just an hour since we dropped anchor here in this small harbor and gave a salute with our rusty artillery. We may be able to avoid misery and shipwreck, Indians and bears—we can always struggle against these odds—but it is impossible to escape the intemperance, inefficiency, and brutality of Captain Kempt, who is a real menace to the passengers.

The harbor, if the shelter where we are anchored can be so designated, is a poor one, and exposed to the northwest [?] winds, which are very violent and frequent in this neighborhood. The bottom is also soft, the anchors drag easily, and the ship might easily be thrown up on shore. Though a mile off shore we are surrounded by reefs.

Trinity Bay is twenty miles long. Our ship is lying in its northern end. As there are no rivers near here we have no use for small boats. This is fortunate as mine would have been useless except for 55 duck-hunting in good weather. Several rivers, so I understand, are supposed to empty into

the bay, one about ten miles and another fifteen miles below here. Of this fact the sailors have no definite knowledge; all they know is that the village of Trinity [Trinidad], situated on Trinity Bay, is not at the mouth of the Trinity River, although the names are identical. Such inaccurate information is often very misleading. Around here it is said that the Trinity, like the Salmon, is one of the branches of the Klamath River which empties into the ocean near the boundary of Oregon. Explorers and sailors as yet know comparatively nothing about this country.

Three more embryo villages which need only capital and labor to expand and prosper are just being laid out on the shores of the bay, south of Trinity City. These are Humboldt, Eureka, and Union Town.\* The latter lies upon a little creek inaccessible except to skiffs and barges but which, since it lies closer to the placers, is more likely to become a center for supplies and merchandise.

Soon afterward renamed Arcata.

On Friday, April nineteenth, we had nasty weather with some rains and violent winds which blew so hard that the *Hector* broke away from one of her anchors. If the other also breaks we shall be smashed against the rocks. As a precaution I am sending Pidaucet on shore with what materials are needed to erect our tent. We shall all go ashore as soon as we have proper shelter.

The passengers who failed to make arrangements to remain a few additional days on board ship have been mercilessly put off on shore by the Captain, together with all their belongings, in spite of their pleas, the storm, and the blackness of the night. Such barbarous conduct, conduct worthy only of an ogre, a brigand, or a brute, justifies my impression of the man the first time I had any dealings with him. In my particular case he is bound to allow me to remain on board forty-eight hours longer, but I am in a hurry to get away from the vessel of whose Captain I shall always retain the most unpleasant memories.

On Saturday, April twentieth, my friends and I left the ship with our supplies and luggage, and installed ourselves in our tent overlooking the sea which commands a view of some fifteen [kilo] meters. There is no beach at high tide although at low tide it extends many meters. From it a steep bank arises abruptly. On its summit is the site of the young settlement. At present this is nothing

more than a large flat area covering seven or eight hectares. It is completely surrounded by the sea and the virgin forests—which will soon fall before the axe of the American settler.

Thirty tents and three houses now under construction comprise the 56 village [Trinity City, now called Trinidad]. Plans have been made, however, for dividing it into enough lots, streets, and public places to hold twenty thousand inhabitants, with room for further expansion. My personal opinion is that this village has no great future. The harbor is dangerous, and there are no large streams or rivers accessible, merely some springs near the sea. Its future will be determined largely by the wealth of the placers.

Since the arrival of the *Hector* the population here has been temporarily doubled. The miners, most of whom have only scanty resources, only remain long enough to rest and get what information they can as to routes and directions. Nevertheless, the information here is hardly more reliable than what we got in San Francisco. The last miners who went out have not come back and nothing has been heard from them. What news we have been able to gather here was given us by ex-trappers from Canada who came overland in the gold rush from their English dominion and down into California where they discovered[!] the Trinity and its placers and who wintered along the rivers and environs.\*

Major P. B. Reading, an American from Sutter's Fort, discovered the Trinity placers the previous year. The Canadians found him there when they first came into the country.

From their extravagant remarks it was first believed that a remarkable region had been discovered. Rumors spread like lightning, with the help of speculators and charlatans, that this country contained immense riches. This is why I, together with many others, am now camping here by the bay, with the sea and the *Hector* spread out before me, and a wilderness and unknown perils ahead of me.

This tiny hamlet is controlled by an *alcalde*, a Spanish[!] official who, at the approaching elections, will be replaced by a mayor. This local *alcalde* is a kind of petty monarch with almost unlimited civil and judicial authority. The first settlers, by virtue of their right as pioneers, took possession of plots measuring one hundred and sixty acres (one acre equals forty-one ares) starting from the sea



and going back as far as the forest. These they have already resold at good prices as building lots to those who have confidence in the future.\*

Captain Warner's account of the founding of Trinidad, Trinity City or "Warnersville," as he chose to call the town, is found, as quoted from the *Alta California*, in the *History of Humboldt County*, San Francisco: Elliott and Co., 1882, p. 101. Here a townsite had been laid out shortly before by R. A. Parker. The place was abandoned, however, and Captain Warner of the brig *Isabel* landed on the 10th and took over the site, building the first house and holding an election on the 13th, when an alcalde, second alcalde and sheriff were chosen, and 140 votes, it is claimed, were polled. The party of Canadians is mentioned and said to have consisted of "fourteen men and two females, with sixteen fine pack horses." De Massey describes the situation just one week later.

The shore and regions around the bay are inhabited by Indians, who live in *rancherias* or settlements which lie two or three leagues apart, and are made up of four or five huts, each of which houses one or more families. The native huts are made out of boards which are not sawed but split, much as planks are split for staves. Having no knowledge, till now, of such tools as the saw and the hatchet, they have managed nevertheless, to get planks from two to five meters in length and from thirty to forty centimeters in thickness by using fire, wedge-shaped stones, and wooden mallets.

Digging foundations about a meter deep first, planks are erected 57 on them overlapping one another. These, plastered with mud, form the walls. More planks are laid on top to form the roof. These huts have no windows or chimneys; the only opening is a hole, level with the ground, which is barely large enough for a man, crawling on all fours, to enter. Such is the hut, or rather hovel, that shelters indiscriminately men, women, and children, creatures who, as a type, are close to primitive man.

By profession these natives are fishermen, hunters and sneak-thieves. As they are not agriculturists they subsist on what roots and wild berries nature furnishes. They have no domestic animals. The men go around naked; the women wear a fly-net made of a kind of flax around the hips which comes half-way to the knees—but it is far from modest.

I have already seen several specimens of these natives hanging around the tents in the village, waiting for a chance to steal or barter furs or fish for some trinket, such as pearls, bits of colored glass, necklaces or, better yet, for knives, tools or utensils.

Their food consists mainly of venison, fish, fresh or dried, and acorns. Sneaks and cowards when alone, when banded together they act like arrogant and defiant highwaymen whenever they run across some stray miner. In plundering, however, they will use every kind of trickery and cunning rather than resort to violence and fighting. These they use only when the former has proved a failure. The natives along the coast, so I am told, are not as strong or well-built as the mountain Indians. But in a little while I shall be able to verify, for my own satisfaction, this information which I got from a Canadian who had had personal experience with the natives under different conditions.\*

These Indians are the Yurok, an Algonkin people. See Waterman, *Yurok Geography*, Univ. of Calif. Publ. Archaeol. and Ethnol., vol. 16, no. 5, 1920; and Kroeber, *Handbook of Indians of California*, Smithsonian Inst., Bureau of Amer. Ethnol., no. 78, 1925.

On Sunday, April twenty-first, all impatient to look over the trail leading to the placers, I struck up an acquaintance with a man from Louisiana, a native-born Frenchman who acted as secretary to the *alcalde*, one of his Yankee friends, and another Frenchman, who belongs to an organization known as "The Colliers," so named because its members mined coal all one winter near San Francisco. This Louisianan, who goes by the name of Guelin, came overland to California like so many other miners and explorers and so knows what precautions to take in this land of bears and savages.

Carrying four days' provisions, woolen blankets, guns and ammunition, all four of us started out in the morning for the great unknown, on a path that was not clearly marked, through the depths of the forest. As we have no map to show the course of the Trinity my compass is useless. We are striking out toward the northwest, where 58 our route is supposed to lie, and paralleling the sea which lies some four thousand meters on our left. This is a rugged country and full of deep ravines. We are constantly climbing up and down in the shade of enormous trees which are very ancient.

After walking six hours we descended a steep slope to the seashore, which seems at this place to rise almost perpendicularly from the sea. Here we found we could travel along a pebbly beach some two or three hundred meters broad, with the sea booming on our left, and the cliffs rising on our right. All this coast is covered with gigantic tree trunks half buried in the sand which have been

lying here for many decades—possibly thrown up on the beach by the sea or brought down off the cliffs which are being steadily undermined by the heaving seas.

Having travelled some six kilometers with the sun beating down on our heads and the pebbles making walking difficult we stopped and camped an hour before sunset on the northernmost extremity of this deserted beach close to a little salt lagoon and within reach of a spring of pure water.

Several hundred feet away stood an Indian *rancheria* which we had visited when passing by. It had only five huts in all, but these held quite a number of men and women, many of whom are away most of the time on expeditions, either to secure food or to satisfy their inbred love of plunder. Not far from this settlement was their graveyard, marked off with stakes, where the graves of parents and ancestors were decorated with the possessions they had used during their lifetime.

This rite, which appears to be their only religious observance, is sacred, and anyone who dares defile the graves would be swiftly punished by a deadly arrow shot quietly from behind some tree. Knowing this, we approached the sacred burial-place with the deepest reverence. Though well-prepared to put down any aggression on their part, yet we did not want to anger them and cause trouble.

Merely a scant handful of old women and children were guarding the huts for the middle-aged members of this little tribe. The principal occupation of these natives is tanning the skins of wild animals, making arrows, quivers, and fishing equipment, and weaving excellent baskets. The latter, made of wood or rushes, are used for a number of purposes: as containers, for packing heavy loads on the head, and even for cooking food.

This last custom seemed very odd to me, but this is how it is done. The basket is woven so firm and tight that liquids cannot filter through it but as the material used in weaving is not fire-proof the containers cannot be put on the fire. So when the Indian wants to cook his food he fills the basket with cold water, and makes a fire nearby, in which 59 he heats some stones. These are then put into

the basket one at a time, and, as fast as they cool off, they are replaced by other hot stones. The cooking is then rapidly done in this simple and ingenious manner.

But certain preliminary preparations must precede what I have just described; fire must be procured. Now the Indian has no charcoal, tinder, or matches. Usually, however, some stump is burning in the vicinity, or the remains of a camp-fire are still smoldering. If the fire happens to be far away the Indian takes a piece of half-charred wood, makes a hole in it, and with both hands twirls a stick quickly in it in opposite directions until in a few moments the charred stick bursts into flames. Tradition does not say whether or not this trick was handed down to the Indians from Prometheus.

I have already described to you what both the men and women wear. Not long ago I met one of the men, without a stitch on, carrying in one hand a sailor's knife which he had stolen or taken in on a trade, and in the other hand a bow and over his shoulder a quiver of arrows. His hair, which was tied up on the top of his head, was decked out with birds' feathers, possibly signifying chieftainship. Others are often seen wearing mantles of tanned deerskins. This luxurious garment, by the way, is more frequently used as a protection against cold and rain when sleeping out under the starry heavens.

The women are the beasts of burden, as the men when travelling carry only their hunting equipment. Sometimes the women in addition to the loads of provisions which they carry in a basket balanced on their heads and tied on by a thong, and the heavy loads on their backs, have one child cradled on their shoulders and carry another in their arms. Loaded in this manner they follow their lords and masters day after day through forests, over plains, and up and down valleys where a civilized man would find it hard travelling.

The women, so I am informed, adorn themselves with tattooing which begins at the corners of the mouth and runs down to the chin; young girls are not tattooed so heavily as the older women whose chins are so covered by blue lines that the natural color of the skin is concealed. Girls and young matrons have only a few lines traced on each side of the chin. My own deduction from this fact is that the first tattooing is put on when the young girl reaches puberty and is gradually increased

year by year until she is an old woman. Such a custom, devoid as it is of all coquetry, would never become fashionable among civilized races where the women pretend they are not a day older than they look.

I cannot understand why the American Indians are called redskins. While I have seen the natives of Brazil, Peru and California, 60 yet I can find nothing about them to justify the use of this expression. Their true color is close to a chocolate-brown.

When the Puritans out here in California see these nearly nude women they are scandalized. The Americans say it is “shocking”; the French, “abominable.” When I first saw these Indian women walking around in the open, and talking and laughing in the most natural manner before strange men when wearing scarcely more than the proverbial fig-leaf, my only feelings were those of indifference for they were neither beautiful nor appealing. Every time I touched their rough, cold, oily skin I had a feeling of repulsion just as if I had put my hand on a toad, tortoise, or huge lizard.

And these thoughts, which may perhaps seem paradoxical, came to me: that the dress worn by civilized races is more conducive to incontinence than the habitual lack of clothing worn by the savages since the imagination is apt to covet what is concealed even though, more often than not, clothing hides a lack of charm and beauty. In both instances love is closely linked with lust, though the fine physique of the natives is enough to prove that they do not abuse it. They may even have a periodical mating season, like most animals. Having no interpreter and being unable to talk with them I must resort to speculation, but I am going to leave the solution of this to wiser heads than mine.

Another fifty years more and this civilization will be gone and this savage, this primitive man who is now here before my eyes, will have become mythical or legendary. This is why, during my trip through this country, I am trying to learn everything I can about them whenever I come in contact with any tribes or isolated individuals.

The Indian has no beard on his face and no hair on his body. I cannot say whether this is natural or the result of some method of hair-removal. His features resemble to a certain degree those of

the Chinaman and the Kanaka or South Sea Islander with the fine eyes, fairly flat nose, thick lips, and prominent cheek-bones of those people. The contour of the head is round, and not oval. This is especially true among the women. The latter are usually fat. The men in general are thin rather than heavy, and very muscular. They are agile on the trail, intrepid swimmers and divers, and quick with the bow and arrow, being able to kill a bird the size of a pigeon on the wing at forty paces.

Their sense of hearing, sight, and smell is highly developed, they can hear a man's step several kilometers away [!] and can see a sparrow at five hundred paces. They can also smell game passing in the vicinity better than a dog can. Having no adequate offensive and defensive weapons nature has given them unusually keen senses. This has made it possible for them to survive, year in and year out, in this wild country where they are now living. But as the status of things has recently changed, their very existence is in peril.

Their one weapon of defense is the arrow, which is often poisoned. The latter is used exclusively in hunting as the regular arrow will not bring down large game like bear and deer. To capture animals they watch for their trails, dig great deep traps, and occasionally trap one of them. When this happens a general holiday is declared. Sometimes captured grizzlies weigh as much as one thousand pounds; small bears run from five to six hundred pounds, on the average.

The Indian is neither generous nor hospitable; he invariably tries to get something for nothing. In all his dealings he will usually try to persuade the purchaser to accept something worth less than what he is after. He will also try as a rule to get away your most valuable belongings, even woolen blankets or cooking utensils. When this fails he mutters the word *chicano* meaning trade, or barter, crossing the index finger of each hand before his face—a gesture used to express the same idea. Dickering then takes place each side offering the least for the most, until in the end terms are agreed on and everyone is satisfied. From the Indian fish has been procured while he, in turn, has received glass, trinkets, and a taste for horse-trading and barter so inbred in human nature.

As for their spoken language—the Indian requires only a limited number of words since his needs are few and such things as physics, philosophy, science, industry and politics are beyond his ken—

it seems to resemble somewhat that of the South Sea Islanders being a medley of aspirated vowels or guttural sounds. I have listened to the Chinese and Kanakas talking in San Francisco and, as I listened to the Indians here, it impressed me as being one and the same language. But I leave it to philologists to determine whether this similarity is real or only apparent.

Up to the time of puberty the children of both sexes run around entirely naked. Young children seem to have a more intelligent air than their parents, for the adults are so preoccupied with material cares that their intellectual faculties lie dormant or grow more and more useless as these cares increase.

Mothers nurse their children as long as their milk lasts. I have seen children five or six years old jump over a tree trunk a meter high to take the breast while the mother appeared highly amused at this prank. The women did not seem to object to the advances we made to these little savages. Infants in arms, on the other hand, were frightened when they saw us, and when I tried to make friends with 62 them by offering some sugar-lumps my advances were met with cries and tears. But the little children who clustered around us were not at all diffident.\*

A remarkable history of these Lower Klamath River Indians has been written by one of their number, Mrs. Lucy Thompson: *To the American Indian*, Eureka, Calif., 1916.

Daylight was waning when we left the Indians and made our camp two kilometers below them near a brook which ran between an embankment and the remains of a great petrified tree which had been lying there since time immemorial. The grayness of the sky overhead completed our feeling of isolation as we sat alone by the embers of our comfortable camp-fire which was reflected in the waters of the lagoon\* beyond, or north of us. Fifty meters west was the sea pounding on the pebbly beach below us. In the forest all around deer abounded; the lagoon was thick with ducks. Far above our heads the birds flew by, making strange nocturnal noises. The little brook close at hand seemed to encourage all this with a murmured approbation.

Probably Big Lagoon.

With such surroundings I spent the night out under the vast canopy of the heavens. Tired out as I was after the long tedious day's travelling I would have slept soundly if the cold damp sand had not chilled me to my bones. Several times in the night I had to get up and throw more wood on the fire.

This was my first real experience roughing it. This life, as you can see, promises to be full of action and excitement. A man naturally takes a fresh supply of courage when he is off by himself in a strange country and forced to face the many difficulties in his path when living close to nature. Under similar circumstances I have spent more than a hundred nights out in the open wrapped only in my woolen blankets and with mattresses made of fine sand, damp rocky soil, moldy vegetation and, now and again, green grass, a decayed tree, or a bed of leaves for variety, but usually with only the starry vault of the heavens over me. But of all the beds I have ever slept on the hardest and the most back-breaking, though you might not believe it, is hard sand. I speak from deep experience!

On Monday, April twenty-second, at sunrise we broke up the camp by the sea and, heading northeast, climbed the mountains. Here we ran into a superb forest where we got lost before we had gone a league. Our lunch was cooked in a small ravine. It was here that we passed a forest-fire and, had the undergrowth been thicker, we might easily have been trapped; but as a strong wind was blowing, the burning area several meters wide, and the vegetation stunted in several places, we were able to avoid the flames.

Having found what we thought was our path behind a thicket—for it looked as if it had been used for some time by pack-trains made up of men, horses, and cows—we followed it for more than an hour, only to discover we were in a *cul de sac*. It was then that the idea flashed across our minds that we had been following the tracks of a large herd of deer [elk] that after travelling in a straight line for nearly five kilometers had scattered and gone off in the underbrush. This was our first experience.

Taking a new lease on life, after lunch we looked in another direction. Here we came on a path less clearly defined than the first and which we followed for half an hour, believing it would eventually lead us to the banks of the Trinity. Confident of this discovery we pushed on, with the sun beating



down and giving us a thirst more painful than anything known in civilized lands—a thirst that causes more suffering in an hour than twenty-four hours' travelling without eating—and yet we found no water. I had a few drops of brandy in a small flask which I was afraid to use for fear of increasing my suffering.

Finally we came to an old resinous tree trunk. This I found was hollow, and contained a kind of tar mixture, as brown as if it had been dipped in lye, which had been collecting there since time immemorial. To take it or leave it—this was the question. Finally thirst won out and I took several mouthfuls. It did not taste badly and quenched my thirst, reviving my flagging spirits. The efficacy of water saturated with tar is not properly appreciated by the medical faculty!

Continuing, we travelled through a magnificent forest. Never have I seen any vegetation like it nor anything so unbelievably majestic. Here were pines [redwoods] growing one hundred meters high that measured twelve to fifteen meters in diameter [circumference] and were capable of making planks six meters or more wide. Many of them were hollow and could easily shelter six or seven person for the night. Others were half-burned, maybe by lightning, by the Indians, or by some careless trapper. No doubt all these three causes contributed.

The Indians, particularly in the spring and autumn, set the stubble in the pastures on fire to destroy the insects and reptiles, and to make hunting easier. Miners and hunters camping under the trees also build fires which they are not always careful to extinguish upon leaving. Things like this are what cause the fires so often found in forests and which can be seen at a great distance off on the horizon.

In the evening, just as the sun was setting, we returned to where we had camped yesterday. There we found one of our comrades who had remained behind visiting with several Indians who were going out on the lagoon to fish in the evening. One of them slept on the sands in front of my tent all night long. He wore no clothing and simply used a deer-skin as a cover. Even while he seemed friendly enough I suspected he was up to some trick and was waiting quietly to steal something.

So for this reason we got little rest that night. This passion of thievery will ultimately prove fatal to the Indians as a whole, and to this little tribe in particular.

At the mines some weeks later I learned that several miners were robbed and wounded near where we had been camping, that one American had died from his wounds, and that an expedition had come out from Trinity Bay, destroyed five huts, killed several natives, and captured one young woman whom they took back to Trinity City and dressed in European garments. For a month she lived with a Frenchman, apparently enjoying this new life and not seeming to miss her savage village. But one fine night her natural instincts came to the surface and, prompted by that inconstancy which is the bane of all nations, she vanished, returning, I fancy, to her own people, there to relate her adventures and her impressions of life among Europeans.

On Tuesday, April twenty-third, we headed forth along the shores of the Bay of Trinity, following for an hour and a half the pebbly beach, running between ocean and lagoon, which led to the Indian huts, the homes of our native friends of last evening. As the fishing was poor and only a few sardines had been caught, they went along with us. On the way a curlew circled above us high up in the air. Taking a long chance I fired at it. To my infinite surprise it fell. Like a flash the Indians disappeared, picked it up, and brought it over to me.

This little incident was significant in that it inspired fear and respect in the minds of the savages who were eye-witnesses. It was interesting to see how curiously they examined the bird's wounds. It would have been even more interesting to have known what they were saying about the gun and the hunter in general. I made them happy by giving them some curlew feathers which they like to wear in their hair as ornaments when hunting, making war, or making love. They seemed grateful for this small favor.

We also shot some ducks out on the lagoon, but they were so far away we were unable to reach those we had wounded. The Indians, who saw where they fell and planned on getting them after we had left, refused to swim out after them, giving the excuse that their skiffs were not handy.

We dined sumptuously that evening off curlew dressed with fat bacon and roasted over the embers. In place of bread we had hot biscuits; to drink, brandy diluted with a large quantity of water. Our table cloth was the turf, our canopy the shade of a tree hundreds of years old. My comrades were asked to share this luxurious banquet. As the sun was setting we returned to Trinidad after nine hours' tramping. This was my first attempt at exploring.

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I rested on the twenty-fourth, but on the twenty-fifth, hearing that a group of forty miners, mainly Frenchmen, were leaving for the mines, I persuaded my tent-mates to join their expedition, leaving me to rest a few days longer at Trinidad, to look over the neighborhood, dispose of some of our belongings—possibly selling them—and follow them as soon as possible. To go now was out of the question for the time being, as there were only five horses, which had already been spoken for, in this locality. I also wanted to try to get some land in or near Trinity City, or even in Humboldt or Eureka, as these towns are the natural ports for the placers of the back country.

But Naudet either from laziness or capriciousness refused to leave without me. Veron followed suit, being mean or merely obstinate. As we needed to use Pidaucet for the short time left us under his contract I was forced by the contrariness of the others to choose between the alternative of losing the work of the latter or the provisions and effects of the former, valued at some two hundred and fifty dollars. So I decided it was wiser to start off alone with Pidaucet and join two or three energetic and good-natured miners who were starting off ahead of the main train.

The expedition itself was to be led by four Canadian guides up to the Trinity River for the sum of three hundred dollars. Knowing from my experience on the *Hector* that most of this party were improvident and unreliable, I did not care to join them for the journey, preferring to be independent and save both time and money.

This is the first time since leaving France that I have left my Cousin Alexandre Veron alone and free to rely on his own resources. However he will be constantly on my mind, for in the year or more I have spent in his society on the *Cérès* and in San Francisco I have had ample time to know

him. He is a unique character, a type I have never met anywhere else even among the thousands I have met in all ranks of society.

For this reason I am going to sketch his personal appearance and character, for there may never be any one else like him. Prosper Alexandre Veron, who was born in 1813 at Langres, is the last male representative of the younger branch of the Veron family. Originally from Pesne, this family, ennobled in 1540 by Charles V., has been living in Langres for the last three centuries where they are highly thought of. One branch of the family is called the Verons of Monginot because of numerous intermarriages made with this family in Langres and to distinguish it from the older branch, the Verons of Farincourt.

Charles Nicolas Veron, his father, was my mother's brother—thus making Alexandre my first cousin. He married Jeanne Rose Marque of Santy, daughter of a magistrate, and niece of Colonel Baron 66 Benand and of Madame Francois Aubertot de Frenoy, who was closely connected with Countess Massogne de Latour and the Philpines of Rivière and Persée.

In 1814 she became a widow and devoted her life to raising her four children to the best of her ability. As she lived economically and quietly she left at her death eighty thousand francs to each of her children. Now while a mother may understand how to educate her daughters she is often incapable of bringing up sons even when they are strong and intelligent. This is what happened in my aunt's case.

Her two daughters were brought up as all young girls of that period were, but when her two sons reached manhood they had so little self-reliance that they were incapable of holding any responsible position.

Auguste, the eldest, soon left the parental roof, started out for himself, married, lost his fortune, and died soon after. Alexandre, who was the youngest, remained under the wing of his mother and brother-in-law until the day he heard I was leaving for California. At that time he came and offered

to go out with me, be my traveling-companion, share my good and bad luck alike, participate in any profits, and let me manage everything.

The prospect of a life full of adventure quite carried him off his feet as he was thoroughly tired of his own humdrum life, its monotony, his limited opportunities, the family problems, and the narrowness of small town life. In a rut as a result of his inadequate education and lack of knowledge of business conditions he dreamed of rich fields to conquer, of the ocean, foreign lands, unforeseen events—and finding millions.

This was his mental attitude when he sailed from Hâvre. With sea-sickness came his first disillusion. The length of the voyage, too, was a disappointment, the loss of his baggage exasperated him, while the prospect of danger, privations, troubles ahead of him at the mines, and our future prospects, have preyed on his mind until he is now so unsociable and irritable that he has suggested we separate. This plan I accepted readily.

But on the other hand, I would not like to be reproached at some future time by his family for having left him marooned, with the sea on one side, and the wilderness on the other, without protectors or guides, and at the mercy of sharpers and savages. I believe he thinks he can never succeed at the mines where muscular strength counts for everything and where knowledge is useless. He feels that a separation will have its pecuniary advantages as well as free him from a tutelage which he no longer thinks is necessary.

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From the standpoint of physique Alexandre is large, well-built, a splendid walker, a good hunter, and a heavy eater. He is rather ugly as the result of a fall he had in childhood, which flattened his nose down into his upper lip. His face is large and bony; his eyes are small, keen, and fawn-colored, and he is practically beardless. Caustic and quick-witted, as a talker he is often as careless in his conversation as in his conduct. Yet he is fundamentally sound and sincere and, I am certain, even at the age of thirty a man morally pure. Such was and is my Cousin Alexandre Veron, certainly one of the oddest members of our family I have ever known.

Leaving him at Trinity Bay I started off for the mines along the Trinity River with Pidaucet, our carpenter. The latter is quite another type altogether—indolent, taciturn, unresourceful, awkward, and cowardly. He has to be constantly supervised every hour of the day, and to have every error explained and pointed out. He has a bad case of home-sickness and misses his wife, whom he openly deceives, and his foster-children. He sighs for the flesh-pots of Egypt which are missed mainly when they are not available. Under conditions like these, with two heavy burdens on my hands in addition to my many other cares, I am about to leave for the placers. During the last few days Veron has spent most of his time cooking for himself and his friends, mending his stockings, and waiting impatiently for letters.

At noon on April twenty-fifth, 1850, Naudet with a pack weighing fifteen kilograms on his back, Pidaucet with a load of thirty, and I, carrying some twenty-eight kilograms [over sixty pounds] of provisions, utensils, guns, and ammunition, started out from Trinity Bay. We had tacitly agreed that, as soon as we reached the Trinity River, Naudet was to return, rent some mules, and rejoin us at the placers with everything we had left behind in our tent, and that Veron was to come out with him.

The main train left in the early afternoon led by a Canadian guide on horseback. The two pack-mules which the capitalists of the party had been able to procure at the inflated figure of three hundred dollars apiece had started three hours ahead of us. All along the trail we met packers who were not able to keep up over the rough roads and under the heavy packs they were carrying. This forced them to pitch camp about three leagues from where they had started. Passing them we made our own camp about a league beyond in the woods adjoining the sea.

On the twenty-sixth, at nine in the morning, after having breakfasted we were off. We lunched at the northern end of the lagoon I have already mentioned [Big Lagoon]. While this lap was not long, 68 yet a march of two hours over pebbles or gravel with the bright sun beating down, and loaded with a heavy pack, is quite enough for a tenderfoot as yet not seasoned, and unaccustomed to this kind of exercise.

In the afternoon we climbed the mountains which bordered the eastern side of the lagoon. That night we camped on the summit [Trinity Mountain] near an extensive forest. We slept in a hollow tree trunk large enough to accommodate not less than ten men with all their baggage.

Here in this shelter I held a kind of bazaar, thanks to the glass beads I had with me—such a spectacle as had not been seen here for many a long day. The Indians, who had been on friendly terms with us for the last few days and who had picked up some ducks I had brought down, had come to trade turbot for rice, bacon, tea, and a little brandy I had taken along to ward off fatigue, make me forget my troubles, and make the future look more roseate.

On the way out two of our shipmates joined us, one a Frenchman, the other an American. The former had travelled overland to California. The latter was a pure-blooded Yankee, a fact that stuck out all over. We are fortunate in being able to travel with men of such wide experience, and the five of us have firmly made up our minds to push on ahead and put up a fight if we are attacked.

On April twenty-seventh we travelled all day long through the forest, which is rich in splendid vegetation; more than once we climbed hills with such steep slopes that we had to use both our hands and feet to make any headway. This exercise lasted several hours! Overhead flew several flocks of wild birds, which the backwoodsmen call grouse. These birds have been imported, so it is said, from England to Canada. From there they have migrated down into Oregon and California. They are about as large as chickens, and as highly prized as the pheasant. \* I fired at one but missed, as luck would have it, for it would have been a welcome change acceptably replacing yesterday's duck and, to some extent, it would have been a compensation for our long tedious day's travel.

What de Massey saw were probably native grouse.

We crossed a little stream [Redwood Creek], unknown to geographers, about twenty-five meters broad. A tree, chopped down on the banks, had been thrown across the river for a bridge, which was strong enough to carry a mule heavily loaded. By the time we reached the opposite bank it was four in the afternoon, so we concluded to camp there for the night.

The river was full of trout. I told Pidaucet that this was a fine chance to show his skill as a fisherman. Although he has spent most of

THE TRINITY MINES IN 1851 Showing the miner's trails. Facsimile of the northern portion of a MS map by George Gibbs. Original in the Indian Office, Washington, D. C. — *Courtesy of C. Hart Merriam*. Names which are obscure in this reproduction are: Trinidad, Pekuan Creek, Bluff Creek, Red Cap's bar, Weitspeck, Pine Creek, Pekan's bar, John's Creek, New River, Bestoil or Bestoils, Sane's or Sano's Peak. There is a trail leading up Indian Creek from Happy Camp, also one through Big Bottom to Scott's River.

69 his life at Selles on the shores of Concy, Upper Saône, building boats and launching them on the upper and lower Saône as far as Lyons, yet among all his friends he has the reputation of being an expert fisherman—a pleasant reputation at any time, but one particularly useful at the present.

So he let down a line while I tried my luck a kilometer on down the river. Unfortunately neither of us got a bite and so our supper was a morsel of grilled bacon and some thick and heavy flapjacks. Hard ground is not conducive to sound slumbers, even with woolen blankets. This is why in place of a mattress we first spread out a piece of waterproof. This waterproof is used both to keep off the rain in the daytime and the dew at night.

Next, building up a good fire, we lay down with our feet up to it, looking exactly like so many spokes radiating out from a central hub. A few feet away the brook bubbled, while gigantic trees served as a kind of shelter over us. For bed-fellows we had our guns, knives and swords; some few had their revolvers.

On April twenty-eighth, after walking through the forests until noontime, we came out on a green meadow where a herd of deer [elk] was grazing, and which looked like the rendezvous of every deer in the country. Through it ran several brooks of sparkling water. The spot was entrancing despite the fact that it was so surrounded on all sides by the forest that it only extended two kilometers. What a superb site this would have made for a hermitage in the Middle Ages. What a



retreat for a misanthrope in the Nineteenth Century. But to the modern unromantic trapper it merely means a chance to kill a fat buck, or bear. In this hope the day was passed.

If Naudet had only brought his rifle we might have brought one down but unfortunately we had only three guns between us and none of them was meant for long-distance shooting. Moreover, Naudet was afraid to take a chance as he had nothing but his hunting knife—a useless luxury—and some pistols.

During the day we saw several herds of deer [elk] ranging from one hundred to two hundred head, but they kept at a safe distance. They are huge fellows, weighing around eight hundred pounds. Some of them act as scouts and at the faintest noise or the slightest sign of disturbance give signal to the entire band to disappear in the forest. I could not resist firing at some does. I wounded one but, as we had no dogs, she escaped. In this way we lost a day and delayed our journey, without adding anything to our store of fresh provisions.

On April twenty-ninth at six in the morning we left this land of wild game and travelled for the next six hours through forests, plains, 70 and valleys. Then as the trail became less and less clearly marked we retraced our steps. As I had been famishing all day I finally quenched my thirst with water that had been collected in the hollow of a pinetree. At sundown we camped in a meadow near a brook—an essential for every camp—not knowing whether we had made even ten kilometers headway.

We left this camp, which I dubbed “Camp of the Wolves” in honor of these creatures which howled all night long around us, on April thirtieth. I also carved on a tree the date when we had camped—hieroglyphics to the Indians who may be the only ones to see them. As through some mistake we were on the wrong trail we decided to go back to where we had camped the night before and strike out again from there.

Here at this camp we found the French caravan which had been several days on the road, as well as several Americans who had been robbed by the Indians and were returning, thoroughly discouraged, to Trinity Bay. Nevertheless we decided to push on ahead. In the night a fog as wet

as a rain came up, adding nothing to our comfort, and our waterproofs proved more useful over than under us. The camp has taken on quite an air of activity. There are more than a hundred miners camping here, either returning to Trinity or going out to the placers.

On Wednesday, May 1, 1850>, we again started off on our journey. This time as the road was good we went on ahead of the advance guard; the main group took a longer and less difficult route. Seventeen of us camped that night on a small hill. There we found some Frenchmen and Americans who were afraid to go on any farther as they thought they might be robbed of everything they owned by the Indians\* who had already stolen their guns. Among these Frenchmen was an organization known as Grand-Perret.

The Indians along Redwood Creek were the Chilula, related to the Hupa farther east.

On May second we broke camp and, after climbing several mountains which were not so high as they were steep and rugged and making only three leagues after four hours' walking, we halted near a small Indian settlement. Noting our numbers and how well armed we were they made friendly advances. For a few glass beads and two fish-hooks I got enough deer meat to last three of us one day. But to offset this Pidaucet, with his usual negligence, lost his ammunition. This is a serious matter in a situation like ours where it is direly needed for food and defensive purposes and where it is one of our main safeguards.

When we got under way again at two in the afternoon several Indians trailed along after us and now and again others joined them, coming silently out of the woods and underbrush, others crept out of the tall prairie grass which seemed to magnify the number of robbers 71 following us. So far, at least, they have been friendly, humble, and, in fact, even obsequious and would gladly carry our baggage if we dared trust it to them.

It was five in the afternoon and the sun was just setting when, after twelve hours' marching, we reached a plateau overlooking a river which we thought was the Trinity. We were completely fagged out. I had fallen a little behind my companions, who were about fifty meters ahead, when I suddenly looked around and found about thirty Indians following me.

The natives were all so young and strong that they could easily have knocked me down, robbed me, and disappeared before my friends knew anything about it. It seemed, however, that they had other and better plans in view: to rob the entire train. This is all that saved me at a time which I am convinced was the most critical moment in my whole life. I stopped, looking back every moment or so, filled my gun to be prepared for any emergency, and made sure my sword was handy. The path was so narrow that these brown, tawny men were almost on our heels as they travelled in single file behind us.

I had made up my mind to fire if anyone tried to block my way and prevent me from catching up with my companions. The five minutes it took me to catch up with them seemed like hours. Finally we were all together on the left bank of the river—either the Rogue [Klamath] or Trinity.\* Though it is not known definitely which river it is, I am inclined to think it is the former, meaning “River of Thieves.”

Probably on the Trinity River near the center of the present Hupa Indian Reservation. The Hupa were apparently the Indians they dealt with from this time on.

Night was coming on and it was high time to pitch camp, but the site was neither desirable nor convenient. For one thing the soil was a fine gravel and the place was exposed to attack, being near some small hills covered with a thick undergrowth where Indians could easily hide and surprise us in the night. Since it was too late to be over-particular the only thing to do was to accept the situation.

On the right bank of the river, which must be some sixty meters wide at this point, rose a shady bank. Beyond, off in the distance as far as the eye could see, were magnificent live oaks, which gave the countryside the appearance of a vast pasture, some four or five kilometers in extent. Through the trees here and there we caught glimpses of Indian villages—a fact far from reassuring. Weary and hungry as we were we had no alternative but to brave it out and camp. So camp we did.

The Indians came up to us freely offering their services. They were eager to relieve us of our packs, baggage, and arms, and only after some difficulty were we able to keep them from getting too

friendly. As they made no attempt to barter it was thus evident that they had some other motive in mind. Finally, realizing that their obsequiousness merely served to excite our defiance, at a given signal from their chief—an old fox—a young brave of about sixteen or seventeen leaped in among our baggage, stole Naudet's hunting knife—a fine piece of workmanship with a hilt of embossed leather well calculated to attract the cupidity of a robber, even a civilized one—let out a yell, and took to his heels. In the twinkling of an eye he had disappeared. The whole episode had not taken over three seconds.

Having seen him in the act I reached for my gun and started out after the thief although, owing to the tall grasses, I could not see what direction he had taken. Reaching a little knoll, I saw that the agile runner had gained considerable headway on me. My companions kept calling out “Fire,” “Fire,” and as I despaired of ever catching up with him I fired at a distance of sixty meters. He fell instantly—from fright no doubt.

I started after him hoping to get back the stolen article, but before I had gone half way he got up and took to his heels again. I had expected to find the knife where he fell but he had left only the case, which I brought back. Disgusted with my lack of success I returned this to its owner who was more angry even than I at this bit of bad luck.

In due respect to my victim, I believe I scared and annoyed him quite enough to make him remember me for some time to come.

But all I had for my gun was bird-shot and my rifle does not carry far. At the time of the robbery one of my friends fired right among the Indians who immediately scattered. The only thing he accomplished was to frighten them and make them run as fast as they could.

Long after they had disappeared from sight we heard their yells of distress and calls for help. These were answered by more cries coming from far off in the distance. Gathering for a council of war we unanimously adopted the following resolutions: to extinguish all lights in camp that night and not attract the Indians; to take turns standing watch until daybreak; to abandon this camp as soon as possible and find a more strategic location with better command of the approaches; and to remain

on the lookout until the main train pulled in. When this arrived—probably within twenty-four hours—we would have a force of some sixty men against five or six hundred natives in case of open hostilities.

After pitching our tents and eating supper we lay down to a fitful sleep while the sentinels, who were changed hourly, remained on guard. When my turn came to stand watch this thought kept running through my mind: What would have happened if the Indians had not been merely sneak-thieves and our guns had not seemed like thunder? In 73 one attack they could have wiped us out, and taken all our packs, arms, ammunition, utensils, provisions, garments, money—everything, in fact, that they did not have themselves and coveted. Of legal tender they might have taken as much as seven thousand francs in gold. I alone had one thousand francs in my belt, and while I do not know what the rest had yet Naudet must have had as much as I did. The odds were also five to one against us. I cannot say what plans they are making, either openly or secretly, by way of retaliation. All night long cries, which were taken up at distant points far off on the horizon, sounded anything but reassuring.

In case of open trouble or treachery no doubt I would be singled out for having wounded one of their number. Moreover, I am easily distinguished from the others because of my hat, which is not one of gray felt such as the others wear, and the red woolen coat I use in place of a shirt. This is a costume that can be quickly recognized and it is impossible to change for I have no other clothes and no one else wants to run the risk of being held responsible for firing, even though I did so on the advice and in the interests of the entire party.

However delicate and precarious my position may be I am not at all afraid to face the savages, though I am certain they have spies everywhere—perhaps even as far back as Trinity Bay—and know every foot of this country as well as the routes of the pack-trains and miners. They probably know who started out with us and that this party ought to get in inside of twenty-four hours. But they know, as well, that if they kill anyone without provocation they will be forced to pay a heavy penalty and that the least punishment that would be inflicted on them would be the destruction of their four villages and the levying of heavy indemnity.

In their colonizing, the Americans, who are constant readers and great admirers of the Bible, have adopted this maxim in the Indian Country, *initium sapientiae timor domini*. Though often effective it is frequently barbarous where put into practice. We hope the warning recently administered will prove adequate and that no more skirmishes will develop. I am egotistical enough to consider my own skin worth more than those of a dozen Indians.

When the sun rose on that momentous day, May third, we immediately got up. First we looked around our tent, the neighboring hills, and along the banks of the river. Here and there we found a few arrows which had been shot from the right bank of the river where some little hills overlooked our camp on the other side. Some, too, might have been dropped in their hasty flight. Either the darkness of the night, the absence of our camp-fire, our extra guard, or the fear of our guns had kept them from bothering us.

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We took some samples from the river-sands and washed them, but either because, in our inexperience, we did not know how to handle them properly or because they were not auriferous, we found nothing of value.

Supper over, we decided to move from our present camp-site and pitch our tents in a sheltered spot over on a hill in the same direction we had come from yesterday and some two kilometers in from the river. There we would be safe from surprise attacks and could hold the enemy on all four sides. This was also the road that would be taken by the pack train which we had decided to join before going further.

During the day several Indians came within hailing distance. These were probably spies sent from neighboring villages to sound out our attitude toward them. These newcomers were obsequious, humble, and petty sneak-thieves in comparison with their bold confederates of yesterday who plundered us brazenly. They insisted on pressing their services on us. We did not let them come near our tent, however, and did not take our eyes off them for one instant.

After holding a kind of mock conference with their leaders it appeared, so far as we could determine, that they were trying to make us understand how sorry they were for the robbery that had been committed, but that the thief did not belong to their tribe. This was their way of explaining why he was not punished. After asking them what had happened to the thief they gave us to understand that he had been so seriously wounded that his death was expected momentarily. Yet his legs had seemed strong enough yesterday when he got up after he had tripped when running away!

After this explanation they made friendly overtures. Gesticulating in my best manner I gave them fully to understand that any robbery or any attempt at robbery would be immediately punished and that, while we had not come to disturb or harm them, we would take the defensive at the first sign of any enmity on their part. I think they clearly sensed what I was driving at, for they left us in a spirit of friendliness and appeared satisfied with the results of their mission. If they came only to find out whether their arrows had done any damage they were disappointed, for we were all well and in fine physical trim.

On May fourth the caravan which we had been so impatiently awaiting and which, travelling in single file, could only make a short distance daily even under the leadership of the Canadian guides because the pack-mules were so loaded down with provisions, pulled in at eight o'clock and went into camp two miles on up the river from where our robbery had been committed. Now that we were finally together once more and there were about sixty white men in all we felt we could hold our own against all the Indian tribes in the neighborhood.

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Danger being now virtually over, the next day the Indians brought us many kinds of food. Dried fish is abundant here, also acorns erroneously called "sweet," a root something like the onion, potato, or artichoke, and a drink made of some strange ingredient, more or less bitter, which is far from appetizing. In exchange for these products we gave them some imitation pearls and other trinkets, using their provisions to save our own from running out.

In the middle of the day I decided to inspect the road leading to the placers which are reported to be five days away from this camp. So two of us started off together on the trail accompanied by about twenty Indians who followed us for two miles or more, then left us. Wading into the river we washed several specimens of sand but failed to find any gold.

The Indians having gone back to their villages situated along the right bank of the river, we strolled on down the trail some five miles from camp. On the way down two Indians, entirely naked and unarmed, came out suddenly from the underbrush and stopped us, begging us not to go beyond this point but to return to camp. They gave us to understand that we were on dangerous soil, and that the neighboring tribes might attack us when we least expected it, and rob us.

Whether this information was out of consideration for our welfare or to keep the caravan from going on I cannot say, but they were so insistent that we thought it prudent to retrace our steps before dark. We retraced our steps reluctantly, for we think these primitive men have no idea of kindness or consideration. However, I may be grossly misjudging them.

Later on the thought came to us that they might have been referring to a skirmish that had taken place farther up the river between some natives and Canadian trappers, who are not very conciliatory, and a certain group of Americans at whose hands they had been severely punished for their misdemeanors.

In spite of what they said, however, I am still wondering why the Indians took such an interest in us, and cannot decide whether it was treachery, timidity or a sense of pity. My final conclusion is that they were sent out by some neighboring villagers who after the clash with us believed their lives were in danger, and that they were trying to avoid more trouble by being friendly. Not caring to attack such large forces they were trying to delay us as much as possible in order to sell us their stale fish, rotten acorns, and wild roots for things which Mother Nature does not provide for them and which are especially coveted by their women who are born coquettes despite their scanty clothing, tattooing, and primitive way of living. Now that it was growing dark 76 we started back.



We got in without accident or other adventure to our prairie camp, with its sixty-four men and hundred pack animals, just as night was falling.

On May fifth, eighteen volunteers, several of whom had horses, after listening to my story decided to cross the river several miles up-stream to look over the situation and to return that evening. Pidaucet was one of them. The rest of us waited for them to return before starting off on our journey. This is unfortunate as it means time lost and extra food consumed, for if we remain in any one place for any length of time I can foresee trouble ahead even with only brief delays. Most of the party, so it seems, do not worry their heads over the future.

The belated explorers returned to camp on May sixth, having been living on short rations and sleeping out in the open. Roses are blooming on the banks of the river near our camp, the air is sweet with their fragrance. Our departure is now finally set for to-morrow.

We got off in a body at sunrise on Tuesday, May seventh. Fifteen of us formed the advance guard. I tried to get Naudet to go back to Trinidad with the Canadian guides, knowing he was not properly prepared to go on, and as we had promised to provide his food, I knew his share would have to come out of our own meager larder. But the plan did not meet with his approval. The length of our trip is uncertain, famine threatens and the guides have gone back. While I have an excellent compass no one knows what point on the horizon we should head for. Under conditions such as these we are starting off on what promises to be a great adventure.

Right here, before I forget it, I want to tell you about an exhibition of Indian dances we saw a few days ago while the train was tied up in the "Camp of the Great Prairie." It was on one of the days when a crowd of natives, men and women came over to visit and barter. There were at least sixty of them in all.

Among the Frenchmen in our party is the comedian Lamarre, at one time an actor in Paris, who is always laughing and joking even in trying situations. So, whenever the slightest opportunity arises,

he jests, jokes and entertains the Indians, making himself extremely well-liked and winning their esteem and confidence.

Noticing one young Indian who seemed more intelligent than the rest and who appeared to have some influence and authority over his comrades—possibly as a chief, medicine-man, or high priest—Lamarre told him to call all his scantily-clad friends, men, women and children, and form a circle.

Singing with a high nasal tone a rhythmic phrase of three or four notes, he soon got everyone, without moving away from their places, <sup>77</sup> to beat time their feet. Gradually, from time to time, he quickened the tempo to such a degree that there was a thundering, clapping, and pattering in unison and these usually stolid faces beamed with ecstasy and pleasure.

The rest of us on the side-lines could not help laughing at the pleasure this innocent diversion—so suited to their primitive and unemotional natures—gave them. In another twenty minutes everything was quiet again, and the savages left to look after their own small interests. By to-morrow the trials, the long tiresome marches, hunger, thirst, danger, and all the uncertainty of what lies before us will begin again.

Let me tell you what happened this morning, May seventh. For four hours we followed along the meadow bordering the river, camping finally on its bank. On the opposite shore rose a plateau dotted here and there with an Indian settlement. As soon as we had stopped the Indians came over offering us fresh salmon and a kind of mushy food which was new to us and which had a bitter flavor. They also brought us acorns.

Situated as we were, there was no use in offending them. So we accepted, as if they had been celestial manna, these products of the culinary art of the inhabitants who live along the Trinity. After this Lacedæmonian repast I accepted the offer of the Indians to inspect their little straggling village. Two of my friends volunteered to go with me. Several motives moved us to undertake this adventurous step—the hope of getting some fresh provisions such as fish or game, and the desire to see at close range a true Indian village. Up to the present time we had only seen a few

settlements having only a few huts each and which had not been particularly interesting for the reason that being on the sea their inhabitants had already come into contact with the white miners and fishermen.

Here away from the coast the individual, the primitive community life, and the type as a whole are instances of the primitive way everyone lived five or six thousand years ago. So, succumbing to the temptation and without counting the risk involved in putting our heads into this wasps' nest, we took our lives in our hands, got into a canoe manned by two savages—who had everything to gain by drowning us in the river—and the three of us started off.

Two of our number carried only swords, the third man was better equipped as he had a first-class revolver with six chambers. Crossing the river without mishap we climbed the hills and found ourselves among the Indians.

The village consisted of twenty huts, built of wooden planks 78 plastered with mud and moss, and roofed with split logs which the Indians obtain in any thickness and breadth desired by burning down a tree and splitting it with a wedge-shaped flint which is driven in with a piece of wood.

The red pine<sup>\*</sup> grows abundantly in these California forests, and as it is easily cut, this task is not difficult.

The redwood does not grow so far east as this, but Professor Kroeber tells us that the Indians brought planks up the river. It is thought that the description of the locality here fits the Hupa country better than it does the narrow gorges of the Klamath where other good sized Indian villages of the Yuroks were located.

Each house is only one story high and is set down about a meter in the ground—a way of building meant no doubt to afford protection from the cold in the winter season. The hut has only one opening which serves both as door and window. This is round, close to the ground, and about fifty centimeters in diameter. To enter it is necessary to crawl in on all fours—but happily obesity is unknown among the Indians[!] Any fat woman would be forced to sleep outside. Such is the exterior. While I had hoped to see the interior, in addition, my friends prevented me, saying I might be brought out dead or at least stripped of all my belongings.

I was particularly impressed by noticing that there were far more women than men in and about the village, and inferred that the husbands and brothers were fishing, hunting, or off looking for trouble. I would place the total population at around one hundred inhabitants. Among the younger women I noticed several who were quite goodlooking. Among the older ones of both sexes there were several who were so wrinkled that they might easily have been a hundred.

Only about a dozen young men put in an appearance; they covered everything we owned. Had we listened to them we would have handed over every single thing we were wearing. And yet they offered us almost nothing in return! Before long they grew unpleasantly familiar, pressing eagerly around us, and, if they had not seen one of us carrying a revolver—for we made no effort to hide the fact that we would check their cupidity in any way that seemed expedient—we might have been the victims of an ambushade.

This being the situation, we concluded to return to camp and so avoid any chance of being robbed by natives. We were taken back in the same canoe that had brought us over—we were almost afraid to stir—and soon rejoined our friends who were beginning to worry over what had become of us.

The Indians left us with the salutation *Tschoo* \* which may mean “good-bye” or, possibly, “Do not come back here again.”

The Hupa have an exclamation of this sort, and in the Yurok *Tsutl* means “good-bye.”

But we had managed to purchase enough dried salmon to last us two days. This was the only practical result of our trip. It was three that afternoon before we broke camp and went on nine miles where we spent the night.

On Monday, May eight, thirty of us started on ahead. As we 79 got farther and farther up the river the mountains became higher, the woods more impenetrable, and we were finally forced to cross their summit and camp at a spot where two rivers forked. This is referred to as the South Fork [of the Trinity River]. Can this river be the Salmon? No one seems to know anything about it!

Here we found a party of Americans with thirty mules returning from the placers and going in to Trinidad to lay in supplies. They were prospecting along the river—washing the auriferous sands whenever they stopped. They are camping over on the right fork of the river. While some are busily panning others are cooking or bathing. We saw the brawny silhouettes of the latter, wrapped in red and white woolen blankets, walking solemnly around in the sun getting dry. They made a quaint picture with the forests for background—an effect as original as it was unexpected.

Finally the slow-moving pack train, always behind schedule, caught up with us. One of the horses having strangled had been immediately cut up and eaten, for provisions are already running low. Several, in fact, are out of supplies and depend on their friends who have not even enough for their own use. For the past few days Naudet has been among this number; Pidaucet and I are looking after him.

This desperate situation has made me insist that he take advantage of the chance to travel with the Americans back to the village and return and meet us at the placers with Veron, who has charge of our supplies and personal belongings. In the end the prospect of starving, the chance of never returning, and my irrefutable arguments won out, and he departed.

On May tenth we again took the trail. As we had to cross the river the Americans, as they had a canoe with them, generously offered to get us out of our predicament for the modest figure of two dollars a head—there were twenty-five of us! These nineteenth century Charons are good bargainers! Once on the opposite bank we did not linger in these Elysian fields with their shade, their silence, and their sense of desolation.

Those who were short of funds waded over with the water up to their necks, holding their guns up over their heads, and dried out en route. Even if this river we have just crossed is not the Acheron it may be our Rubicon. Still we must press on since hunger, fatigue, and misery threaten us along the Trinity and until we reach the placers.

With all the courage, energy, and gaiety we could muster we pushed ahead, climbing without a stop for seven hours. Then tired, hungry, and thirsty, and not finding any water, we went on until dark when we came finally to a small brook.

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On the way we met a pack-train returning to the coast. By them we were told that we were thirty miles from the placers. This meant only two days more before we should reach this long-desired land of promise. Soothed by this hope we spent a restful night, and by morning felt rested in body and spirit. Despite our meager repast of pancakes and water we were eager to start off once more. This was on the tenth of May.

The next day we tramped for five hours over hills and valleys, but all to no purpose, as we had lost our way. Not until three that afternoon did we find the trail again. Following it until five that evening, weary and discouraged we again camped beside a little stream. Our next move was to attempt to rejoin the main party for, should we have another such unfortunate experience, we would be out of food completely—except for roots and acorns, and the latter are very scarce at this season. We had not made more than six miles.

On the twelfth of May, in the hopes of making up for lost time we started off bright and early in the morning. Within less than two hours we were lost, all traces of the trail had ended, and while we scouted around in every direction looking for it—twenty of us spent two hours looking—we were unsuccessful. Several of the members of the party grew panicky, among them Pidaucet who several times lost his head completely.

Not knowing what to do in this trying situation, we decided to camp, hoping in the night we might think of some solution. I profited by this forced rest near a brook—probably the same one we had come upon yesterday—to try and kill some game. Nearby was a shady pool. Here I stationed myself, hiding in the underbrush.

At the end of half an hour I killed a duck. Never was there a happier hunter or one more famished than I. A duck, think of it! And a large duck at that! Enough for two days! No duck would have meant going hungry. Pidaucet and I were the center of envy as we dressed it and roasted it that day and divided one-half between us. All this took less than an hour and, in spite of our hollow stomachs which were far from being satisfied, I put the other half away for to-morrow.

As the more of us there were the more slowly we travelled, on May thirteenth I decided to go ahead with Pidaucet and two Germans and get in before the rest, who seemed in no hurry to reach the mines. We cut straight through the woods ahead of us, hoping to find some indication of a trail.

But we found something we were not looking for—a forest of trees about sixty meters or more high. Where the branches should have been near the base they were smothered with wild vines, which climbed far 81 up their trunks in a search for air and sunlight, to a height of some ten meters above the ground. These great pines measured about thirty centimeters[?] in diameter.

Farther on we found an immense fallen tree which may have been lying there for two centuries and which was still in an excellent state of preservation. Near it was another of equal size which had wound its roots around the fallen log and had sent up great branches in an attempt to extract strength and life from the sunlight. In following the tracks of some big game we frequently came across deep traps dug out by the Indians. These were covered with thick branches and leaves and were designed to catch large animals. If we had only been lucky enough to find a single doe, deer, bear or stag, what a feast it would have brought to the discouraged members of our party! In addition to that it would also have supplied us with food for some time to come.

For several kilometers we passed by plants which supply the raw material used by the Indians in making articles. These plants, or vines, hung in festoons from tree to tree several feet off the ground. Had they only been Ariadne's thread they would have led us out of our present labyrinth! However, I must admit that it is used only for fishing-tackle, *esparto*, and loin-clothes, or fly-nets, the only garments worn by the Indians.

After walking seven hours, we returned to the place we had started from in the morning. There we had left the pack-train, which had not moved from the bank of the river. Discouraged, despondent, and weary, I camped with a heavy heart, my head aching, my stomach hollow, and my feet covered with blisters.

Having rested, three men on horseback started off on May fourteenth to explore the country for several leagues in the immediate vicinity and to look for our lost trail. In the meanwhile we mended our socks, searched for game which was nowhere in sight, and lived on herbs and roots.

Among them we found a plant known as the wild cabbage which looks something like our plantain in France. This, in a sense, appeased our appetites. We also made a few cakes, baking them in the ashes, as we had no ingredients for pancakes. Having also run out of tea and alcohol we drank, instead, a concoction made of mint and elderberries, unsweetened. It was refreshing, however, and quite in keeping with our present condition.

In the evening our guides came in, but they had only found what we had found—forests, mountains, and no trace of a road. This made everyone look serious; even the gayest sobered down, and the most calloused looked care-worn. Personally I am seriously alarmed over 82 what fate has in store for us, but I am trying to hide my fears and not increase the general feeling of downheartedness.

On the fifteenth of May we decided to make a fresh attempt, so I started out with seven volunteers one of them being Pidaucet—my man Friday. In the hope of having better success we took another direction. We knew a road existed as several pack-trains had gone over it, but we did not know how to get our bearings or how far away it was. After tramping all day long we camped at night near a little lake. Snakes and tortoises, which vanished into the lake at our approach, were thick along its shores. How my mouth watered for turtle soup! Unable to get any of them, we did manage, however, to kill two large snakes with some stones, as well as several little ophidians, which we ate for supper. But a stew of reptile half-cooked in salty water is a poor feast for epicurean stomachs! Having nothing better, we ate them together with some herbs and a few biscuits. Completely worn



out we soon went sound asleep, soothed by the music of a little brook trickling only two hundred feet from our camp.

On May sixteenth three of our comrades deserted us—having more faith in their own lucky star than in ours. This left only five in our party. Leaving all baggage and supplies, except a gun and compass, behind, two of us climbed a high mountain which commanded a sweeping panorama of the country.

Personally I felt certain that, if a road actually existed, it would follow the summit. The lower levels, in this thickly wooded country, are so covered with underbrush that they are almost impassable, and so it is only higher up that the trees are thinned out enough to permit men, not to mention pack-animals, to travel. In our inexperience no one had thought of this before. After climbing for five hours my companion and I reached the top. Here we found a recently travelled trail, in fair condition, following the direction we were taking. There was now no longer any doubt but that we were on the right road. We were saved at last!

But after finding it we did not know which turn to take, the right or the left. Not wishing to shoulder the responsibility of this decision I concluded to put it up to the crowd when we got back here next day. With a light heart we now retraced our steps and climbed down the mountain we had ascended under such difficulties. On the way down, however, my friend and I could not agree on what short cut to take. When I started I had taken my bearings with the compass from a high peak on a line with our camp. But in my hurry to arrive without any delay and announce the good news I took the right-hand turn, my companion following the same trail we had taken that morning.

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I tramped and tramped for four hours, crossing ravines, pushing through thick underbrush, climbing up rocky peaks and getting so entangled in the underbrush that, worn out and exhausted, I could go no farther through the dense underbrush and young pines that barred my way. In trying to scale some rocks which hemmed me in on three sides, my strength gave way. I had visions of passing the night alone and hungry in this isolated spot—and I had imprudently come off without food,

water, or blankets. As the nights are cold all I could do was to light a fire to keep off wild animals. As a signal of my distress I fired several shots, but got no response but their echo. And yet I knew I could not be very far away from camp.

Despondent over the situation I sat down and rested. But if my body was idle, my mind was active turning over ways and means of extricating myself from this dilemma. A host of reflections, reflections far from gay or reassuring, passed before me. If I survived the night safely, would my comrades, deep in their own troubles and struggling to save their own lives, look for one lone member of their party? They had no particular interest in me, and misfortune breeds selfishness. Pidaucet was the only one who knew I had one thousand francs on my person, but he would never think of starting out alone after me. Would the others be willing to go with him?

For half an hour I sat reflecting and meditating with as much philosophy as possible, and though I was not rested when I got up, yet I felt a new sense of vigor. I now made a fresh attempt to climb over the rocky peaks. What I had to do was to get over onto the other side and look for the trail I had lost. This was the only course open to me. I tried again and again to get my bearings with my compass and finally decided to scale the rocks toward the north. Twice I lost my grip but the third time, after putting forth a supreme effort, I reached the summit. Once on top I was saved. No more insurmountable obstacles impeded me and although there was no trail, I could at least get my direction.

Three-quarters of an hour later I reached camp, just as the sun was setting. There I dined on a slim one hundred and fifty grammes of biscuits, washed down by a pint of mint infusion. For a man who had had this same fare at sunrise and who had walked steadily for twelve hours in uncomfortable shoes, with feet bleeding, and under the conditions I have just mentioned, sleep was imperative. But first of all my sore feet had to be looked after and rubbed with the only ointment we have out here—resin gathered from the trees, which heals wounds even when walking. This done I then wrapped them in bands of old linen; my stockings are about gone though I did manage to patch the feet enough to make them last a little longer.

As for my three friends back in camp—they had been resting and not giving a thought as to what had become of me. But such is human nature—completely self-centered when cut off from the broadening stimulus of religion.

During our enforced sojourn here these last few days our provisions have been running low so I have been putting in my idle time making some biscuits out of what little flour I have left, baking them in the coals. After using all the flour I had twenty-two about as large as my hand. Of these I gave eleven to Pidaucet, cautioning him to make them last, as I did not know when or where we would get any more. A few days later his were all gone while I still had three remaining. I gave him one of mine; it was the last sacrifice I could possibly make.

On one of our side-trips we had stumbled on an Indian hut, open and unoccupied. I had gone in and poked in all the corners. Finding a little pile of stale acorns I had crammed my pockets full and advised Pidaucet to follow suit. By nature he is not foresighted and is regretting it now. And so when the pangs of hunger became too insistent I ease them by munching a few acorns. While my stomach is thus occupied, it leaves me in peace momentarily. In autumn, jays, doves, and crows, despite their slender throats, are partial to this same diet when they can find it on the oaks.

On May seventeenth, five of us started out hopefully along the trail located the evening before. In place of breakfast we were full of hope and courage. Once on the summit where the trail ran—the trail so long sought and at length found—we debated which turn to take, no one knowing the direction of the placers.

After a lengthy consultation the majority decided to take the left-hand turn, hoping it would take us up along the Trinity. We walked all day long, suffering acutely from hunger and thirst—fatigue no longer being thought of. At night we camped in a place dubbed “Camp of Bears” because when we got there we found three of these creatures strolling several hundred feet away from us. My own opinion was that we ought to go after them and either kill them or be eaten ourselves—one way of swiftly ending our suffering.

By taking the first course we could replenish our larder with delectable food and feast for several days on bear meat as well as having the hides to use for repairing our shoes. By the second we had an excellent chance to end the ill-luck that had pursued us relentlessly from the beginning of the trip. Perhaps the physical strength as well as the morale of my comrades was gone—though there may have been some other reason—for my proposition was unanimously rejected. Sadly I watched the ham, shoulders of bear, and bear-cutlets, that had 85 already made my mouth water at the sight of them, disappear through the underbrush. Now that this food had vanished we fasted, by way of compensation, and reefed in our belts for the fourth time in eight days. Another reef or two and I would have been nothing but a skeleton.

During the day we found some groves of hazelnut trees; but not a single hazelnut was in evidence. Several hundred meters beyond was a forest of young chestnuts but at this time of year not one chestnut good or bad could be located. In the distance we could see smoke rising. Probably this came from some camp, or from the placers, as it was on the far side of the forest. But it proved to be only a forest-fire burning. It is thus that the fond hopes of men who seek their fortunes often go up in smoke. The five of us here in the “Camp of the Bears,” as well as the sixty avaricious members of the pack-train behind us, belong to this category.

Toward evening I ate half of my last biscuit; to-morrow morning I am going to eat the remaining half before starting off along the trail. And after that, what?

On the eighteenth of May we had to reconnoiter again, the trail having disappeared. Believing we had found it we walked on confidently until dark. Though hungry we were full of hope and courage for we had heard three shots which foretold the presence of civilized men in the neighborhood.

We camped again that evening feeling certain where the road we had been following for the past two days would take us. After eating half of the last quarter of my biscuit—some herbs and grasses completed my repast—I went to sleep.

On May nineteenth, we got up at three in the morning and, without eating anything, started off at five. At exactly ten o'clock to the dot, when we were least expecting it we found ourselves in a narrow opening and saw our pack-train with the twenty Frenchmen and thirty Americans, mules and supplies. Having found them we were now no longer in danger.

It was some time since I had eaten, and only a scrap of my last biscuit, which I was saving for supper, was left. Pidaucet's food was all gone. Call it what you like, chance, providence, the good Lord, or all combined, had led us out of the most perilous position a man could possibly be in. Here in camp we learned that for the past two days we had been travelling away from, not toward, the placers.

Among the Frenchmen there is a group composed of Swiss and Francomtois that has adopted the name of one of its members, Grand-Perret, and which numbers in its company one of our fellow-passengers from the *Cérès*, Pequignot, nicknamed Grezely. A Swiss by birth he 86 was originally associated with Doctor Briot, whom he left to join Perret's party.

Witnessing our distress, the latter offered us some biscuits. He would accept nothing at all for them although we wanted to pay him at placer prices. And while I hesitated to place myself under obligations, yet it would have been poor taste to have declined. For this reason I accepted.

In camp we had the most delicious meal, of biscuits and water, I have ever had in all my life. We did not dare eat as much as we wanted, however, not only to conserve food but also to avoid tiring our stomachs which had lost the habit of working.

That same evening we camped about two hundred meters from the lake, thick with snakes and tortoises, and not far from where we had spent the day of the fifteenth. True enough, we had located the trail leading to the placers, but we had taken the wrong turn, otherwise the trail would have brought us in within twenty-four hours. A peculiarity of these mountain roads, which often follow all the contours of the mountain in the course of ten or fifteen leagues, is that they frequently seem

to go in the opposite direction from your destination. This was what led us at that time, to make this grave error.

On May twentieth we crossed the mountains, which were still covered with snow.\* Worn out, strength gone, feet bleeding, and with mere shreds of socks tied on with strings as my only stockings, I still managed to keep going. Walking, in the course of time, becomes automatic. This, together with energy and strong will, is what keeps a man going, and no amount of suffering, hardship or discouragement can shake it.

This seems to indicate that they were struggling through the rough country north of the Trinity River, perhaps crossing the Trinity Summits, although this must have been an exceedingly impracticable route. There is but little possibility that snow remained in May on the summits southwest of Big Bar. These mountains are only from four to five thousand feet in elevation.

The group called *Grand-Perret* took the lead; Pidaucet, my three other friends in misfortune, and I followed behind with the Americans who travel at an easy gait. We were making for a camp twenty miles beyond where we started from in the morning. It was a hard trip.

Breaking camp at four in the morning on May twenty-first, 1850—the anniversary of the day I left Hâvre a year ago—after crossing some broad plains and climbing some high mountains we halted for lunch at noon. Learning that some of our companions of the *Cérès* were camping on the shores of the Trinity\* about four miles below the placer called Big Bar—they were among the first to pan along this river—Pidaucet and I, fearing the main train would not get in that night, pushed straight on for the goal of our long journey. We got in just as the sun was setting.

Hence the names “French Creek” and “Little French Creek” in this vicinity?

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### [IN THE TRINITY MINES]

We had left Trinity [Trinidad] Bay on April twenty-fifth [1850] with sixty-five men in our party. Sixty of this number had been scattered or lost along the trail, and had been exposed to hunger, thirst, and weariness. Several had disappeared and we had heard nothing from them. The Franco-

American party that had caught up with us on the main route had not come across any of them though they were three days behind us.

Pidaucet and I had reached the end of our journey not only at the cost of infinite misery, energy, and perseverance but also by the will of Providence which had led me to the right trail just when I was getting more hopelessly lost than ever.

The placer of Big Bar on the Trinity is situated on the left [south] bank of the Trinity River. It is built on a narrow plateau about fifty meters back from the bank. Just below it extends an alluvial shelf smaller and lower than the first. There the miners have staked out their claims. First arrivals have the right to stake out a space two meters in width and of indefinite length.

The camp itself consists of thirty or forty tents and shacks. There is a general merchandise store here as well as a butcher who kills an animal whenever he can get one. Flour sells for one and a half piasters, rice for the same figure, bacon for two piasters, half-dried meat for fifty cents a pound of fourteen ounces—weighed on unreliable scales. A bottle of brandy is worth seven piasters and ordinary wine brings four piasters. A pair of shoes, worth over in France about six francs, costs twelve piasters.

After our many days of fasting we felt the need of a good substantial meal. For lunch I had rice with bacon, meat, and pancakes instead of bread. To drink we had a mint concoction without sugar in it.

My first year of experiences is now about over. But the end of our troubles is not yet in sight. You can readily understand what an unsatisfactory year this has been for me. All the time we were lost in the depths of the virgin forests without help of any kind, and exhausted after three weeks or more of steady walking, reconnoitering and enduring every kind of privation, Cousin Veron was loafing at Trinidad, sleeping in a tent on a good mattress, and living off the fat of the land, without giving a thought to his friends. The idea never occurred to him of joining Grand-Perret's party and coming out to join us with some food and supplies which would have been a lifesaver for us now and would have made it possible for us to have 88

A section of Bancroft's *Map of California*, 1868, showing the Trinity, Klamath and Shasta mines, eighteen years after De Massey's visit. Courtesy of the Bancroft Library

89 conserved our meager capital of a paltry thousand francs. This amount is all we have left and, owing to the high cost of everything, it will not last long.

But I have no right to blame him if he lacks courage and initiative; these qualities are not in him. Moreover I knew perfectly well when I left him alone at Trinidad with only himself to rely on that his interests as well as ours would suffer—a thing he is not aware of.

I am jotting down these reflections at ten in the evening. Contented in body if not in spirit I am about to roll up in my blankets under a tree beside Pidaucet who is already dreaming of paradise. By resting and sleeping I shall try to collect fresh strength to begin the life of a miner, for this is what is in store for me.

On Wednesday, May twenty-second, [1850], I started off along the river to try to find out how these gold-diggers extract the precious metal from the sands. After dinner I ordered Pidaucet to erect a shelter large enough to house three persons, to build a crude oven of stones and mud outside for cooking purposes, and to cut down a tree for making a rocker. A rocker is an object formed something like a cradle and commonly used for washing the earth and auriferous sands. In France this same thing would bring about ten francs, but out here it sells for five hundred.

Slinging my gun over my shoulder I went down the river for a league and a half, stopping at all the shacks, keeping my eyes open, and asking questions wherever I could make myself understood. Two miles up the right bank, after crossing the river on a tree-trunk that had been thrown over, I came to a second group of placers. This was called Long Bar of the Trinity River.

Long Bar is well situated, and adequately sheltered, being on low ground which forms a little plain a short distance from where the river describes a half-moon for a distance of five or six hectometers [?]. Some wooded slopes and the river form its boundaries. The site, however, does not seem to be safe from the winter floods. The stores here carry a better line of goods and are more pretentious



than those at Big Bar. Miners working there and in the neighboring placers come over and lay in provisions here every Sunday.

After leaving the camp the river forks. Following the right branch for about two miles I found both banks were staked out and being worked. Gold is found in nuggets in the crevices of rocks and in shallow soil close by. The miner washes the gravel in a large pan of beaten iron; each planning is called a beating. A good miner can make one hundred beatings in a day. Of this number possibly three-quarters yield nothing, or practically nothing. At other times the gold runs from twenty-five cents to twenty-five dollars, or better.

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It is this constant element of chance that keeps enthusiasm and interest at high pitch, sustains morale, and enhances the endurance. Beyond this it is a hard life. However, it is one that fascinates and appeals to men of strong and independent character.

On this tour of inspection I stopped to chat with one miner who had just taken out a pile of gravel, and was examining it. Looking at it closely I discovered a bit of dull yellow about the size of a small hazelnut. Taking it out I handed it to him. It proved to be a nugget—the first I had seen at the placers. I asked him to sell it to me. Its intrinsic value was eight francs, but he wanted ten for it. I accepted his offer, however, and I am going to send it to you in France at the first opportunity. I am hoping to find many more which will be even larger.

Since the day was nearly over I retraced my steps and returned to Big Bar. I am now fully resigned to my miner's lot—which is far from being sybaritical. During the day Pidaucet had put up a shack. This is preferable to a tent which is apt to be hot. But in trying to cut down a tree to use in building our rocker, he broke the hatchet. This has been an unlucky day for us!

An American workman can do almost anything with a hatchet, but a Frenchman handles it clumsily and in addition has to have a saw, chisel and shovel; otherwise he can do nothing. These were the

objections raised by Pidaucet when I suggested he use this simple tool at the placers in making rockers.

Not knowing when this primitive method will be replaced by some more efficient means of gold-extraction I am going to give you a concise description of this rocker, even though it is of no value to you.

The rocker, in French *La Berceuse*, is formed like a cradle to which has been added a handle. It is operated by hand with a rocking movement. Usually it is made of boards. When these are not available a tree-trunk split in half is used. This half is then hollowed out, openings being made in the lower part to carry off the water. It is then equipped with a sieve of fine iron mesh, or wrought iron, with holes in it.

This, which is attached to a movable square frame, is designed to receive the earth, sand, or auriferous gravel. The bottom of the rocker is next filled with boards three or four centimeters high and one-quarter of a centimeter apart to catch all the flakes of gold which, being heavier, fall to the bottom when freed from the gravel as the water flows off.

After the rocker has been made it is placed wherever it is most convenient on the bank of the river and is then ready to be operated. 91 To handle it three strong, energetic and able-bodied men are needed; one to shovel the earth, another to carry and transport it in pails for a long or short distance (an always laborious task because of the steep embankment and loose boulders) and deposit it in the rocker, and a third to pour water constantly from an iron pan through the rocker with one hand while keeping it moving with the other. In a short time the refuse earth passes off into the river. The sieve is then removed, and the pebbles extracted. This operation is repeated from sunrise to sundown, with a rest of two hours at noontime. To avoid monotony the three partners change places and in the same day each one takes his turn as shoveler, carrier and cradle-rocker.

When work is over for the day, two men prepare supper while the third gathers and sorts what residue has collected, which is held in by the boards in the bottom of the cradle. This takes about twenty minutes. An average day at Big Bar will net about ten dollars a man. This would mean

about three hundred buckets of earth washed—some thirty-five hundred liters. A few claims run considerably higher, so I have heard, but miners as a class are uncommunicative and do not tell how much they take out. Often the luckiest complain the loudest.

Gold is found only in a coarse powder which contains a certain amount of iron in the form of a black sand. This is easily separated with a magnet. While these details may not seem necessary yet they are obligatory to an understanding of the life I am about to enter, hoping to clear my conscience of my own sins and those of others.

The vegetation in the high altitudes where the placers are located is not so abundant as that we found in the country we came through in getting here. The soil itself does not seem very fertile. The mountains, which are on the right shore of the Trinity and face the camp at Big Bar, are steep and covered with brush, hazelnut trees, and a bush that bears a fruit much like the hawthorn. Interspersed with these are conifers and scraggly live-oaks.

On the banks of the river grows a wild vine which drops its leaves, so I am told, in autumn. It bears a small grape, disagreeable to taste, containing a small amount of sour juice. I am strongly of the opinion that this bush is indigenous to California. Among plants the *madiasativa* is very common. Parsley also grows abundantly everywhere. Fruit trees such as we have in France are not found in California. I merely mention this to give you some idea of the natural setting of this part of the country where we about to stage our little drama.

We expect to sleep in our own shack to-night. Having had no shelter but the stars for more than a month now, there is a certain amount of satisfaction in having a roof, primitive as it is, over our 92 heads. Unfortunately reptiles and insects have not yet abdicated, so we have to be philosophical and let them make themselves at home anywhere.

On May twenty-third I found a rocker for rent. We have staked out a claim but there are few desirable ones available. For our initial venture after eight hours' work we took in twelve dollars altogether. Of that eight dollars went to Pidaucet and me. Figuring our food at seven dollars, we had only cleared a dollar profit. This is not encouraging, but we must credit it to experience. After a

modest supper, hoping for better days to come we went to sleep, as soon as it was dark, on the bare ground.

On May twenty-fourth we were unable to find a rocker for rent, so we had to lay off. We spent the day taking much-needed baths, mending our clothes, washing them, making enough biscuits to last several days, and finally taking a little rest which I felt the need of, for, in the past fifteen days, I have been walking constantly, under the most trying conditions.

If Pidaucet could only fish! The river is full of trout and salmon although we have not seen or heard of any game around here. But I do not think he knows how to handle a rod and I am powerless to persuade him to try it. Still it is unfortunate to have no fish to sell for we might earn even more than by digging up the river.

On May twenty-fifth, being still without the needed equipment, I decided to clear off our claim for some three meters and prepare the sand for the day when I could possess a rocker—this expensive and rare object. If our work were profitable and we had what we needed the situation would prove tolerable. But we are always hungry. If we did not check our appetites I believe we would be eating all the time.

When we got in here we were so emaciated that we looked like walking skeletons and each of us had about reached the limit of endurance. Skins tanned, features drawn, beards uncut, feet almost bare, clothes in tatters, hats hardly recognizable, we looked more like rascals in disguise, or famished brigands, than honest and respectable citizens. Even to-day we look very little better. But here where we are now, brute strength and luck count for more than education, clothes, or good looks.

Moral standards are missing. The merchant follows his own lax instincts unhindered; he sells his merchandise not for dollars which have a fixed and recognized value, but by taking in payment gold-dust. Dust which is actually worth from eighty to eighty-five francs is taken at a valuation of from seventy-five to eighty francs. Thus he makes a profit of at least five francs on the weight alone. The miner has no recourse but to accept it or lose a day's time in going to Long Bar, the

only camp where there is any competition. But this is merely typical of the way man exploits man in all countries, civilized or uncivilized.

To-day, May twenty-sixth, being Sunday and a day of rest, the American Protestants are holding religious services. The rest of us who are skeptics, free thinkers, and atheists are also glad of the chance to rest one day in seven. Everyone is putting in the day to suit his own particular fancy. Some are reading the Bible, others are laying in supplies for the following week, several have gone out hunting, and the more ambitious are out prospecting.

The word “to prospect” which I am using here for the first time requires explanation. It denotes the act of going out to locate new auriferous beds richer than those being worked at the moment. There are both small and large prospects. The former term is used to describe the kind made on Sundays when the prospector, taking just enough food for the day, goes up and down the river carrying his pick-axe and iron pan, taking samples wherever he thinks gold might be present. Sometimes the results are excellent, but more often than not it is merely time wasted. Large prospects are usually undertaken by a party and, as a general thing, last a week or longer.

On Monday, May twenty-seventh, as our rocker was not ready we began the week by getting the sands ready to work. Pidaucet, who is proud of his physical strength and experience in manual labor, came over to give me an elementary lesson in how to use my pick and shovel. While I was watching him demonstrate his theory my professor hurt his wrist, making it impossible for him to continue.

Pidaucet is very unlucky. Only six days ago he broke my hatchet—the only useful tool I had for chopping—and put it out of commission for the time being. And now, just when he might be extremely useful—in the past he has been nothing but a parasite—he is incapacitated. I was at a loss to know what to do under these circumstances as it was impossible to work alone without a rocker and there was no way of getting one here at the placers. Neither was I financially able to afford to sit around and lose time waiting. Our little savings have already diminished considerably in the last few days and soon will be gone. So, cost what it may, I am going to put my pride in my pocket,

make the break, and hire myself out to a group of miners at the rate of four dollars a day, and food. In this way I shall be saving capital and learning how to prospect for gold at the same time—a thing I know nothing about at the present writing.

None the less I must confess it is not easy for me to sacrifice my freedom in the interests of men whom I do not know and, who, while 94 they may be honest, on the other hand, might be brigands, or ex-convicts, Moreover, I have never worked for anyone else before, in fact ever since I have been twenty-one I have always had workmen under me. So, in a year, you see I have descended all the rungs of the social ladder which I am now trying to climb up again.

You will be interested to know that the party we left behind us had an even more tragic experience than we did. Its members suffered for a longer period, many being scattered and lost in the forest. Several gave up and went back to Trinidad. Others attempted to cross a river on a raft which capsized. Everything was lost—food, tools, and baggage.

Others who started out to climb almost impregnable peaks with the hope of getting their bearings have not returned and nothing has been heard of them. And yet no one thinks of going out to help them!

Quite a few have been abandoned and left for dead on the roadside by their companions who barely managed to keep alive on herbs, lizards, and snakes—anything in fact they could find. Even the dog they had with them died. The ones who took along a large supply of provisions and were on horseback—believing this was the wise thing to do—have had nothing to eat for a long time, and are as famished as the rest.

Every day or so, two or three survivors of this ill-fated expedition straggle in. Buoyant, optimistic, and led by experienced guides, when they started out, they made the rest who were hurrying on ahead to reach their destination as fast as possible, with their heavy packs on their backs, look pitiful. But now they too are in bad shape. They come limping in and are so bruised and weary they can scarcely walk, while their clothes are in tatters.

Almost everyone is out of funds and there is no choice but to go to work as day laborers. Even so, for the time being, their strength is so far gone that they are unfit for manual labor. Unable to find work, many of them, after resting a day and being somewhat revived by the food generously offered them, have gone on up the river in preference to spending their last remaining funds at this camp.

On the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth, I worked until evening in the interest of my two Irish bosses, but their claim is not a rich one, and I believe that in these three days they will just about break even, counting the food they have supplied me in the capacity of hired man at the rate of three dollars a day.

The work has been extremely irksome. I had to fill, carry, and empty three hundred buckets of sand. I made one hundred and fifty trips up and down a path as hard to descend as it was to climb—a 95 distance of some seven kilometers in all—carrying a weight of fifteen kilograms in each hand. All this was under a broiling sun! In addition we were badly treated, badly fed, and poorly housed at night.

Such a life is somewhat strenuous for anyone not accustomed to it. Naturally I was not sorry when my lords and masters told me, on the evening of the third day, that they would have to dispense with my services, for I am afraid I could not have held out much longer. Then, too, I had not been able to please my employers and they were tired of me:

On May thirtieth, as I was taking an enforced rest with Pidaucet who has not yet been able to work, a group of three Americans offered me a job with them. I accepted, for there will be ample time to loaf when work is not available.

These Yankees out here are boorish in the extreme. They have a sinister look and are absolutely uncommunicative. Hard workers, themselves, they believe in making those under them labor. Also, they are very strong physically. I cannot say where they hail from; in all events not from a civilized part of the country. It is from this population out here that squatters and filibusters might be recruited. When my day was over I was paid off, and I was glad to see the last of them.

So ended my thirty-eighth year. This same anniversary I celebrated a year ago on board the *Cérès* in the mid-Atlantic off Lisbon. At that time I was gay, full of enthusiasm, and cheerful over the future. The day was made memorable by meeting an English brig, the *Caroline*, of Sunderland, which had run out of food and water. Her food almost gone, she had come over to us for assistance. Anyone who is superstitious might have deduced, from this incident, trouble ahead for us. Skeptics like myself, who mock at prophets and events, are now being punished for our levity.

Those, however, who predict calamities and misfortunes nearly always find them and few in this world are completely happy. Such are my thoughts as I am about to begin—on June first, 1850—my thirty-ninth birthday. If my luck gets any worse I shall be dead, or insane by the time I am forty. I had not counted on any such bad luck as this when, in 1849, I set sail from Hâvre.

A miner called Fredet, whose brother runs a carriage-works on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, got into Big Bar to-day. As he had no tools and very little money he offered to help Pidaucet build a rocker and to go into partnership with us. It is imperative for us to start some kind of work as Veron has not arrived yet—there is nothing to stop him from joining us eventually—so I told him he could work with us on our claim as soon as the rocker was ready, with the 96 understanding that a place was to be made for Veron when he gets here. This being mutually agreeable, we set to work. Pidaucet is just beginning to get some use of his sprained wrist, and although the rockers have gone down fifty per cent. in value they still sell for fifty dollars; even so it is cheaper to build than to buy one.

Monday, June third. At last we are at work! We have taken out an ounce of gold-dust between us, netting us five dollars and a half apiece for our work. While this is not a large sum yet we are our own masters and this is just the beginning. He have high hopes of making much more.

On Tuesday, June fourth, we had just begun work when, around noontime, an individual who called himself a tax-collector came in and, in the name of the law, demanded from each miner the sum of twenty dollars to be paid once a month. You can readily imagine no one wanted to pay it. Had he been able to collect I doubt if the State of California would have been the richer. All the money



received without any control or check would never have reached its destination. The American administration even though it is quite business-like and carefully supervised, is not entirely free from cupidity, greed, and disloyalty on the part of both of the underlings and chiefs who look after them.

Nevertheless, this visit from the tax-collector gave certain jealous and ill-tempered Americans a pretext for picking a quarrel with new miners—and our neighbors have lopped off part of the claim we are working. These bold citizens, who refused to pay the tax, were angry with us for also refusing.

Veron came in on Wednesday, June fifth, with a party. Among them were several miners whom we had lost on our trip out. As Veron had experienced some discomforts and had been deprived, during his trip of eight days, of many of the comforts he had had at Trinidad in the restful month he spent there since our departure, he felt he ought to air his grievances about the trip and the hard labor ahead of him here at the placers.

His pride wounded, his character embittered, and his conceit hurt, instead of blaming his own stupidity, carelessness, and negligence, he blamed me as the cause of all his misfortunes, past, present, and future. While he had never shown this side of his character to me, yet his travelling companions, who got it at first hand, told me all about it.

When he first started out to join us at the placers, relying on his physical strength rather than on his endurance, he took on a load weighing forty kilograms. After a day's hard marching he was so exhausted that the day after he lost his head completely and threw his entire load into a ravine, returning to Trinidad without it.

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Then he made up a lighter package consisting of sugar, chocolate, tea, tools, ammunition, and a gun, but he forgot to put in any real provisions. Leaving our tent in care of Mr. Villeneuve whose partner, Mr. Mulnaer, a Belgian who had some mules, was making up a party to go out with him, Veron finally left for good. Anyone else, in leaving a tent and its contents to a neighbor whom he

knew only casually from having met on board the *Hector*, would have taken inventory of what he was behind leaving him. But not Veron! The idea never occurred to him.

On the trip, as he had nothing to eat but tea, sugar, and chocolate, he bought some provisions from Mulnaer without making a bargain. The result was that after he reached the placers he had trouble over the price. I paid what Veron said was justly due him, but the creditor was not satisfied. It was a simple matter for him to charge whatever he desired as his partner was holding what we had left behind.

In face of all this Veron said nothing about these arrangements while Mulnaer remained at Big Bar. But after he had left for Trinidad I heard through other channels what had happened. Finally I got the whole story out of him.

For three weeks now we have been working from twelve to thirteen hours a day and resting only on Sundays. Our most productive day netted us twelve dollars apiece, but most of the time we have taken out only five, six, seven or eight dollars. When the day has been poor and Pidaucet's laziness and Veron's foolishness and complaints are worse than ever, then all my patience and philosophy are needed to endure it. If I had not had strong bonds of kinship with my cousin it would have been far easier for us to have separated long ago and for each one to have gone his own separate way, stood on his own feet, and made the best of it.

Life here may not be all a bed of roses, but we have just learned that a fire has destroyed most of San Francisco and that the majority of the merchants in the city have been ruined. We have had no details as yet. If De Gaulne has been wiped out I am in grave danger of losing the four hundred dollars placed on deposit with his firm. The goods we have coming out are also placed in jeopardy—a consoling prospect to look forward to and divert us from our present trials and tribulations.

We have also heard that at Camp Murphy, in the mines south of here, the French to the number of five or six hundred and the Americans, some twelve or fifteen hundred, have had trouble, declared war, and as the result of some disagreement are fighting. We understand that the conflict threatened

to assume the proportions of a civil war 98 until the Governor of California and the French consul, Mr. Dillon, stepped in and curbed the disorder. The bitter feeling, however, still runs high.

Despite the fact that we have not heard how the trouble started, anyone who knows the quick temper, pride, and aggressiveness of the two nationalities as reflected in these particular individuals can without injustice readily imagine that both sides must have been equally guilty. This is what made the attempt at reconciliation progress so smoothly.

We hear numerous rumerous about robberies perpetrated by Indians in the North as well as the South, of bloody reprisals on one side and another, and of miners killed or wounded. But the incident that made by far the deepest impression on the men along the Trinity River concerns what happened to some Canadians who are comping about twenty-five kilometers down below Big Bar. These men were the heroes of the day, the victims being their Indian neighbors.

This may have been what the two Indians whom I met on May fourth not far from our camp on the prairie were trying to tell me about, and it explains the way they acted when they thought we were going out to swell the number of their enemy.

These particular Frenchmen I have reference to were trappers by profession and, in consequence, nomads. They had come down a short time ago from Oregon. Last year while hunting in Oregon they heard of the gold discovery in California. On their way to California they prospected all the rivers and finally found the long-sought gold on the Trinity.\* In 1850 they located here near the river. They have exploited and washed all the sands nearby, and have taken out fabulous amounts of gold-dust.

See note 14.

But like anyone unaccustomed to the luxuries of life they longed to enjoy their wealth at any cost. And so they squandered it on whatever would add to their comfort and enjoyment. Having horses they think nothing of travelling one hundred leagues to purchase supplies and luxuries. In 1849 they

combed the placers of Big Bar and Long Bar then moved on down the river. Now they are located near Trinidad Bay where supplies can be procured more easily. There they spend their winters.

Their camp is made up of some twenty-five men and about the same number of women and children. I do not know what laws or religion they have adopted and, though there are no priests, judges, or lawyers among them, yet they all live harmoniously in one small community. And here they are born, married, and buried without benefit of clergy or the law so necessary as a rule to civilized communities. While I fail to understand it, yet such are the facts.

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In all countries not under legal regulations the head of the family is absolute master of all his own goods and chattels and, among nomadic tribes, the word of the leader is law.

These Frenchmen are skilful in hunting beaver, marten, and fox, as well as larger game. Having stripped Canada, Oregon, and Northern California of this form of wealth they are now looking for some more remunerative occupation. This group, or their agents, have already scoured the country in the immediate vicinity. Beavers are rarely seen any more on the banks of the Trinity though formerly whole colonies of these mammiferous rodents were found in this locality. On my trips I have found traps especially built for them. To-day, hunted as they are, they are found only in isolated places and a Canadian considers it a rare bit of luck when he catches one. These trappers dislike the English because they are in control of Canada; they detest the Americans because they are Protestants; they abhor the Indians for being robbers. The French alone meet with their approval.

At present these French trappers are only encountered in isolated localities. Yet they are brave, energetic, loyal, and highly respected, despite their small numbers. I do not know what their religious beliefs, if they have any, are. More than likely they have none at all in view of the way they are born, marry, and die, like so many flies.

To live naturally and simply satisfies all the demands of their natures. When everything is said and done they like the simple life and would not live otherwise. Nomads as they are and habituated to

living in lonely forests and remote from all evidences of civilization if they have evolved a religion and creed to suit their needs it would be based on Catholicism. However, it would be a Catholicism of a practical nature, radical, and free of conventions and restrictions.

Unlike the Yankees they have no prejudices against caste or colour, and will marry the first woman they meet whom they fancy, making her their companion, slave, and beast of burden. These women, who are usually Indians from Canada, Oregon, or California, are referred to as their "Savages." Children born of such unions are called "Our Savages."

The presence of such rich placers in this country was not suspected until the end of last autumn when, in an effort to conceal this information, the trappers decided to winter on the river. To lay in enough supplies to make them comfortable during the winter season they sent men and mules to several villages, some going to The Springs [site of the town of Shasta] and others to Trinidad City.

Observing that their saddle-bags were full of gold-dust and nuggets and that they were very liberal in paying for what they purchased, interest was aroused and it was believed that a new El Dorado had been located. This led to a mad rush for these new placers, a rush that was destined to lead to disappointment. The Canadians, flushed with success, bought everything in sight and owing to the exorbitant prices asked they soon found they had spent most of their wealth when winter was over. This forced them to go to work again in the spring. This time, however, conditions were much less favorable for quick results, competition being heavy.

Such was their status after wintering at Canadian Camp. About this time some greedy Indians living near them stole several of their mules and horses and they immediately voted to send out a punitive expedition against these robbers. This, by the way, was led by the younger Canadians who have Indian blood in them.

Starting out heavily armed as Canadian trappers always are, they reached the outskirts of the village under suspicion, before daybreak, surrounded it, and set the huts on fire. Then, hiding in the

underbrush, they shot the Indians as they ran from the flaming huts. The women and children alone were spared and managed to escape.

When a count was made fourteen victims were found lying on the ground. These heavy losses are characteristic of uncivilized countries where five men on foot equal one man on horseback in skirmishes. This nocturnal combat ended without endangering any of their own members. All the same it was a cruel retaliation and one which reflected little glory on the victors. Exultant over their victory the executioners returned to camp and celebrated by heavy drinking.

This is typical of the tales we hear around here. Add to this the wanton destruction of one of their villages about a day's march beyond Trinidad, to which I have already referred, and you may readily see that any antipathy existing between the white men and the natives is largely provoked by the rapacity of the latter and the pride and the revengeful natures of the former.

Falling in with some discouraged miners who were returning to Trinidad, I took advantage of the opportunity to send a letter to Oscar de Gaulne in San Francisco—my agent there—telling him all about our trip out, our straitened circumstances, and the uncertainty of making a living at the placers. I also requested him to forward this letter, dated June 23, 1850, on to France, to watch for the arrival of our merchandise, and to expect us back only when we had given up all hope of succeeding at the placers. At the same time I sent a note to Villeneuve at Trinidad, asking him to send out at his earliest convenience the provisions and personal belongings we had left behind in our tent in his care.

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The San Francisco papers have run full accounts of the tragic journey of our train up to the Trinity giving such heartrending details that thoughtful and generous hearts would undoubtedly have been touched if the fire had not happened almost simultaneously and given them problems and troubles of their own to face.\*

The letters referred to have not been found. San Francisco papers of April to August, 1850, carry current reports of the Trinity and Klamath excitements. See, *Pacific News*, April 26 (Events at Trinidad); May 16 (Trinidad); May 20 (Discovery of the Mouth of the Klamath and Events at Trinidad); May 22 (Herman Ehrenberg's diary written

during his exploration of Klamath River); May 23 (Founding of Klamath City); May 27 (Foreign miners object to Tax); August 22 (Events at the Trinity Mines).

Toward the end of June, as our claim was no longer producing and Pidaucet—a man destined to fail us both in body and spirit—had developed whitlow and was no longer working for us, we had no choice but to go out prospecting, that is, to start out and look for new gold-diggings where the dust is more abundant than on our present claim.

Having agreed to this plan we decided first to visit the camp of the Canadians on down the river, prospecting, from time to time, as we walked. This colony is about thirty miles [?] away on the opposite bank of the river.

So we started off, packs on our backs and loaded down with equipment and provisions. Though we made several sample washings on the way yet we found the yield to be exactly what it was at Big Bar, If any richer claims exist they must be held by miners who are working them and who have replaced the rocker by the long-tom, a better and faster machine.

Certain sections had already been staked off by the miners who were busy working them, having even turned the river from its course to pan the river bottom. To do this, however, requires both strength and capital. Yet a few have had exceptional luck. Among them is the Marquis de Franclieu, an ex-Algerian colonel who came out and staked off a claim two miles below Big Bar. With him came two passengers from the *Cérès*, a rosary, and a charm. By using a compass they crossed safely through the forests beyond Trinidad to the placers without making a detour. There they took up a claim that is bringing them in one hundred dollars a day apiece. What luck!

After travelling about three days we reached our destination. On the trip Veron and I prospected while Pidaucet looked on, being unable to do any manual labor. In fact he even threw his tools away so that he would be sure not to have to work.

Veron is always losing his head at the slightest provocation. He was climbing along the bank of the river where the pitch was steep, and for greater safety he actually threw his pack away letting it drop down into the river. It contained all our funds, four hundred dollars in all, most of which

represented the net results of two months' work of all three of us, and my portfolio containing all my notes.

When I saw what he had done I jumped in and fished it out. By some miracle it was unharmed and I dried it out in the sun. I am most 102 unlucky in having associates of this calibre, companions who get so upset over any little thing. True we have been travelling over difficult trails; Indian paths no wider than my hand—and along the edge of cliffs so steep that the least false step would send us down into the river flowing fifty meters beyond. More than once, too, we have had to take off our shoes and carry our packs on our heads. But this is not where Veron is so trying.

After three days of many catastrophes like this we finally reached the Canadian camp.\* I was glad to meet the heroes of the bloody skirmish I have already described, and even more curious to see how far the descendants of the French Colonists, who came over in the seventeenth century, have conserved the old pronunciation and their family names, and what affection they have for the French whom they so fondly call their fellow-countrymen.

From the data given here the camp seems to have been located near the junction of the South Fork and the Trinity. Father up the river, however, there was a camp called Canadian Bar.

Their settlement radiates an air of peace and good-will. The members live in tents set up in sheltered and wooded spots near the river. They all seem prosperous, and far from miserable. Our arrival created somewhat of a sensation. They gathered around us, asked questions about France, and gave us a cordial welcome. Among the most friendly were Mr. Petit, and especially Mr. Gervais. Both appeared to be influential members of this community.

Here and there we saw Indian squaws and papooses, large and small, moving about. Everyone was busy tending to his own affairs, looking after his own quarters, the animals, or attending to community business. The elder, or community supervisor, Mr. Gervais, brought us a delicious piece of fresh venison which we gratefully accepted. We asked him to come and have lunch with us the next day. This was the only hospitality we were able to offer.



He accepted and the next day at eleven he arrived bringing a complete dinner with him. This good fortune and this foresight on his part were completely unexpected. The affability of this good man who, weather-beaten though he was, had the true French spirit of hospitality and generosity, touched me to the quick, for we were two thousand leagues away from France, and this man, whose ancestors had left there two hundred years ago, knew the mother-country by hearsay only.

The meal was as gay and jolly as anyone could ask for in view of our present financial and geographical status. This fine old patriarch who owned a number of servants, pack-animals, a furnished tent, and a certain amount of gold, ranks as one of the aristocrats of this back-country. Perhaps, despite our clothes, he was able to judge from our manners and our conversation that we were not as uncouth as we looked. Had I been certain of this I should have enjoyed it even more, and retained even pleasanter memories of this occasion.

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After hearing his account of their expedition against the Indians my own impression of it is materially modified. Such deeds cannot be measured by the standards of civilized countries where protection is afforded by the police, the judges, and the courts. Out here each family, clan, or group must supply this deficit; this is what makes summary justice obligatory and justifiable, and makes existence possible.

The day after this feast we again took the trail for Big Bar, following the opposite bank of the river. We prospected time and time again, but all our attempts were uniformly unsuccessful. In speaking of the Canadians—whom I shall probably never see again—I should like to say that their pronunciation of French is identical with what was in current use, during the seventeenth century in Normandy and several other French provinces.

For instance they pronounce *qui que ce sais* as we would pronounce *qui que ce sait*. When I was quite young I knew some old men nearly eighty-nine whose fathers had been alive during the reign of Louis XIV and who still clung to this old-fashioned method of pronunciation. Similarly many

expressions they use at the present time have long gone out of fashion and give to their conversation the stamp of archaism.

After eight days' absence we got back to Big Bar, unhappy over the prospect of resuming our life of drudgery. A few days later I heard that the things I had asked Villeneuve to send out had arrived. While I did not know what the package contained yet in our present straitened circumstances anything was acceptable.

The package weighed one hundred pounds and the transportation charges were one dollar a pound. This exorbitant price we had to pay, or lose everything. I was completely out of trousers, and shirts, and was as ragged as a disreputable beggar. To go prospecting I had to buy two pairs of shoes, one for Veron and one for myself, at twelve dollars each.

When we unpacked Veron was not satisfied with the contents. In fact they had sent about forty pounds of things that were absolutely useless and not what I had asked for. But whose fault was it? Veron had had trouble over the price of the food he had bought on the way out from Mulnaer, Villeneuve's partner, and had not told me about it so these men had done what they pleased with the flour and other provisions, and apparel, and had sent us only what they could not easily dispose of.

There is no redress in a country like this when it is customary to exact justice individually rather than through judges and lawyers who often absorb in costs over and above the value of what is in litigation, making the case a farce.

Veron added fresh coals to the fire by losing his temper, swearing 104 he would never pay even half the transportation charges, saying he was abandoning his luggage, and turning the whole affair over to me. To such conduct, contrary to all written and verbal agreements—for I am the official head of our commercial company—I refused to pay the slightest attention, and merely paid the freight charges out of our common purse.

Thereupon he seized me by the collar and began to argue. As he had given me this admirable excuse, I decided we had better separate. So I divided up the two thousand francs worth of gold-dust and we parted. Each was now free to go and do whatever he pleased.

Pidaucet and Fredet, our two workmen, are far too happy over his departure to follow him. They have promised to stay with me indefinitely. Both, however, have had bad blisters on their hands for the last fifteen days and have been incapacitated. This was the way I spent July 14, 1850—St. Bonaventura's Day—to cap the climax of all that has happened to me in the last few months! After paying one hundred dollars for the baggage held for me, my capital was diminished by half. But by selling off what I am not using I can probably get back fifty per cent. of this amount. Now that I have some extra clothes I can appear more like a gentleman and less like a typical miner.

Rumors vague at first, but growing more and more persistent, have been circulated around Big Bar of the discovery of rich placers only a few days' trip from here. Those near the Klamath, Salmon, and Upper Trinity rivers have been most highly recommended.

Every day a few prospectors who have not found much gold-dust here slip off quietly from camp heading for one of these regions. So much of this has been going on that Big Bar, so prosperous and well-populated only a month ago, is now almost deserted. Merchandise has gone down over half. My cronies being unable to work because of their minor ailments, I decided to go off on another prospecting trip while their blisters were healing.

We agreed that during my absence they were to guard my claim, work it if they could, and that all expenses as well as any profits taken out were to be shared equally. This left me to put up with all the trials and troubles while they rested.

Having purchased out of my own pocket enough food to last from fifteen days to a month, I joined the first group leaving. In this party one of the Americans spoke French, and as he had a mule and was all alone he kindly offered to pack my twenty-pound load of provisions. I carried the rest. As

the guns, tools, and blankets weighed around twenty-five kilograms this was sufficient to carry over a mountainous country, barren of roads, and little travelled.

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### **[JOURNEY TO THE KLAMATH]**

In this way on Tuesday, July eighteenth [16th], I started off. There were eight in our party in addition to three well-loaded mules. We had been warned that the Indian tribes along the banks of the Klamath were hostile. Undaunted we started off in this direction, for we all had plenty of courage.

At ten in the morning we began to climb high mountains. These we scaled until time to pitch camp—long after sunset. After this long arduous day out under the burning sun one of our party had become so exhausted that he had tried to quench his thirst with brandy—there being no water—and, lying down, had dropped off to sleep. When his absence was noticed a search was made for him, but he was not to be found. This was an ominous beginning.

In the evening a party of eight Americans with five horses under the leadership of a Canadian guide who were taking the same route passed by, and camped a short distance away. This made sixteen men, all told, camping close together, which lent a feeling of considerable security in case of common danger.

Among these travelers was a Parisian, an ex-clerk, by the name of Edmond Pecher. He is in partnership with a Mr. Roussel, formerly a sword-maker from Remirement. Mr. Gaguin, of Grand-Perret's party, who was originally a watchmaker in Moret (Jura) was also in the party. I joined the latter and we are preparing our food together. This is an economy both of time and labor.

On July nineteenth [17th] we broke camp just as the sun was rising. All day we tramped and climbed over steep slopes and through underbrush so thick that my trousers were in rags. As there were no springs in sight and the sun was burning we suffered excruciatingly from thirst. There was not a drop of water in my canteen. It was noon before we reached the arid and rocky summit of the

highest mountain [Twin Sisters Mountain?]. From this point we tried to get our bearings, but all traces of the path had vanished. There was no water in the vicinity and the sun was so hot that it was impossible even to hold a pebble.

Everyone was worried and we all searched to find a way to extricate our party from this desperate situation. While a consultation was being held I was taken violently ill with chills and cramps. My arms and legs tingled and even the muscles in my face contracted. Everything went black around me and I dropped down with every ounce of strength gone, but still fully conscious.

I did not know whether this was a sunstroke, some cerebral congestion, or the rupture of some unsuspected aneurism. Ignorant of what it was yet I clearly understood the danger I was in. I imagined myself deserted and dying on this deserted mountain, fortunate if I were not eaten alive by carnivorous animals or birds of prey.

Thoughts like these were flashing through my mind as I saw the train pull on ahead, when an American, taking pity on me, tipped up his flask and found a few drops of brandy left in the bottom. With these he moistened my parched lips.

The “rise and walk” of the Scriptures never had a more miraculous effect. I was able to breathe normally again, I could speak, and then I got up. All this had not lasted more than a minute, but it seemed like hours. I jumped up, clapped my hands, and stamped my feet to start circulation. When I took my pack again to rejoin the party I found they were starting off in another direction.

Another quarter of an hour passed by. We then descended the mountain we had climbed so laboriously and, two hours later, halted and lunched near a little brook [North Fork of the Trinity?]. Those who have never suffered from hunger and particularly from thirst day after day have no conception of what a joy it is to eat even the coarsest fare and drink fresh, clear, cool water. Since leaving Trinidad I have had more than one such experience. We spent the night in the same spot here in the forest and after eight hours of trying tramping we were all quite ready to turn in.

On July twentieth [18th] the train got under way bright and early. The Americans took the lead as their men, having horses, were not carrying anything. By evening just as the sun was setting Gaguin and I found ourselves on a wooded mountain [Blue Ridge?] and without water. We went to sleep without eating, so as not to increase our thirst.

The next day at sunrise we broke camp and two hours later came to a brook [North Fork again?]. Here we stopped for a bite, for after walking two hours we were nearly famished. Here we had abundant pure water close at hand.

Refreshed we started off again, and around noon came to some steep mountains. At this point the mules and horses refused to go on. We accordingly rejoined the main party who were as miserable as we were. After many ineffectual attempts requiring patience, energy, and the constant use of hands and feet, after considerable crawling we finally surmounted all obstacles. An hour later, when we were nearly exhausted, we found a picturesque camp-site, with good water, pasturage, and shade. We decided to spend the rest of the day here. I took advantage of this rest to mend my trousers—if such the rags hanging to my legs can be termed—which were new when I left Big Bar.

Leaving at sunrise on Wednesday [Saturday], the trail was easy up 107 to noon. Later, however, we had to climb boulder-covered hills and scramble through dense underbrush which delayed us, as much as to say “You shall not pass.” But we had no choice but to push ahead or turn back. So we forged ahead, not making over a kilometer an hour.

Mules and mule-drivers were at the limit of their endurance, and the latter warned us that we would either have to relieve them of the provisions they were carrying or they would desert us here in the forest. This was the ultimatum. So I had to take on the extra twenty-pound load of flour that was consigned to me at a time when I would have been more than happy to have had some kind soul relieve me of my own burden.

Though loaded with at least sixty pounds Gaguin and I did not remonstrate but walked on slowly ahead at a steady gait, slipping, perspiring, panting, as we ascended the formidable slope but

eventually reaching the top. Many men who, in their whole lives, have been exposed to far less danger, suffering, and trouble than have fallen to our lot in the last four months have received ample compensation, and an assured future.

For my part my personal sacrifices will seem small, indeed, and I shall be well satisfied if I can only save the family reputation and fortune. Moreover, I shall always retain a certain amount of work-a-day philosophy which is never acquired by living complacently by the fireside. These were my thoughts as I climbed up the forbidding mountain.

I do not know what Gaguin's thoughts were, or whether he was thinking at all. He is a man already past his prime, placid, taciturn, simple, and uneducated. Without pride or ambition like most working-men he is easy-going and good company on a trip. His character is very different from that of Pidaucet.

After resting a short time—and we had need of it—Gaguin and I took up our loads and started on our way. The main train, which pays little attention to laggards, was already far ahead of us. This does not mean, however, that it will get in ahead of us. The fable of “The Hare and the Tortoise” invariably holds true and reassures me on this point.

Out of water and despairing of finding any for our camp, we marched along until four in the afternoon. Suddenly my eye lighted on a tree which bore an inscription cut into the bark notifying the traveller he could find water a few hundred feet south. Finding the direction with my compass within ten minutes we came to a superb forest which was on fire. Although we thought the message might be a joke, yet we carefully explored the vicinity until we found, near a bed of smoldering ashes, a tiny spring.

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This was all we needed to prepare our food and spend the night. But we were in considerable danger from falling sparks and the possibility of one of the great trees falling—they were no less than one hundred and fifty feet high—which were completely on fire; at the same time it was imperative to be near water in order to put out any sparks that might drop on us, and yet we had

to keep a safe distance away from the flames on the wind-side. It was difficult to comply with all these conditions under the present circumstances. Half afraid to sleep we lay down to rest. Another disadvantage was that we were cold and in danger from wild animals. What a night it was, what a hideous picture, and what an orchestra!

With eyes half-closed I could see hundreds of huge, flaming columns surrounding us in the darkness, glistening, crackling, sparking. Occasionally there was a loud crash, echoed, a long time after, in the distance. This was followed by an immense rain of sparks, lighting up the forest. Thunder, lightning, the noise of artillery are all trifles compared to the confusion and turmoil of a forest fire.

What a situation for two lonely watchers to face, men who were worn out and, resting on a bed of ashes, asked only to be allowed to slumber. This particular night will long remain graven in my memory. I have never seen and probably shall never again see anything so stupendous, and all from so slight a cause! Probably some miner—possibly one who had indicated where the spring was located—forgot to put out his camp-fire after cooking supper. No one knows how many hectares of this magnificent forest were destroyed that night and the day after. In the course of my travels, I have often seen forest fires burning on the mountains in the distance, but I had never been close to a fire before and seen the virgin forests being destroyed. While they are now considered of little value, at some future day this loss will be regretted when the country is settled.

On Sunday, July twenty-first, at nine in the morning we again joined the caravan, which was spending the day resting, the weather being fine and the men and the mules tired out. The camp-site was pleasantly located and the pasturage was abundant.

Among the Frenchmen in the party are two brothers named Bués who speak with a southern accent. They are fearless, splendid hunters, and in the prime of manhood. I know nothing about their past history except that they came on a sailing brig bound for San Francisco—which touched at Brazil.

Preferring not to sail around the Horn and confident of their physical endurance and good-luck, they crossed the continent with some fellow-travellers, who were equally courageous, from Rio de



Janeiro to 109 Valparaiso, Chile. Having crossed the pampas, the Andes, and the deserts—some seven hundred leagues in all—they got over in time to catch their same ship and sailed on toward California. By doing this they escaped the long sea-voyage, had a change, and an interesting trip to break the monotony of the voyage. It was a trip that must have proved full of interest.

At noon on Monday, July twenty-second>, we came to another fine pasture where some horses left by some prospectors were peacefully grazing. Being safely hobbled their owners hoped to get them again if, in the meantime, they were not stolen, killed, or injured. This meant that we were not far from the river and the sought-for placers—the goal of our journey. In the afternoon, after a two hours' halt we got into some rugged country and crossed several ranges still covered with snow [summit of Salmon Mountains near headwaters of the North Fork of Trinity River?].

We camped at sundown in a little valley shaped like a horseshoe. It was steep and damp but very picturesque with wooded mountains rising all around not more than one hundred feet from us. Topped by immense slabs of whitish rock which took the form of pyramids, these peaks hemmed us in on the north, west, and south. Toward the east we could not see more than two hundred meters ahead, due to the thickness of the underbrush.

The grass was fresh, abundant, and very green, with a few patches of melting snow still on it. There was ice all around us. Here in this spot we passed the night after starting some roaring fires and selecting the driest place for sleeping. Then, while some cooked, the rest went out to hunt grouse and bear in the neighborhood.

The Bués brothers managed to kill a bird, which made a welcome addition to their supper. We also saw a bear, but he got away. Bears have to be killed instantly with one shot. If not they will attack—a danger few hunters will risk. One of my dreams when I left for the mines was to acquire a fortune and a bear-skin as a reward for my hard life—a life which has far surpassed anything I have ever known before—and which culminated in this trip with the pack-train which offered a chance for some hunting, just as I was beginning to think I had been idly pursuing two chimeras!

The damp, cold night was not passed without considerable discomfort despite the roaring fires, which we kept well supplied with wood, burning at our feet. We must be in a very high altitude as we have been climbing steadily for five days now and since there is snow all around us even in July. This is what makes one believe that the source of the Sacramento and its tributaries, the American and the Feather 110 Rivers, the Klamath and its tributaries, the Salmon and the Trinity, and even the Oregon, cannot be much higher than our present elevation. This is merely my own off-hand opinion.

On Tuesday, the twenty-third of July, we were not tempted to sleep late in the morning because the camp was so unhealthy, even though charmingly situated. So everyone was up and around at daybreak, and after a bite to eat we were off. The first two kilometers of our trip were made through snow. Leaving this behind us we found, from time to time, skeletons of horses that had died from fatigue or exposure—a most unpleasant sight which we were glad to see the last of. We saw, as well, some poor decrepit horses, who were of very little more value than their unfortunate companions, browsing leisurely through the woods without a thought of what the present or future held in store for them. No doubt these were completely happy. To eat, to be idle, to sleep, and not to think—this, to dumb creatures, is supreme happiness.

And in my present situation I would never dare admit I envied them. An inner voice, a voice of pride and duty, steadily urges me on and on, but in moments of discouragement I ask myself whether the game is worth the candle. Why not die here as well as some other place? And why tomorrow, and not to-day? To die would be simple in comparison with this constant physical and mental anguish which seems interminable. The situation seems intolerable.

At this juncture an inner voice tells me more insistently than ever to “go on.” Suddenly I find my courage reviving, I take a fresh start, and feel a new fund of energy rising. Often, as I did today, I climb up and down mountains for hours, reaching camp in a state of physical exhaustion, but exultant over having conquered all obstacles and overcome my moods of depression. We

camped, about six in the evening, close to a brook, which is said to be about three miles (some five kilometers) from the river. But so far no one knows what river it is.

On Wednesday morning at eight o'clock we finally came out on what proved to be the Salmon River. On both banks, for two miles in each direction, the river sands were staked out and being worked by miners. Where we are now there are about two hundred and fifty miners who are taking out, according to reports, from ten to thirty dollars a day each. Some of the first comers who got the best locations are netting nearly sixty dollars. The river has a steep bank and is very rapid. In width it varies from twelve to twenty meters. It runs clear over a bed of rock, sand, and gravel, and is full of fish. We saw a number of nets stretched across the river from place to place—the Indian way of catching trout and salmon. The evening was spent working gravel and sand taken from the different localities.

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To judge by all the abandoned huts and discarded Indian belongings I found on my prospecting trips through the country bordering the river, this region must have been inhabited by Indians who were either forced out by the arrival of the white men, or had left of their own volition. I even found a completely equipped Indian hut hidden away in a sheltered and inconspicuous spot only a few miles from the placers.

The hut looked as if it had only recently been abandoned by its Indian owner who had probably gone off on a hunting, fishing, or pillaging expedition. In it were some woven baskets of assorted sizes, fishing tackle, and miscellaneous articles, but all were in such poor condition that, in spite of my desire to take something home as a souvenir, I did not, and left everything just as I had found it.

Gaguin, who was with me on the trip, was usually ahead or behind taking samples, and washing them whenever the presence of gold was suspected. Returning around five o'clock I found my friend Gaguin calmly sitting by the water eating nuts and some black fruit, smaller than a cherry, which grows wild. The fruit is juicy, and grows in clusters; the tree on which it grows is from six to seven meters high and twenty centimeters in diameter. It reminds me of viburnum.

Both time and strength were wasted as none of our attempts were successful, and so, tired and discouraged, we returned to camp. Our provisions were also nearly gone, and as I wished to push on to the Klamath it was imperative to restock. This is not easy out here in a country where there are no stores and where butchers have fresh meat only once a week, as animals have to be sent out all the way from the plains of the Sacramento. Making the trip by easy stages it takes them from fifteen days to three weeks for the journey. We all lay in supplies as best we can. As the meat is of excellent quality—each animal weighs somewhere between eight hundred and a thousand pounds—even if we have very little flour our material needs are satisfied.

On July twenty-fifth, having procured some flour, Pecher, Gaguin, and I started for the Klamath. The Americans were greatly astonished at the smallness of our party and considered it unsafe. Frankly this unexplored country has a bad reputation. It is inhabited, so I am told, by rascals of the lowest order. While this may be the case, yet similar rumors were circulated in San Francisco about the natives of the Trinity country who, after all, turned out to be nothing worse than petty sneak-thieves, who seemed to prefer vegetarianism to cannibalism.

As a party of Americans who were going to work a claim they had staked out about five leagues from here had agreed to pack my fifty pounds of flour, my friends and I camped with them our first night out, not far from our starting point.

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To-day is a memorable occasion, a gala-day. Just a year ago we celebrated it on board the *Cérès* where everyone was in high spirits and optimistic over future prospects. But out here in this wild, uncivilized country, closer to poverty than a fortune and surrounded by strangers who are coldly indifferent to what becomes of me I am no longer justified in building castles in Spain or even cardhouses. One must be philosophical, however, and take bad luck good-naturedly until the luck changes.

This evening we had pancakes, a little fresh meat, and some cold water for supper. Anyone who has nearly starved to death for fifteen days near the Trinity River has little right to complain here along the Salmon where the prime essentials are procurable.

On Wednesday, the twenty-sixth, we tramped all day long over the mountains which were for the most part wooded and offered slight variety either in vegetation or scenery. On a hill-top, in a little open clearing, I found one white lily in full bloom. I made the remark that this was the first lily I had come across in my travels since leaving home and, as it was the emblem of my own country, it made me homesick for France even though two thousand leagues of land and ocean separated us.

We rested where the Salmon and Shasta rivers [!] fork.\* The latter, which is about the length of the former, gets its name from Mount Shasta—the highest peak in this part of the country—where it rises. This peak can be clearly seen from any mountain, thirty leagues away. These two rivers probably flow into the Klamath which empties into the Pacific well below the Oregon border. In any event this is what miners and backwoodsmen believe. Up to the present writing geographers have wisely refrained from making any statements about it.

At the Forks of the Salmon. De Massey confuses the North Fork of the Salmon with the Shasta River.

Here where we stopped for lunch I had an opportunity to see an entire Indian family, members of one of the local tribes. I did not understand why they came over here and mixed with the miners. They may have been merely curious; perhaps they were waiting for a chance to rob us.

These Indians are a fine type of savage; the men are well-built and stalwart. Some of the women would even be considered handsome if their mouths were not so heavily tattooed, and if they did not have the coquettish habit of piercing the cartilage between the nostrils with a piece of bone or an arrow about seven or eight centimeters long. This decoration takes the place of an ornament, but it is extremely ugly and gives them an odd appearance.

I have been trying to find out something about this custom—a 113 custom extremely painful at first but afterwards merely inconvenient. But I have only found out this much: that somewhat as

*rancheros* brand cattle with hot irons to establish ownership so the Indians whose only beasts of burden are their women mark them in this way for purposes of identification to prevent them from wandering from one tribe to another without permission. This explanation is as good as any other; you can take it for what it is worth.

This placer where we are now established is a rich one. We hear reports of claims yielding day after day as much as five or six ounces of gold per person. This sounds too good to be true, or to last for any more than a very brief period. Already three hundred miners have congregated here at these placers and are busily exploiting them. They have come from every point of the compass, from the Yuba, and other branches of the Sacramento, from the upper and lower branches of the Trinity, and even from Oregon.

At three this afternoon we broke camp and went on to a new camp site farther on, making in all a day's march of about eighteen miles, or thirty kilometers.

On Saturday, the twenty-seventh, I went out prospecting with some Englishmen and Americans. We went down the river for some six kilometers, crossing it four times with all our clothes on and with the water nearly up to our shoulders, testing all the bars. We got out in each washing about twenty or twenty-five cents in gold-dust, making a total for the day's work of an hundred francs each.

Now for the first time I began to draw a long breath again, to feel that everything was not lost, that California gold was not a chimera, and that my luck had changed at last. If the Klamath offers no better opportunities this is where I shall pitch my tent and perhaps spend the winter—if this seems more feasible than returning to San Francisco. Should gold prove abundant the moment the gold-rush is on supplies will begin to run low. A happy prospect this for gold, provisions, and clothing!

In the afternoon we camped six thousand meters farther on. On the road we met two groups of Americans returning from the Klamath, who told us there was less gold there than along the Salmon River. They did not mention the Indians. Nevertheless, disregarding their advice which might have been worth following we continued on our journey. I wanted to see things for myself, and had a

certain amount of pride about it. Moreover it would have been disappointing to have retraced our steps without at least satisfying our curiosity and reaching the goal for which we had started—to get some definite information for our associates about the wealth of the much talked of country—and for which we had already made so many sacrifices.

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Falling in some twelve thousand meters farther on with another party of Americans who were also turning back discouraged and who confirmed the reports of the first outfit, it seemed foolish to try and carry out our plans for it would have meant time lost and a useless consumption of provisions without any material benefit. As my friends felt the same way we concluded to retrace our steps, although we were only a short distance from the Klamath.

Returning to the placers by way of the upper [North] fork of the Salmon we found they had been abandoned and that a fresh fever had drawn the miners over to the banks of the Shasta, and the tributaries of the Klamath. What a waste of effort! How much time is squandered by this constant shifting! A miner who is finding gold worth a hundred francs a day will leave his claim in the hope of finding one hundred and fifty francs twenty or thirty leagues away. More often than not, after leaving, he finds there is nothing in the new location.

In my last camp I came across some of the loveliest spots imaginable, places reminiscent of an English garden, which had been laid out and planted on a large scale by an artist. He had made green lawns, and planted masses of large trees and bushes of all sizes. Some of the trees were a variety that dropped their leaves; others were evergreen. Through the garden ran a brook, with a waterfall. All this was situated directly on the picturesque banks of the Shasta [North Fork of Salmon].

On our way back to Big Bar we took a short cut where the travelling was easier and so had a more comfortable trip as the road had been cleared off by the sensible and practical Yankees with axe and hatchet.\* By going this way and by following the valley which led to the South Fork (a branch of the Trinity) we crossed the river and its subsidiaries three times.

Perhaps this route lay by way of Weaver's diggings—later Weaverville.

Sometimes we had to cross bridges made of the solid trunks of fallen trees where dizziness or a false step would have proved fatal to any individual who was not absolute master of his head and feet. However by so doing in five days we made a trip that had taken us ten days of the hardest walking, not to mention suffering and exhaustion, and with no more discomfort than occasionally getting hungry.

On Wednesday evening, August second, we got into Big Bar. I intended, without losing any time, to give a full account of my exploring expedition, to map out plans, and to start out at once with my partners. But to my amazement I found my shanty deserted.

Upon making inquiries I learned that Pidaucet and Veron having formed a partnership had left together for the lower Klamath, and that Fredet who was not over his *panaris* and the blisters on his hands was 115 expecting to leave camp tomorrow for the same place, taking my watch and money with him and without leaving any word as to where I could rejoin them.

So I got in just in time to look after my few personal belongings and to let Fredet know what I thought of such conduct and the way Pidaucet and Veron had failed to keep their promises. I also declined from this time on to be associated with men who were so irresponsible and ungrateful as not to consider how much time I had lost and how much money I had spent on the trip for our mutual benefit at a time when they were unable to travel. A fifteen days' walking trip and fifty dollars spent—this was the result of my loyalty. From now on I am going to look after my own affairs and have nothing more to do with them.

The next day when I went out to see some of the miners who were still living at Big Bar I learned that a fire had completely wiped out Oscar de Gaulne, my agent, and that as the result of this disaster he had gone insane and had been sent back home. So the two thousand francs I had left with him were lost, new goods were arriving, and no one was there to receive them. Neither was there money for the custom charges. Upon learning this I concluded that a longer stay at the mines



was out of the question. Clearly duty called me to San Francisco for I did not want anyone to think I had not put forth every effort possible to save something out of the wreckage.

Selling off what tools I could and some of my clothing, I bought provisions for the trip and found a companion who was returning to the coast. After paying a driver twelve dollars for transporting my few belongings, I had exactly seventy dollars in gold-dust left as my entire wealth.

This meager capital and the physique of a seasoned miner were my sole stock-in-trade as I had no credit or backing for carrying on my business with bankers, creditors, money-lenders, and consignees in San Francisco. Almost wiped out by the fire, discouraged, and despondent, I faced the almost inevitable certainty of not being able to raise the necessary capital to release my goods from the vessels, pay the customs, or rent a place to display them. From seven to eight thousand francs were needed to get me out of this situation. And yet Veron pays no attention to all this, even though his interests are involved with mine.

On Monday, August 5, 1850, I set out from Big Bar, disillusioned and with no prospects for the future. When I reached here the twenty-first of last May I was brimming over with optimism; and I have done everything in my power to succeed. I have willingly stooped to any kind of work, no matter how fatiguing, but I am now convinced that a miner's life is practical only for men who are accustomed from childhood to the hardest manual labor and that only by extraordinary good luck is it possible to take out a fortune within a few weeks or months.

Three of us are travelling with one mule. The first two days we did not walk; we trotted. I made no complaint but kept up the pace and camped with the rest. But on the third day my legs refused to function and I had to lag behind. The way the guide was pressing ahead made me think my driver had some evil intentions for he had charge of all my capital which, though little enough, will be invaluable after reaching San Francisco.

In the evening, despairing of catching up with him, I had to pass the night alone in a ravine. I had two ship-biscuits and my blankets. It was enough, however. While I was munching at my supper,

thinking over my troubles, bemoaning my ill-luck, and almost ready to give up after this series of calamities one on top of another, along came an American on horseback.

Liking the place, he got off, tied up his horse, and came over and sat down by me. His society quite revived my flagging spirits and dispelled my fit of pessimism. Though far from feeling hilarious, I grew almost cheerful.

The stranger was a young man, but wrinkled, pale, and taciturn. He was fairly well dressed and looked like either an agent sent out by some capitalists to explore the country, or a newspaper reporter. Since he did not speak French and I knew only a few words of English we only exchanged a few monosyllables before sleeping. I noticed, moreover, that he was much more of a gentleman than most of his fellow-countrymen whom I met at the placers.

We both got under way early in the morning. He was on his horse while I followed behind on foot in hope of finding my muleteer who had deserted me, at the next stopping place. The latter was located in a field where a large store, serving as café, restaurant and hotel, was the rendezvous for all inbound and outbound travellers. Here I found my two travelling-companions and had a good meal—sitting down on a bench with a table in front of me and being waited on—a luxury I had not known since leaving the miserable *Hector* at Trinity City.

Having had no mishaps on our four days' trip, we got into Union Town the next day. This was a new settlement made up of fifty houses and forty tents. The houses belong to the speculators. Other sites are occupied by the general store, which sells everything, and the hotel, which is café, restaurant, gambling house, saloon all in one. 117 The tents house the transient miners who are going out or coming in from the placers and stop here to restock, or fritter away the gold they have collected.

The location is not a bad one being on a bend in Trinity [Humboldt] Bay, but only barges and small boats can get up to it. Large ships have to keep off owing to the sand-bars. A plain two or three

kilometers deep, shaped like a half-moon and edged with massive forests which inclose it on three sides, dips down to the sea.

Nearby are two small villages, Humboldt, and Eureka City. These are the ports from which supplies are taken to Trinity City which lies fifteen miles north. Had Captain Kemp of the *Hector* know his business he would have put us off here and so saved us many trials and tribulations.

I spent August tenth and eleventh at Union Town resting and looking over its prospects, present and future, since it is the connecting link between San Francisco and these northern placers.

The Marquis of Pindray has been camping here for some little time together with his servant, the man from La Chapelle. They came out overland bringing with them a herd of one hundred and fifty steers, cows and a few horses. They volunteered the information that their stock came from *Rancho de Vaca* along the Sacramento and had belonged to an American colonel, Victor Prudhon [Prudon], from whom they were purchased and who owned not less than five or six square leagues of land.

They also boasted that they owned a large number of building lots in Union Town. Personally I could not help raising the question how these men, who were living from hand to mouth four months ago on the proceeds of hunting and gambling and taking anything they could lay their hands on, had been able completely to reverse their position and acquire so much capital. The whole thing looked strange to me and aroused my curiosity, though I only knew them by sight and reputation.

Out here they are famous for their prodigality, the airs they put on, their appearance of opulence, and for their reputed nobility. As a visit from me, a poor miner and one of their fellow-countrymen, would not be compromising, I decided to attempt it. I had a good excuse for going to see them as they are the local butchers here. They kill and sell meat at thirty and forty cents a pound. They also sell milk from their cows—at a dollar a bottle! As there is plenty of pasturage around here they do not have to worry over feed for their animals.

Upon giving my name and saying where I was from I was politely invited to come up to their tent. There I found myself in the presence of one of the greatest imposters of the century. He has

all the feline airs of a calculating scoundrel and gives the impression of being about to pounce on his prey. In his conversation the Marquis is invariably fascinating, but his nervousness and his rapacious nature frequently crop out.

The Marquis, whenever it is to his advantage or when the mood strikes him, has his headaches and his nerves just like a capricious woman. At such times he will see no one. He is an original type, an interesting study, but a dangerous man to deal with. I shall probably never run across his type again—fortunately for humanity. If a novelist knew about him, without deviating from the truth what a story he could write woven around his checkered and sinister career.

After talking with him for half an hour I departed. He has invited me to have dinner with him tomorrow, and I see no reason to decline since I am already fairly well acquainted with this Robert Macaire. Bertrand, otherwise known as La Chapelle, was away to-day. No doubt he had gone on some business in his capacity of understudy to his master. I should have enjoyed seeing these two confederates together before me and shall go there with this deliberate intention to-morrow.

Accustomed as I am to sleeping out in the open I did not take a room for the night. Nor does the tent of a stranger tempt me any more than a room in the hotel where I would have to rub elbows with drunkards, croupiers, robbers, and men of the coarsest fiber where only on rare occasions there is an honest miner. In addition it would cost me a dollar; sleeping out under the glimmering stars costs nothing.

My situation, however, was not entirely a roseate one in this damp and sultry country. Mosquitoes came out in such force that there was no escaping them even when I wrapped myself completely from head to foot in my blankets. There was no recourse but to be philosophical and endure martyrdom and sleeplessness for ten long hours.

Getting up bright and early on the morning of the eleventh I strolled about the neighborhood. To kill time and see if I could find any familiar faces I explored all the budding village. The cabarets are thronged with drinkers; most of them are regular fish.

Large numbers of natives, both men and women—small, ugly, trickish, beggarly, and deceitful creatures (even if they were not so stupid the Americans would keep an eye on them) from the tribes near here parade in all their stolidity through the streets and fields. By so doing they contribute to the community with its strange conglomeration of human beings a touch of originality, to put it mildly; of 119 savagery superimposed on civilization. To complete the tableau herds of cattle and horses browse in and around the village.

I am writing this at midnight having just returned from the haunt of Bacchus—otherwise known as De Pindray's place. This hybrid creature is a mixture of wild beast, imposter, and Machiavellianism. If I compare him to Bacchus of mythological fame it is because of his fine physique, and if he does not vomit fire from his mouth his eyes dart fire. In lieu of thunder he has guns and pistols. The herds which he has been able to gather together have the air of being stolen property and not of having been acquired honestly. But what of it? Anyway he is a type well worth studying.

The Marquis, who was standing at the door of his tent with all the pomp of a great lord standing on the steps of his castle waiting for some distinguished guest to arrive, came over, shook hands, welcomed me, and presented me to his confederate and accomplice who is also his cook, valet, secretary, cowboy, butcher, and slave—everything, in fact, except his cashier. I wondered who Mr. La Chapelle, a small, sickly, shy, agile man who obeys his master's every look or gesture, could be.

The tent had two compartments. The first was used as a kitchen, dining room, saloon, harness-room, store, and lounging place; the second did duty as a sleeping chamber and a place to retire when this rascal has one of his nervous attacks, or has his headaches like a woman, and wants to retire to work off his wine or his attacks of bad conscience, after an orgy or some bad act.

A singular ménage this, in which I dined to-day sitting between two bandits so unlike in temperament at the home of the aforesaid millionaire. There was no linen and no furniture. Tree-trunks served as seats, planks for a table, and hammocks for beds. The only evidence of any luxury was in the guns, hunting-knives, ammunition, and swords.

Our menu—I have no right to be fastidious after my sojourn at the placers—consisted of fresh meat, dried meat, tea during the meal, coffee and brandy afterwards, and bread if we so desired. To me it was a feast, but my host ate nothing. The excuse he gave was that one of his headaches was coming on. To make up for it he talked incessantly. La Chapelle, on the other hand, ate bountifully but said nothing. Personally I both ate and talked.

De Pindray, in his conversation, did not mention France or any of his European escapades. Very likely he was afraid of saying something indiscreet which might have exposed his past or got him into an embarrassing corner. The talk turned instead to his residence in America, and his lucky speculations in building sites, which he was still holding in St. Joseph [Missouri], the future prospects of that village, and his trip overland to San Francisco—a journey of some five or six thousand leagues [kilometers?] over desert and through Indian country. He also bragged about his frequent brawls with men of every nationality—from which he always came off victorious.

He also told us how he had acquired a ranch on the borders of the Sacramento, five square leagues in area, from which he had taken off the animals he had brought along with him. He described, too, his trip from *Rancho de Vaca* to Union Town, without guides or knowing the road, through woods, mountains, and underbrush. Acquiring building lots at Union City he put his tent, the tent where I was being entertained, on one of these, but he expects to move on shortly to the placers where he hopes to sell his live-stock at better prices. All this amazing history was related in a simple and convincing manner, and the courage, force, energy, audacity, and intelligence of the man were so impressive to the listener that he actually seemed to be telling the truth.

For three hours this monologue lasted—it was broken only by occasional questions and admiring exclamations by way of encouragement—De Pindray never once stopped talking. He kept looking at me with his strange, fascinating manner as if he wanted to hypnotize me, and fathom my innermost thoughts. Not a flicker passed over my passive countenance, however, expressing what I really thought of him.

Interloper as I was, I had come with the intention merely of observing as closely as possible these two types, a Robert Macaire and Bertrand, types of aristocratic Frenchmen on American soil. Estimating their wealth I would place it around two hundred thousand dollars, nearly a million francs.

At three in the afternoon, edified, if not entirely sympathetic, I left my hosts. I am hoping to run across them again in the future and be able to continue their sinister biography. I have recently heard around here that an American brig, the *Sierra Nevada*, is leaving soon from the Port of Trinidad for San Francisco. Having no money or time to lose, I have made up my mind to leave tomorrow morning for Trinity City.

On Monday, August twelfth, at seven in the morning, I started out with an ex-croupier from one of the gambling houses who now owns a café in Union Town. By way of ballast I carried my entire fortune along with me consisting of a large fund of philosophy, some energy, a gun, ammunition, a good blanket, some biscuits, and about sixty dollars.

It was without any regrets that I left this land of mosquitoes and 121 De Pindray. Refreshed after my two days' rest I took the path that skirts the bay with a light foot, accompanied by my solitary companion who might easily prove to be treacherous like all his brother-croupiers. In all events he is not a highway robber, or a cold-blooded assassin. He speaks French and hails from New Orleans. Why try to be over-particular out here in this wild country! I am really fortunate in having even this stranger to camp with on the short trip to Trinity City.

As we left we were warned by seasoned travellers that along the route we were to take the Indians were numerous and often aggressive in spite of the severe lessons and punishment they had received at the hands of their American neighbors. This did not intimidate us, however, but merely put us on the alert against surprises.

True enough, we met several natives, but instead of attempting to pick a quarrel with us they showed us many little attentions. Many who passed us were packing food on their backs. Some

even offered to carry us over the rivers we had to cross in return for some pearls and trinkets. Others sold us salmon weighing as much as ten pounds, for ten or fifteen cents. Thus we had plenty of fresh fish to eat.

Having made half the trip in safety we then struck off from the seashore and took to the plateau which led us toward our destination. Here we came to a river, larger and deeper than the others, which had to be forded. Two Indians who were loitering on the banks offered to carry us across on their shoulders. We accepted somewhat reluctantly and gave our lives into the hands of these savages. All went well while they kept on their feet, but one of them stumbled, nearly spilling us into the water. When I saw this performance I pounded my porter as hard as I could and sent him looking for crabs at the bottom of the river. While he was trying to get his bearings I hurried up the bank, laughing at our dilemma. We dried off in the sun while we were cooking dinner.

Upon thinking over what had happened we came to the conclusion that we had narrowly escaped trouble. The Indians must have known we disliked wading through the water and thought that if we asked to be carried over it was because we could not swim. I was the only one who appeared to be carrying guns and while my companion also carried in his pocket a gun with six shots in it, no one suspected it.

By giving me a ducking they thought they could put me, together with my gun, out of commission in one move and then handle the survivor without much trouble. As I had the gun this was why I was singled out to be dropped into the water. But the whole thing was of minor importance anyway, the main result being that one of the 122 conspirators received, by way of *pourboire*, a good ducking which was well deserved, I can assure you.

Musing over our adventure we enjoyed a delectable dinner of salmon. At three in the afternoon, dry and rested again, we took up the trail once more on the wooded plateau with its dense underbrush, and toward five that evening we reached Trinity City without further adventure. Full of hope, courage, and vision it was from here that we started the twenty-fifth of last April.



I found my tent as I had left it, but nearly everything inside in the way of personal belongings, tools, utensils, and provisions had vanished, having either rotted or been stolen. As I could not find a purchaser for what little remained I left everything in a store to be sold off for our account. This was one way of escaping criticism, but if I had thrown them into the sea I would have realized as much on them.

This done I made a bundle of my personal belongings, intending to ship them. Those belonging to Pidaucet and Veron I put in a box leaving them in the tent in case they returned by way of Trinity City. Then I booked passage on the *Sierra Nevada*.

Having raised twenty-two dollars from the sale of my gun I did not need to draw further on my savings for expenses on the return trip from the placers to San Francisco. In this way I would reach the city with a capital of sixty dollars with which to meet all the exigencies of my situation.

Nothing about the village of Trinity City had changed since my departure; there were a few more wooden houses and a few less tents, but there was little activity and the streets seemed quiet.

On Wednesday, August 14, 1850, I left behind the inhospitable river where I had almost died of hunger, thirst, cold, fatigue, and discouragement, and poorer than ever embarked on the brig that was just sailing, to face, no doubt, more trials and tribulations.

### **[SAN FRANCISCO AGAIN]**

[August 14, 1851] The *Sierra Nevada* that is carrying away to-day not Cæsar and his treasure but merely a poor bankrupt miner is a small ship of one hundred and fifty tons, pretty to look at but devoid of every comfort and luxury. Nevertheless, she is steady and seaworthy.

In charge of her are the Captain and crew, all of whom eat at the same table on a footing of perfect equality when not on duty. All orders, which are given in a pleasant voice, a voice that is almost cultured, are so speedily and accurately executed as to lead one to believe that no line is drawn between master and subordinates here on board 123 except for the fact that now and again the word

“Captain” is spoken. After travelling on the *Hector* commanded by a butcher, a drunkard, and an incompetent knave, Captain Kempt, it was a welcome surprise to be surrounded by such conditions and to be in a pleasant environment once more.

Moreover, I could not help asking myself why all our Socialists, fanatics, and theorists have never been able to produce results like these which would add materially to their laurels. A profound philosopher would say that the trouble with us is that theoretically we admit equality, on the condition that it does not affect us personally; freedom of speech, if it does not disrupt our established convictions, and liberty only when it accords with our wishes and interests. To such an extent is this carried in all our political associations that more orators exist than practical men, more leaders than soldiers, and more idealists than workers.

The crew consists of the Captain, five sailors, a cabin-boy, and a cook. These, with four Americans and myself who are passengers, complete the personnel of the small vessel. We are given only two meals a day but they are ample and well-served. Fresh salmon, ham, and potatoes are the main dishes, with coffee, tea and brandy as beverages. For more exacting appetites the buffet is always open and supplied with bread, butter and brandy. I notice no one abuses this privilege.

We had a fine voyage down, with a good breeze tempered by a warm sun. We sailed most of the time within sight of the California coastline lying on our left and with the Pacific stretching off to the horizon on the north, south and west. On this floating haven of rest, so tranquil and quiet after four months of fatigue and hardship, mind and body were refreshed and given a new vigor to meet the problems awaiting me in San Francisco when I get there. (I am sorry to say I do not remember the name of the Captain of the *Sierra Nevada*, and so cannot render him suitable homage.\*

L. B. Edwards was master of the schooner *Sierra Nevada*.

On August fifteenth, at three in the afternoon we anchored inside the Golden Gate after thirty-six hours' travelling. It had taken us about fifteen days to make this trip on the *Hector*. By this comparison you can judge the relative worth of the two ships and the two captains.

I registered temporarily at the Marine Hotel,<sup>\*</sup> the rendezvous of all unfortunate miners, ruined gamblers, and sailors. The day following I started out to see what interesting information I could gather around the city. I learned that my creditor De Gaulne, having lost his mind after the fire last May had wiped him out, had been sent home, and that the sums for which he was liable—if they are ever paid—would be repaid only in France.

On Pacific Street; C. O. Stiles proprietor.

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This new financial disaster, which deprived me of my last pecuniary resources and of credit on which I was depending, kept me from being able to release goods being held for me at the customs and on ships due to arrive shortly. Would relentless fate never stop pursuing me?

Before forming this connection De Gaulne had assured me he was associated with the banker, J. J. Chauviteau; in fact he had even read me their agreement. After the fire and bankruptcy, breakdown and departure of De Gaulne no papers were found indicating any such agreement. This seemed a little strange as these two men had been living together. After the fire J. J. Chauviteau had all De Gaulne's papers in his own possession, and had liquidated his affairs to suit himself.

So it seems as if, after the catastrophe, Chauviteau cleared himself, legally or illegally, to the detriment of outside creditors. Then, like so many others who are wiped out by fire—bankers, businessmen, and consignees—he went through bankruptcy. This was a simple and easy way out of this dilemma, of conserving his resources, and of keeping intact a strong-box full of papers and mortgages.

Out here the legal end of bankruptcy is easily accomplished. The case simply comes up before a judge, together with two witnesses, who swear that the books have been regularly kept and that the client is unable to fulfill his obligations. A decree of insolvency is then given and all liabilities are wiped off the books of the creditors, credit has been renewed, and business can then proceed as usual. A fresh stock is put in and new creditors found without difficulty. A bright man should be able to amass a fortune by three opportune bankruptcies; he is *declassé* in the business world if

he does not attain this goal. There is nothing odd about this, for in every country laws are merely a reflection of the men who enact them and represent the virtues, vices, manners, and customs of the country—though there may be a few exceptions to this general rule.

While I was away at the mines the consul Mr. Guy, who was not a big enough man for the position, was replaced to good advantage by Mr. Patrick Dillon, originally from England, but a naturalized French citizen. He got his start in 1836 as an employe in the bureau of the Minister of the Interior, allying himself with the Guizot family. Later he obtained a consular post in England and has just recently been promoted to the post he is now occupying—an enviable one considering its political importance, the responsibilities attached to it, and its perquisites, amounting to about ten thousand francs yearly. Let us hope this new appointee will be able to meet the many demands made on him in San Francisco.

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Mr. Dillon is a scholar; he collaborated with Mr. Guizot in several of his historical treatises published in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*. He speaks French correctly and fluently, as well as Spanish and English. He is energetic, accommodating, generous, hospitable, and sensible. The French call him—referring to his usual manner—“*collet-monte*,” the English, “a man of dignity.” He is extremely generous, so much so in fact, that he is often imposed upon. He is an excellent man for the French consulate.

After I got in, the first visit I made was to the Consulate. Mr. Dillon received me affably even though he did not know me, and his head clerk gave me all the information I was after.

About this same time I learned that my friends and pleasant acquaintances, Count Ernest and Count Elior de Grivel of Perrigny and Lamyre, were in San Francisco. Let me add a word about these new actors in the comedy France is playing out here on the edge of the Pacific. Elior is forty-five; he was graduated from St. Cyr in 1830, being commissioned as an officer.

Temperamentally he is energetic, full of spirits, adventurous, and a great plunger. He is also very independent, rather caustic, and not fond of family life, which proved too monotonous for his liking and made him decide to travel.

His father, who was general in command of the National Guard at Jura in 1815, being captured during the retreat of Marshal Ney in the Hundred Days, acceded to his desire, giving him ten thousand francs and his blessing, as well as wishing him good health, success, and a safe voyage.

He got off at Buenos Aires, and for nine years led the life of a *ranchero*, being always on his horse and out on the pampas under the hot sun like a nomadic hunter. He made a living buying and selling sheep and half-wild steers. His father having died and his mother, née du Guy, having fallen ill with an incurable disease, he returned home unexpectedly on the eve of the marriage of his sister Claudia to my cousin Laurent Marie de Houx, a glass-manufacturer, of La Rocherre. I was at their nuptials which took place at Dôle. It was there I met Count Elior.

Under these same circumstances I also came to know Count Grivel of Lamyre, and his charming daughter Maria, the father and sister of Ernest, who was quite young at the time, but who is now about twenty. He is the companion and associate of his cousin and guardian Elior in San Francisco.

This news gave me unspeakable pleasure as I was starting out to-day, for I felt quite a stranger in this cosmopolitan city teeming with so much activity. These two cousins have sent out a shipment of wines and brandies bought at Bordeaux which they have disposed of at a profit.

Part of the proceeds have been invested in promoting the Hotel des Deux Mondes. This hostelry is run by a Francomtois. Ernest is living there watching and keeping a check on his interests, as well as those of Elior, to the best of his ability. The latter who does not like hotel life has rented an hectare of land at Mission Dolores where he has a little house and intends to do some gardening.

To assist him in this venture he has a devoted servant, who is more like a friend, named Celestin, an ex-cuirassier, a substantial, jolly old companion. He hired a substitute to get Celestin out of military duty and also paid his passage here in return for his services during his stay in California.

Celestin is intelligent, active, honest and sober—qualities rare everywhere, and particularly out in this country. So Elier did both a good deed and a good stroke of business.

Upon his advice I decided to leave the Marine Hotel, which is really mainly a gambling-house, a *café-chantant*, and a cheap eating place or even worse, the rendezvous of a strange world of idlers among whom I felt out of place, and I am going over to make my home at the Hotel des Deux Mondes. There I shall be known to the proprietors, have a chance to meet business men, importing agents, and ship captains whose acquaintance might prove valuable.

The establishment is a second-class hotel, but properly and capably managed. The rates are not exorbitant for this country. In fact I can get board and room there for fifteen francs a day. If I can find some brokerage business to do in my spare time, while waiting for my goods to get in from France, I can see my way clear for a whole month, which is equivalent to two years in Europe with the way events constantly change out here.

In going through the city I can not find any traces of fire except that homes have been rebuilt somewhat better than before and in greater numbers. Those of stone and brick, unfortunately, are scarce, the majority being built of wood, or in exceptional instances of sheet-iron, or zinc. The whole effect is of a vast wood-pile newly built which needs only a careless match to flame up again more magnificently than before.

The French concerns which were so prosperous and active when I left here four months ago—[Leopold] Bossange and Colliard, [Aimé] Hugues and [F. L. A.] Pioche, Mullot and Callot, and [J. J.] Chauviteau—are now in bankruptcy, and their once-proud representatives are now humbly bowing down before any ragged miner who might have 127 a million dollars in his belt. Thus do the scales turn—a thing not always sufficiently considered when times are prosperous. But the French commercial houses will no doubt recover.

However, what many Frenchmen have not the vision to see is keen competition from Americans, English, Germans, and Jews from all over Europe who are pouring into this country. For the time

being this situation is not taken seriously. When it becomes really dangerous it will be met, unless it crushes us before we know it.

From time to time I hear bits of news about the scattered passengers of the *Cérès*. Adolphe de Finance, who is in the mines south of here, has been seriously ill, and because of his scanty resources, his depleted energy, and lack of initiative, has suffered greatly.

The haughty secretary of Montalivet, who looked down on all the passengers who were his messmates on board, has had to climb down all the rungs of the social ladder and to keep body and soul alive he has even had to work as baker's boy and be under a brutal and gross person who was always cross and thrashed him occasionally.

What a come-down for my friend Theologne! What a tragedy for a man who was once one of the social lights of a minister's salon, a man of intelligence, education and merit, well-born, and highly connected, to have fallen so low! Fate plays strange tricks on us. Should Theologne ever write his memoirs this chapter of his life should make interesting reading, providing he does not pass over in silence this chapter of his life in California. Through the influence of friends and relatives in France he can get passage-money to take him back to Europe. That is exactly what he should do. He will lose his mind out here and die of hunger, misery, and loneliness.

I spent part of to-day watching some auction sales. Anything and everything is sold in amounts ranging from five to ten thousand dollars. In this way I get in touch with the current prices of all commodities and also learn commercial phraseology. When the opportunity arises to purchase small quantities of sugar, coffee, tea, etc., at rock-bottom prices I buy to the limit of my available capital and sell to someone who has no time to buy his own provisions.

As I have no store and carry no perishable goods I can sell below the local retail price and realize about twenty dollars a week profit. There is no regularity or certainty about the game, however, and as the brokerage business is not to my liking I am adopting it only as a temporary measure.

On August twentieth I met Doctor Briot coming back from the mines. His affairs have not gone ahead any faster than mine. He has been away inspecting all the placers on the Mariposa and the Yuba 128 —both north and south—but rather as an amateur out looking for information than as a miner expecting to make his fortune. As he made some little profit out of his d'Arbois wine and champagne, he has been able to indulge his fondness for travel without worrying over the future and has not experienced any such difficulties as I met on the road.

The placers that are known, frequented, and well-supplied with provisions always offer to the man with a fat pocket-book comparative comfort. But this good doctor, who is a born physician, when he might be conserving his capital, feels he must see the world. He has his diploma and his medical knowledge to fall back on—resources which I lack.

He has not yet found what he wants to do; he does not care to practice medicine—the one thing at which he can succeed, to my way of thinking. He is willing to try everything else first, and only use it as a last resort. He is firmly fixed in this idea. As he is stubborn and obstinate it is useless for me to try to dissuade him. So I salve my conscience by giving him advice, for I am convinced that, in the course of time, events will justify my attitude.

Two days later I ran across my cousin Alexandre Veron who was just back from the Klamath and the Trinity. He told me Pidaucet had gone with him as far as Trinity Bay, taken his belongings out of the tent, and left for Big Bar. Their prospecting trip had been a complete failure, so it seems. Why did they not wait for me to get back from the Salmon River where there were plenty of claims and gold enough for everyone?

Veron is now living with De France who has the knack of lodging gratuitously. Veron is boarding him by way of payment. And so this dual ménage houses a fool as well as a rascal, Veron playing the former rôle. He told me about some negotiations he has just completed with Mr. De Lamolère who is also living with De France and who completes this trio of men of affairs, a trio unique in this corner of the globe.



De Lamolère had a chance to acquire one square league on an unfavorable basis from a Californian *ranchero*. The conditions were that he was to cultivate it and share profits for a certain number of years, in return for half-ownership. At first blush this seems like a handsome offer, but labor—which is scarce—must be supplied, as well as several thousand dollars for supplies and live-stock. De Lamolère, moreover, has no money.

So far as I know Veron ought to have about four hundred dollars. I made this observation to him, but as usual, he showed very little judgment in letting it get away from him, having given it, as well as 129 power-of-attorney to some stranger to represent him when our goods arrived in port. It is impossible to stop a man from drowning if his mind is made up to it. Such is the status of my cousin, Alexandre Veron, who does not seem to be in his right mind.

None of the miners has had as bad luck as my companions and I. A chap called Parisot from Quiers in Sûre (Upper Sâone), a passenger on the *Cérès* who was once tutor to young Boyon of St. Hippolyte (Doubs) found, after three months' prospecting, four thousand dollars in less than a month on the Mariposa. His friend, a man named, Gerard, a brewer from St. Hippolyte, got over five thousand dollars. All this was taken out of one diggings. A miner working near them had no luck at all. So you see it is all a lottery.

Parisot has now gone back to France. I sent a letter by him to Passavant with a little nugget—the only one I found—together with my note-book in which, for over a year, I had been jotting down notes of my travels. It had an accidental bath in the Trinity, thanks to the carelessness of Cousin Veron. In consequence some few passages are blurred. These are the only remaining relics of this time of trials and tribulations.

The Francomtois over here become readily acclimated. Three of the best hotels and cafés in San Francisco are financed and run by them. The Baltimore Hotel is managed by Louis Burtney of St. Loup, district of the Sûre. He is known as “Baltimore” because he cooked there before coming to California. He had a splendid American clientele, but was burned out in May. By securing a mortgage-loan at ten per cent. a month he was able to rebuild.

The Hotel Mondelet is run by a man from Luxeuil by the same name. He and his wife worked for a time in Chile where they owned a dyeing and cleaning establishment. As soon as gold was found in California he realized what a future the country was going to have and was one of the first to reach California. He brought a shipment of flour which quadrupled their capital.

Buying some land on Dupont Street he built a hotel and started out in business. This was burned down in May, but rebuilt. After getting it in running order he sold it, reserving the ground, which he then rented to the new proprietor for five thousand dollars a year. A short time ago they returned to France there to enjoy their profits and live in luxury among their old friends and acquaintances, not to mention the creditors they left behind them when they came away. But who can say how long it will last for, at any time, a fire might wipe out their entire holdings.

The third establishment of this same type is the Hotel des Deux 130 Mondes, where I am now living. It belongs to Messrs. Grivel, of Jura. Among the guests here at this hotel two have particularly impressed me. The first, a young blond who appears to be twenty-one or twenty-two years old, is a handsome, well-mannered, though somewhat effeminate fellow. He speaks French and English correctly although he has not had a good education.

Fond of the dice, a good meal, and the fair sex, inclined to be a swindler and a parasite, he has some mysterious business or position that keeps him occupied and brings in a few dollars for pocket-money. I presume funds are supplied by his family who have shipped him out to California to acquire experience and to learn how to get on in the world. His father having been French consul at Boston, Mr. Dillon, our local consul, takes a personal interest in him.

His grandfather, Maximir Isnard was quite a noted Frenchman. He was a member of the legislative assembly and President of the Convention during the First Republic. Later he went over from the camp of the democrats to the ranks of the Girondists. Shortly after he was taken prisoner. Returning to the Convention in October, 1793, he was made one of the Party of Five Hundred. At the time of the Restoration and First Empire he withdrew to private life, dying, in 1830, in obscurity.

The grandson of the man whom I have just sketched is Joseph Isnard. I may possibly speak of him later when I have more time and enough patience to tell you everything I have seen, heard and learned in this surprising country where virtues, vices, faults, and good qualities exist only in so far as there is any interest taken in them. In the confusion that exists out here a man does not appear to the best advantage. There is practically no family life. Such things as honor and consideration are mythical qualities, for everyone bows before the pot of gold. Joseph Isnard has a brother at the mines whom he never sees and never mentions. I cannot say which one has just cause for evading or disliking the other.

The second person at the Hotel des Deux Mondes with whom I came in contact and whom I liked much more is Doctor Clergeon, an affable, obliging, generous, and always elegantly clad man who always looks as if he were about to call on some aristocrat. He lives lavishly and seems to have plenty of money. He is very quiet about his family connections, how he got his start in the world, and why he came out here. This is about all I have been able to gather from the few talks I have had with him. In turn he questioned me fully about my own affairs and, having nothing to conceal, I answered him freely.

About certain phases of his own life he is curiously reticent—something I am unable to account for. I cannot find out whether he is a bachelor, a married man, a widower, a health-officer, or a pharmacist. He has never mentioned the names of any of his relatives except that of Mr. Bertrand, Senior, a lawyer, living at 219 Rue St. Martin, on the outskirts of Paris, who married his sister about ten years ago.

Unwilling or incapable of practising medicine or being a wholesale druggist, three years ago through personal choice, ambition, or perhaps for some political reason, he wound up his affairs, left for China, and located at Hong Kong as a physician. There, becoming addicted to the use of opium, which is in common use, he put a severe strain on the contents of his purse, first on a small, then on a large scale. This threatened to wreck his medical career, but he still had a capital of fifty or sixty thousand dollars when word of the marvellous discoveries of gold reached China.

Everyone was greatly excited and crowds began to leave China. Among others Clergeon joined the general exodus, spending part of his capital on the following purchases: three wooden houses ready to construct and with furniture to put in them, rice, sugar, medical supplies, and some miscellaneous things—among them birds' nests.

He hoped, within a year, to triple his fortune and return to France, a millionaire. Thinking, as did so many other merchants at that time, that gold was not necessary in that land of gold, he put nearly all his capital into merchandise. Then when he got into San Francisco and needed money to pay the freight, the customs, and rental on a store where he could display his wares, as well as to buy land on which to erect his houses, he found himself in a tight place.

Like so many of us poor unfortunates he had to put his affairs in the greedy hands of an agent, Mr. Salmon, who is half-French, and half-American, and a native of Mirecourt (Vosges). Had the doctor arrived several days or weeks after the May fire, goods, houses, furniture, and everything could have been promptly sold at a good profit. But as he did not get in until early in August—nearly two months after a flood of goods had come in—commercial San Francisco had been rebuilt.

By this time the stores were again full, and no one was interested in buying a house in the suburbs, as the city was given over mainly to money-making and family life was not considered important. His situation was precarious and although he has been in California a year now he is not yet out of the woods.

The Doctor, however, did not lose everything, and if he can save half he will be quite satisfied. Having expected to lose everything he had he is taking it philosophically. Would he be as cool were he in my position?

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The outlook here is far from satisfactory. Transactions that appear perfectly safe often present so many unexpected pitfalls that I never feel safe about anything.

The month of August was spent in trying to sell, but without success, what goods we had in the customs while waiting for a second shipment that was slow in arriving. In the interim, through my brokerage business, I was able to meet my daily expenses.

Impatient over the delay I finally suggested to Doctor Briot that as nothing better had turned up, we might take a trip south of San Francisco where a number of large *ranchos* belonging to old Spanish-Californian families are located. These families being too indolent to cultivate the ground, merely use their many square leagues of fertile land for pasturage.

If on this trip we find a *ranchero* who is willing to lease us a section of his land, together with some live stock, on terms advantageous to both parties, we may decide to pitch our tents there, cultivate the land, and at the end of a certain length of time become half-owners in the land we have worked.

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***PART VI To my friends: Doctor Briot, my sympathetic fellow-traveller, Count Elier de Perrigny, and his young cousin, Count Ernest de Grivel of Lamyre, whose devotion and affection have never failed during my darkest hours and for whom I shall always cherish the warmest affection.***

**[JOSEÁ AND SANTA CRUZ]**

On Sunday, September 7, 1850, at eight in the morning Doctor Briot and I, like Jerome Paturot starting off on a search for fame, engaged passage on a little skiff of twelve or fifteen tons, which was bound for the port of the little village of San José. San José is situated at the southernmost extremity of the Bay of San Francisco—in other words about twenty leagues from our point of departure. From this inhospitable land We set sail Without saying *au revoir*, So black looked the future! Come what may we are off With a light breeze, Out of funds, And almost without hope.

The name of our ship is the *Wave*. The owner, proprietor, and skipper are all combined in one lone man, the Captain. The crew is composed of one cabin-boy. These, together with two paying passengers, are all we have on board. But they are quite enough, for this tiny boat is so loaded down

with freight that it is impossible to move about. So we must adapt ourselves to circumstances and be resigned, during the crossing, to remain standing, sitting, or lying down, uncomfortable as it is.

Luckily the trip will be short. The weather is perfect and the wind favorable without being brisk enough to upset our skiff which might readily capsize with a stiff breeze blowing. At this time of year, however, we have nothing to fear except being becalmed when the breeze dies down about four in the afternoon.

We sailed down the bay without discomfort or mishap. Off toward the north San Francisco receded gradually into the distance. West of us stretched the peninsula, with its chain of mountains that fringe the Pacific. On the east were the low-lying hills with the plains stretching out at their feet and dotted with a few ranches, and the Mission San José, which though now in ruins has been recently exploited as a watering-place, since it is the site of some excellent hot springs.

After seven long hours we got off at the port of San José. Here we found an embryo village that had been laid out on the marshy, 134 unhealthful lowlands.\* From there it was about three leagues to San José, our destination. The trip could be made either on foot, horseback, or in a carriage.

Alviso townsite, surveyed in 1849-50 by C. S. Lyman.

As we had very little money, plenty of provisions, and excellent legs, we decided to use the latter, and so, talking merrily, we started walking. The doctor carried his pack slung from a hook, a convenient if not an elegant method; I carried mine over my shoulder, miner-fashion. Anyone meeting us would probably have taken me for one of the lower classes and the doctor for a day laborer; but in this part of the country few distinctions are made and any made are usually in favor of the laborer.

Garbed in this fashion and with these loads—each of us was carrying a bundle weighing from fifteen to twenty kilograms, containing utensils, provisions, and blankets—we crossed the long expanse of plain which was broken, here and there, by lagoons of brackish water that forced us to make constant detours.

On every side stalks of wild mustard grew to a height of two meters; they looked like magnificent rape seed ripe for harvesting. A fire, however, could destroy them in a moment. At this season of the year the road is easy to travel, but during the rainy season, from November to April, it becomes impassable even for pedestrians. This may be what has kept settlers from locating in this remarkably fertile country.

A good dike, a canal, and a railway terminal and station at San José would change the entire appearance of this plain, now so rich and so deserted. Off in the distance where the land is a little higher some old ranches lying about a league apart were discernible. They seemed to be under cultivation and devoted to fruit-raising.

The nearer we approached to San José, the modest capital, the more truck-gardening we found. On the outskirts it covers most of the ground surrounding the village. By supplying the local trade and San Francisco, truck-gardeners reap good profits in view of the fabulous prices of all fresh vegetables. These are the usual prices: potatoes, twelve cents a pound; a good cabbage, four francs; radishes, twelve cents; a melon, one dollar. Everything else is in proportion.

Under such conditions the rôle of gardener seems a roseate one. We purchased some land here last March for one hundred and eighty francs, and all we now need to do is take possession, but unfortunately this is not feasible as it has not as yet been properly surveyed.

At six that evening we entered the capital of California. The United States makes a habit of choosing for its capital a village with no commercial future and which, if it did not have this title, would have difficulty in attracting a population.

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San José is located on the plains. A few picturesque wooden houses dot the outskirts. Some adobe houses, owned by the Californians, are lost in a jumble of wooden shacks and tents. A large street of generous proportions bisects the village. This is the main thoroughfare and here the public buildings are established.

In the daytime this street is nearly deserted, but when night comes it fairly teems with activity. A motley population swarms through the street—a population largely of Mexicans, Chileans, Peruvians, Indians, and Californians. Concessions and amusements, gambling, and noisy merry-making are found everywhere. *Café-chantants* and gambling-houses, however, are the chief attractions.

The Spanish-Americans are fond of dancing, and music furnished by the mandolin and guitar is always in evidence. The whole place is thus kept in an uproar and everyone appears to be either angry or drunk. This lasts until midnight; it is enlivened by a few fights and frays. Then the public lights are gradually extinguished, the orchestra stops, and the crowd reluctantly disperses to its tents, lofts, and huts, while others, without shelter, lie down and sleep in the open wrapped in a blanket or *serape*. Some few, more vicious or energetic than the rest, spend the remaining hours of the night in the gambling houses.

Among the latter I saw about fifty men from Sonora who are on their way from the placers to their own country. This group of lively and happy miners, who are strong, heavy-set, rugged, brown and weather-beaten, are inveterate gamblers and absolutely lawless.

They are said to have collected a considerable quantity of dust and gold-nuggets which they are spending recklessly at roulette, monte, and thirty and forty, with high stakes, like knaves of the lowest order. Many of their number have lost their stakes and have left San José. I longed for some painter to watch this street-carnival with me, and transmit it to canvas for the benefit of posterity. To-morrow and the day after this it will begin all over again—this hideous fête of gold, vice, and vermin.

Among these men, types as odd as any I have ever seen, I ran across one of my fellow-countrymen, Dechanet, who once owned a small shop in Langres. He is just the same as he always was. He has been here about four or five months painting buildings, and while he has had good days yet as a general thing work has been slack. He conceived the excellent plan of making friends with the village priest who gave him a small plot of land near the church. On this he has built a shanty



that serves as headquarters for his work. He boards at the hotel for sixteen dollars a week—a sum equivalent to three days' earnings.

I located him in a gambling house watching the roulette wheel and 136 absorbed in the prospect of imaginary gains and future fortune. After breaking into this agreeable reverie I wished him good evening and good luck. He looked frightened when he saw me, as frightened as if he had seen a ghost, his superior officer, or Medusa's head—the uncomfortable feeling that an unexpected creditor, however unimportant, always creates when he surprises the debtor at an inopportune moment. So I hastened to relieve his mind by telling him that when it was convenient he could reimburse me for all or part of the twenty-four dollars he owed me—for which I would be deeply grateful. Poor chaps like myself have to be accommodating.

Dechanet promised to remember it and reimburse me in a few weeks. He also confirmed the rumor that Father Doubet, our other creditor, was living in retirement at Santa Cruz. He said, too, that the road leading across the coastal range was difficult and dangerous to travel as it was infested with bears, wolves, and jackals. From him we learned that it would take fully two days to get there.

Such warnings failed to intimidate the doctor and me who are by this time seasoned travellers. Moreover, our route will take us past several *ranchos*, and our plan is to stop and visit them. Dechanet promised to get us some information about ranches before we got back in case we did not find anything that suited us in the locality.

Our departure is set for to-morrow. The doctor did not find his friend Jourdain in when he called. Jourdain is an old resident of California. He came to San José long ago and established the first hotel in the village. Had we seen him he might have given us some assistance in the way of good advice.

After leaving Dechanet to enjoy himself without further interruption we spent the night under the roof of the Jourdain Hotel. Fatigued from our trip and our evening and with our ears still ringing from the noise of the village and gambling houses we slept fitfully, our dreams interrupted.

As yet California has not been admitted to statehood in the American Union and so has no proper constitution. It is ruled as a territory, having been annexed under laws passed by the supreme authorities at Washington, who appoint all the highest officials as well as the municipal officers whose powers are very extensive here in the United States.

The governor, Peter Burnett, lives in San José. As the courts and federal authorities are likewise located here all this gives the village a certain amount of life and social activity. The population is estimated at some three thousand inhabitants. In addition to this number there is a large floating population living in tents who are going to or returning from the mines.

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Spanish is the language commonly used. The proportion of women here is much larger than in San Francisco; Mexicans, Californians, and Indians predominate. Two Frenchwomen operate *cafés-chantants* —Madame Martin, and *La Reine des Fleurs* (a nickname which is far from suitable). Both are noted for their avoirdupois and their independence, and are on the high road to financial independence if they do not dissipate what they have earned and saved.

On Sunday, September 8, 1850, the doctor and I departed shortly after dinner. This date brought back memories of Passavant and its fêtes which, for over fourteen years, were so merrily celebrated by our relatives and friends with festivals, songs, dancing, and happiness. Everyone was always gay, jolly, and full of spirits on those memorable occasions. Year after year this same large celebration was held at the homes of various neighbors, although we had other smaller gatherings in the intervals.

The last year this fête was held I was on the *Cérès* in mid-ocean. To-day I am tramping, pack on back, across plains and over the mountains in America with no definite goal in view and without being able to see even in the far distance what I am struggling for with every ounce of physical force and moral energy I have left in me.

I feel just as if I were continuing in the nineteenth century the traditions embodied in the legend of the Wandering Jew, with the single exception of his invincible five sons. And how is this fête-day being passed in Passavant in this present year of bad grace, 1850? Sadly, I imagine.

All the news you have had from me has been far from encouraging or reassuring regarding my future. To lose courage, however, is the worst thing that can happen to any of us. But my head and heart are both heavy with memories of the past. This introspection, however, is broken into by talks on various practical subjects with my comrade in misfortune as we follow the dusty road leading to Santa Cruz, a road that leads across barren plains, dusty, sun-beaten, and arid even in the early autumn.

Here and there we come across a *ranch*o, or pass a small house by way of breaking the monotony of our journey. Usually these have a gardener living in them—a Frenchman, Spaniard, or perhaps a German. To my amazement I saw emerge from behind the hedge of one of these gardens an aged Indian who was small, ugly, decrepit, and armed with a bow, arrow, and quiver.

To amuse himself he shot at some ravens while we looked on, but he missed most of them. We did not expect to meet such a wild looking savage around here near a village and in a fairly well settled and civilized community. He mumbled a few words of Spanish and I finally managed to understand that he had come down from the placers where a miner had taken him for his servant. He sold us a melon; I wonder if he gave the money to his master.

After three hours' walking we reached the western edge of the plain. Ahead of us loomed a chain of mountains—the coastal range—which lay between us and the Pacific. These run parallel to the coast from north to south. At the foot of the lower slopes, which are covered with magnificent forests and command an extensive view over the vast plains we had just crossed, stood Rancho Hippolyte, so-called because a Frenchman by this name had married the daughter of the proprietor, an old Californian.

It was a fine property, being picturesquely situated and traversed by a little river. This Frenchman, with his wife and family, is one on whom fate has lavished her favors. Men are not all equally favored—despite revolutionary maxims.

In the hope of meeting the owner, a fellow-countryman from whom we might acquire some useful information, we went to the door, gave our names, and disclosed the object of our visit. Unfortunately the owners were absent and we met only the feminine head of the household, an attractive young matron, and some pretty little girls.

Under ordinary circumstances we might have had a pleasant visit, but luck was not with us. They could not speak French, and we understood only a few words of Spanish. This made it impossible to carry on a conversation which might have given us a chance to pay a few compliments—which always please the ladies. Deprived of this privilege I had no recourse but to study their ways and carefully observe the setting and the characters of those before us.

As we had entered unexpectedly we found the entire family at dinner. This consisted of a bowl of beans (*frijoles*), meat, *tortillas*—a kind of dried pancake used in place of bread—and for dessert, a watermelon. Everything was placed on the floor right in the middle of the kitchen. Everyone had already sat down but they did not invite the unexpected guests to share their repast. Hospitality, apparently, has not penetrated to this remote spot as yet. Nevertheless, in all fairness to these occupants I must say that they offered us a glass of water—and two watermelons which we paid for.

After resting half an hour, highly edified with the hospitality we had received and properly grateful for being allowed the shelter of their roofs, the water from their pitchers, and chairs to sit on, we took our departure. Shaking the dust from our shoes as we crossed their threshold we gaily started off laughing over this amusing little episode 139 as we followed the winding path through the forest. Now and again we looked back across the vast stretches of uncultivated lands now lying idle, fields which are capable of feeding four times the present population of California.

For two hours more we climbed through the woods. Then suddenly we came out into a little valley. Here some Americans—possibly its first occupants—were living. They had built a sawmill near a little waterway which, in the rainy season, is strong enough to furnish power to saw the wood that is cut down during the summer months. The plant had been temporarily shut down, but within a radius of two kilometers the ground was littered with fallen logs and with millions of feet of redwood waiting to be sawed.\*

The first lumbering in California was carried on in the redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Isaac Graham established his sawmill on Zayante Creek in 1842. Bayard Taylor says he had five mills in 1849, but of this I have no confirmation.

On we walked for another hour until the sun began to set. This was the hour when the wild quail, which are thick in these woods, run across the paths and open spaces looking for food before going to rest for the night. The doctor was lucky enough to kill four with his gun.

At this particular season the birds run in groups of twelve to fifteen. As they are seldom hunted they are not wild and will let anyone approach within twenty-five or thirty feet if they are not frightened. But at the first suspicious noise this interesting and coquettish family rises in flight and takes refuge in the nearest tree, usually a live oak, where it remains perfectly quiet. There, believing themselves safe the birds do not move. Not even a shot will dislodge them, and, in consequence, a great many shots are necessary to bring down many victims.

For this reason the hunter who is not successful at the first shot usually does not fire again at the same group; it is wiser to try another place. This same instinct of self-preservation is found among the wood-hens of Eastern France which use exactly these same manœuvres in evading the shots of the hunters. In other respects, too, these shy, modest birds, with their quiet plumage could readily become acclimated in the south of France.

At sundown we camped near a small bubbling brook at a place where two streams forked. Here a bridge of trees had been thrown over, probably in behalf of the sawmill. If I mention this bridge, it is because it is the first one I have come to in the forests of California capable of supporting a team or a man on horseback—and I have crossed as many as twenty in a single day, when returning from

the Klamath, that were so weak that a brave as well as a cool head was necessary to venture out on them.

While sitting around a blazing camp-fire after our long tiresome tramp the doctor and I celebrated the fête of Ormoy, where his mother and brother live, and that of Passavant, my old home, some twenty-five hundred leagues away, for both happened to fall on the same day.

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Our celebration was not so poor as you might imagine. We had four roasted birds and a bit of cold veal for the first course, and our appetites, not having been appeased at Rancho Hippolyte, were excellent. This was accompanied by brandy and cold, clear water from the brook.

After this repast, as balls are no longer suitable for men of our age, we amused ourselves by listening to a vocal concert. This was given by birds of every kind and description who sang soprano while the bass and alto were supplied by neighborly bears. By keeping our fire blazing all night long we kept the latter at a safe distance. They were as reluctant as we were to get more intimately acquainted. This was the way we passed the end of a hard day, one of the most trying days I have had in California.

To walk in the fresh air all day, even though with an interesting companion, and to live close to nature where the unexpected is always happening are not conducive to comfort if one is hungry, thirsty, or out of work. But on the other hand such a life brings strength and health and is an excellent antidote for past regrets and anxiety over the problems of the future.

On September 9, 1850>, I got up quite early, but as the doctor had not slept well during the night he could not be roused in the morning. At eight, however, after a light repast we broke camp. After climbing for over two hours in an effort to reach the summit we then followed along the crest for another four hours. Below, sloping off both toward the east and west lay the immense plains covered with patches of wild oats that grow to be forty and even fifty centimeters high. This dry

stubble of clear yellow stood out in vivid contrast to the forests of green pines and oaks rising behind them.

We observed, along the way, the tracks of two bears—our friends of last evening—and traces of a few deer. What a superb country this is for amateur sportsmen!

At one o'clock, hunger, thirst, a convenient brook, and a shady spot lured us to stop and eat a modest lunch. Two hours later, rested and refreshed, we started briskly on our way once more. The trail we were taking was not as poor as we had anticipated, especially after what we had experienced along the Trinity and Salmon rivers.

Toward four o'clock we passed a fine old *rancho* which we might have leased, had we been able to find the owner, as it was for rent. But it will probably still be on the market to-morrow, or the day after. I understand the terms are very favorable and that the proprietor is extremely anxious to find a tenant. The property consists of one square league of land, a house, some fenced-in pasturage, and three 141 hundred head of cattle. It is to be rented on the basis of share for share. It is situated about two leagues from Santa Cruz.

As it was then nearly evening and the day had been trying we went to an American hotel. There, for one dollar, we got enough food to keep us from starvation. We slept that night out in a granary on some hard boards.

The old Mission built by the Franciscans at Santa Cruz is no longer standing. At one time, however, it was an extensive establishment and under the paternal directions of the fathers owned vast herds of sheep and cattle. To-day the church is in ruins. Only the nave, dilapidated both outside and in, is still standing; it is still used for holding services. The tower has fallen, and the bells, fastened to a few crude beams, are lying in the debris.

The priests' quarters are composed of two main buildings made of adobe, or clay, which are also disintegrating and would have to be repaired to be habitable. The deserted huts of the Indians, who left the Mission to resume their nomadic life when they were given their freedom at the time of

the expulsion of the fathers, are falling to pieces. The lands are lying idle and the herds have been destroyed or lost.

The destruction has been so complete that unless California had been taken over by the United States this country in another fifty years under Spanish rule would have been turned into a desert. But the Yankees with their energy, their activity, and their ability to turn their energy to practical account will soon change the entire aspect of the country.

The nucleus of a village has already been laid out at Santa Cruz, and several wooden houses have been erected. This section of the country, moreover, has rich soil, abundant forests, and a small port suitable for shipping out what the country produces.

It is not sufficient for a people to resolve to throw off the domination of a country and a ruler that are antagonistic, for to preserve them from utter ruin, there must be some one in authority. Nor is it wise to jump from the frying pan into the fire. This is what the Mexicans overlooked when they achieved independence.

After stupidly ostracizing the Franciscans, confiscating the Missions, and letting personal interests take precedence over religion, the government through intrigues tried to foster the same prosperity that had existed before the destruction of these budding colonies which represented half a century of persevering and intelligent labor. All they succeeded in doing was to replace with desert wastes these productive Missions.

A series of revolutions further weakened the government and split the country into factions to such an extent that the Mexicans were powerless to check the American conquest. From the day when the Yankees won out and California became a part of the United States a new era dawned for this country which, at the present writing, is rich and almost virgin territory. Those who had confiscated the Missions, however, soon had to suffer all the anguish of retaliation—their new properties were taken over, in turn, by their lords and masters the Yankees.



The town of Santa Cruz is spread out on a large tableland that commands a view of the harbor. Its population is estimated at between five and six hundred residents. Half of these are Mexicans and Californians, one-fourth Americans, and the rest Indians, Jews, and foreigners. There are only a few Frenchmen among their number.

Though the governing of the town still centers in the *alcalde*, whose title and functions are purely Mexican, the control will soon pass over into the hands of three authorities, the judge, sheriff, and mayor. The most important influential person in the village, after the *alcalde*, is a Franciscan father, curé of Santa Cruz, who is quite unpopular.

This father, though he has taken the vows of poverty, is avaricious and reputed to be very wealthy. He accepts money, gifts, and alms, and under the name of a lay-brother owns a ranch near here which is valued—though perhaps this figure is inflated—at a million piasters.

Inasmuch as I had decided to try to find Brother Doubet and straighten out my affairs with him, the day after we got in—September 10, 1850—the doctor and I went to call on the curé. As we did not know what kind of a reception we might get, to break the ice a little we brought along ten ducks we had shot the night before on the roadside.

In all civilized countries two strangers who presented themselves under such auspicious circumstances with the manner, if not the clothes, of gentlemen, would be hospitably welcomed with at least an outward appearance of cordiality. With this expectation we walked over to the presbytery.

Ushered in through the kitchen, in passing through we noticed many women and children. I could not understand why so many women were necessary to wait on a single man who rarely sees anyone or has any company, nor what all these children were doing here in the home of an old and ugly monk who is supposed never to look at a woman—although he may not be above temptation.

To punish, no doubt, my wicked and uncharitable thoughts which I concealed under a most circumspect manner, a most unforeseen dilemma arose. Upon entering we had spoken to one of

the most intelligent 143 looking women—most of whom were half-breeds—and asked to see the curé. As he could not receive us immediately we offered the delicate and plump birds to her for His Reverence's supper.

We then inquired for Abbé Doubet who acts as a kind of understudy to the curé, doing all his chores, saying mass, receiving visitors, answering the mail, confessing, baptizing, marrying, and visiting the sick and needy. For thus lightening the burdens of his superior he is given, by way of compensation, wretched food and lodging. What extras he gets are bestowed through the charity of some devout members of his parish who take pity on him, or through the kindness of the American Protestants—although the latter are supposed to place material interests above religious fervor.

If mass were not sung at the Catholic church at Santa Cruz on Sunday, the *rancheros*, and their families would not come to town; they would go somewhere else, or stay at home. When mass is held they usually attend, spend the day, and lavish money in the neighborhood, either in the gambling houses, stores, or cafés. For this diversion they donate as much as they do to the church. Frequently they have an extra mass held for them accompanied, often, by a group of Indians playing violins, or with simple religious music.

The Americans are practical if they are not orthodox. A burial without any pretense at luxury and with only the barest essentials costs nearly one hundred dollars out here.

Finally I found Abbé Doubet. He has a very pious manner. Without waiting for me to present my claim he told me that for the present it was impossible for him to pay me. Then he told me his tale of woe, how he had been duped, it seems, by a sharper with whom he had gone into partnership and who took everything he had.

I am at a loss to know why he went into business. All I do know is that the Bishop of San Francisco heard of the disgraceful position he was in and that all his explanations did not clear him in the eyes of his superiors. By way of punishment he was sentenced to a year of hard labor at Santa Cruz.

I believe, however, that his year will soon be over for he told me he expected to leave shortly for San Francisco. He has assured me that when he gets there he will secure funds and pay me. With this promise we left the poor, pitiful Abbé Doubet, who is probably the unfortunate victim of his own zealotry rather than a rascal, despite the mystery that enshrouds the past, present, and the future of this gentle, strange being who seems abandoned both by God and man.

In leaving this inhospitable presbytery—we had not even been offered a glass of water—as our purses were empty and our stomachs hollow, we were sorry we had given our ducks away for they would have made us two good dinners. Instead, we shall have to feast on beefsteak from the hotel, which is invariably tough and expensive.

We have only met one French family here, the Bacon family. They are newcomers and have opened a bakery. This is a business which before Bacon's arrival had not been established in this budding village, for the American substitutes for baker's bread little hot biscuits which are cooked fresh in the oven for dinner, and the Mexican, in place of bread, has *tortillas*. For this reason up to the present moment the lack of a bakery has not been noticed.

Upon going to see Mr. Thomas Pallou, who knew the purpose of our trip, he sent us over to see his brother, Mr. Fourcade, a Frenchman from Bordeaux, who married the daughter of a *ranchero* and who owns property about two leagues from here.

On the morning of September eleventh we left Santa Cruz to visit this *ranchito*. Toward four o'clock we reached our destination. Mr. Fourcade, the owner and manager it appears, was formerly a sailor whose ship was confiscated or deserted by the crew when the placers were discovered in California.

Fourcade stayed in California and tried his luck at the mines where he had remarkable success; within three months he took out nuggets valued at thirty thousand dollars. Then, since he had been one of the first to reach and exploit these particular placers the mines were named after him. These diggings are famous even as far south as this. To cap the climax he had his heart, fortune, and hand accepted by a rich Californian.

The *rancho* contains between eight and eleven square leagues of land. Just now it is in litigation over a boundary dispute; the case is still pending. We noticed, as we walked around, that it looked like a fine piece of property; it has three kilometers of seacoast, running water on it, not to mention fields suitable for pasturage, meadows, woods, and soil adaptable for use in making bricks. He has offered us a certain number of animals, access to the ocean, and an acre of land on the shore for a landing. As all this seemed like an attractive proposal we were about ready to sign an agreement.

While we were discussing all these points with Mr. Fourcade he graciously invited us to spend the evening with his family. We accepted his invitation without ceremony, hoping in this way to settle all the minor points during the course of the evening.

Orders to kill a two-year old steer were immediately given with as much unconcern as a French farmer would show in ordering chickens dressed for extra guests. A Mexican servant mounted on horseback 145 started off, lasso in hand, after an animal. He brought it down at a distance of thirty feet, turned around, and returned dragging this victim, tied by the horns, behind him. He then severed the animal's head with one blow, threw it away, and cut the remainder into quarters. All this did not take more than twenty minutes.

After quickly grilling some steaks our meal was ready. The menu was simple: red beans, which were fairly good, an abundance of meat, *tortillas*, and fresh water. Tea, coffee, wine, and brandy may occasionally be used here but of this I am not certain. At all events they are reserved for state occasions.

The *Señora*, the mistress of the house, is young, pretty, and in an interesting condition. She did not dine at the table with her husband and brothers-in-law. Five of us counting Fourcade and his brothers enjoyed the feast; the fifth was a relative of the woman.

In the course of the conversation the purpose of our visit was again broached. It was then that a number of difficulties and obstacles put in an appearance. They were quite willing, it seemed, to

rent us part of the *rancho*, but first of all it was necessary to have the *rancho* divided among the eight co-owners and to obtain the consent of the grandmother.

Neither did they care to rent for over three years and we wanted a six years' lease with the privilege of buying at a price fixed in advance to be applied against the rental, for we hoped eventually to make the lands valuable. Our host, without refusing our proposition, asked permission to defer his reply until next December, hoping, so he said, that the property would by that time be divided.

In this country a deal delayed is a deal lost. This was our conviction when, toward nine o'clock, our host escorted us to the apartment reserved for us. It was a dirty, untidy place close to the ground and with mud walls thickly covered with dust, a door that refused to close, and broken panes of glass.

The hides of a few horses were spread on the floor and were used to sit or sleep on. Everything was primitive and extremely simple; I understand the owners' quarters are equally uncomfortable, and yet they are considered to be wealthy *rancheros*. Moreover, I do not think the Fourcades are like so many local ranch-owners who do not know any better way of living.

Had we not been afraid of offending these people we would have camped out in the open, but such a move might have seemed like repaying courtesy with rudeness. So we resigned ourselves to the situation and with a clear conscience lay down to sleep the sleep of the just.

First of all, however, here is some gossip about this household— 146 true or false as it may be—that is being circulated around the country. On the surface it seems far from charitable, and what surprises me is that it is known as there is little visiting out here between families because of the great distances. It concerns the domestic life of my hospitable hosts, the Fourcades.

Now when anyone speaks of them they are mentioned in disparaging tones as small, blunt men, and if anyone asks whether they are married, there is an embarrassing silence, for theirs is a three-cornered establishment and no one knows what the status of the one woman is. Perhaps in California there is a sacrament that blesses such a union, but it does not meet with local approval.

In France there is constant visiting back and forth between neighbors. But in California, this country with the future, it is possible to travel forty kilometers without meeting a solitary person. It is barely possible that this same custom existed here in times past among the natives and that they exchanged visits between tribes.

Early on the morning of September twelfth we left our hosts and returned to Santa Cruz. As the day was a fête-day we joined in the singing of mass, accompanied by violins and other discordant instruments. Being provided with a letter from the curé—sent by this Capuchin father to his rich brother land-owner—after an exceptionally good dinner we left for San Juan.

### [SAN JUAN BAUTISTA]

For three hours our route followed the coast. We passed one fine *rancho*, owned by a rich Californian who, like most of his associates, is uneducated and unable to read or write. Riding, gambling, playing, drinking, swaggering, and brutality take the place of this elementary knowledge and seem essential to the happiness of these isolated ranchowners.

Next we ran into a forest where, after six hours' walking, we camped at sunset near a brook and dined off a duck the doctor had shot. This took the place of the deer he fired at and wounded, but which got away. Tired though comfortable, after building a blazing fire we went to sleep.

On the morning of the thirteenth, having cooked breakfast we got under way once more. The trail was clearly and unmistakably marked. On the way we saw hundreds of ducks which let us get up close to them but, as ammunition was getting low, we let many good chances to fire escape.

Toward eleven o'clock we came to a ranch-house on the left of the road. The firing of a gun across our path brought us to an abrupt stop. The owner of this property was an old, pure-blooded Californian, who spoke nothing but Spanish, but who liked to live well—at any rate this was the impression he gave—and when we went inside we found a lavish board spread which was being enjoyed by six or more relatives and friends, both men and women. We did not know whether a

celebration was being held or whether this was merely a family gathering and the way they lived every day.

Whatever it was we noted an atmosphere of comfort and luxury not usually found at ranch-houses. A white cloth covered the table which held six platters of meats and vegetables. With the food was served not plain water but tea, wine, and brandy, which were passed around at the table.

The noticeably happy faces, the sparkling eyes, and the shrill voices gave an air of animation to the gathering. When the *ranchero* saw us he came over, greeted us pleasantly, and in a cordial, almost effeminate voice invited us to share the dinner. The hour, our appetites, a certain amount of curiosity, courtesy, and this unexpected meeting made us a little timid and over-scrupulous, for we made a shabby appearance.

We accepted, however, and spent an hour at the table with all these good people. Although we enjoyed eating and drinking, the difficulty was in making ourselves understood and being able to return the hospitality with gracious words, compliments, and a description of our travels.

Eventually we compromised by a jargon of French-Spanish. In this way we were finally able to understand that the owner of the property would be willing to lease but that his wife opposed it, though apparently without any good reason.

As it would have been discourteous to have pressed the matter further we dropped the subject and enjoyed the dinner. I cannot say too much in favor of these genial hosts whose names, I am sorry to say, have slipped my memory. We took a decided fancy to this property as it was admirably situated at the head of the great plain that stretches from here to San Juan and over to the town of San José. From there it reaches on north to within two leagues of San Francisco. It is broken only by a few low hills.

Near the ranch-house was a forest and, not far away, a small lake. The lake was covered with hundreds of wild duck. The sea lay only about four leagues away, while San Juan was some nine leagues from the property.

By noon we were on our way; so far our trip had been tiresome and fruitless. We tramped in the heat of the day which at this time of the year is never less than 25° to 30° centigrade. Here and there 148 across the plains a solitary ranch-house loomed up in the distance. These dwellings, as a usual thing, were ten or fifteen kilometers apart. To visit them would have meant detours and, so far at least, such visits have not been altogether a pleasure.

Between each *rancho*, marking the boundaries, stood a hut occupied by a shrewd speculator who had planted a little garden and was living there in a simple, frugal manner. When the surveyor finally arrives and settles the boundary disputes—most of these are still in question—there will probably be considerable unclaimed land between ranches which squatters can claim up to the amount of one hundred and sixty acres.

This explains the isolation, the patience, and the simple life of these modern hermits. Had I not known this I should never have understood why they lived as they did unless some catastrophe had given them a distaste for society, although they did not seem like misanthropes.

All this flat country is covered with half-wild steers, cows, and horses that roam the ranges in herds of hundreds and even thousands. As soon as these creatures saw us in the distance they would lift their heads high in the air, bellow and neigh, then turn and scamper off. Then they would stop abruptly some hundred meters farther on, turn around with a menacing air as if hesitating between flight and attack, and then go on again.

What would be left of two poor travellers like us if we were trampled on by these thousands of hoofs and attacked by all these horns in case the herd declared war in the councils they held at those particular moments? Even to think of it makes me shiver. After a moment's hesitation—it seemed like hours—the enemy would go on, but they kept up these tactics until they vanished in the distance.

Half an hour later another herd duplicated this performance and went through exactly the same manœuvres. We were just beginning to get used to it when one of them, stronger and braver



than the rest, charged toward us, stopping only a hundred feet off. It was not a moment too soon. Fortunately courage and ferocity do not always go hand in hand or we might have quickly passed on to another and better world.

Shortly after this experience we came to a large *ranch* which we decided to visit. Although several of the buildings were in ruins they were inhabited by all the skunks in the neighborhood, who had forced everyone else to move out. This is probably why the proprietor and his family have departed.

Ground-squirrels—little gnawing animals resembling gray 149 water-rats—are always under foot wherever one steps. With bushy tails held high these drab creatures sit by their holes ready to disappear at the slightest disturbance. They are fairly good eating but the large gray forest squirrel is more delicate. These creatures, together with grasshoppers and frequent droughts, are the bane of agriculture in this part of the country.

Finally we reached *Rancho del Padre*, owned by the curé at Santa Cruz, and reputed to be one of the most valuable in California. It is ably and intelligently managed. We felt certain of a warm and cordial welcome since we had a letter of introduction from the Franciscan father to his brother who manages the property. Others had received us without credentials so why should we not expect the same here?

Confident of such a reception we passed through several entrances and finally found ourselves in an enclosed court. On one side was the main building; on the other three sides were sheds. In this patio, surrounded by Indian servants, was a large man well along in years, with a wrinkled countenance, who seemed like a man of the lower classes. He was busy melting tallow in an immense kettle.

This was the master of the house, so we bowed and presented our letter. He read it, placed it in his pocket, and returned to his tallow, merely making a slight motion with his head as much as to say “Well, *au revoir*, God bless you!”

We lost no time in leaving this gross, ugly man—who had not so much as offered to let us rest under his roof or given us a drink—more indignant than surprised at finding a manager who acted as superciliously as a rightful owner.

In going out of the gates the doctor and I looked with famished eye at an enormous piece of fresh meat hanging there to dry in the sun before it was sold or fed to the Indians. We asked permission to buy some, saying we would pay for it. They had the generosity to decline our offer, so we threw some small change to the Indians, not caring to be under obligations to the inmates.

Then we stopped a short distance up the road and prepared dinner under the shade of a convenient tree, bitterly regretting the loss of the ten ducks we had so generously given the Franciscan father at Santa Cruz and which had been repaid in so inadequate a manner.

Life is full of the unexpected. On the same day inhospitably treated in the morning by one from whom we might have had a right to expect different treatment, at five that same afternoon we were most courteously assisted by a stranger to whom we had no letter of introduction. What a hideous thing wealth wedded to avarice is! By way of retaliation we made all sorts of puns about him and wished his establishment ill-luck, while we ate our meager lunch.

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But before going on we inspected the exterior of this Franciscan domain, a kind of petty kingdom on United States territory, with its hundreds of Indian vassals working at various kinds of labor. Some were drying skins in the sun; others were cutting meat into strips. A few were tanning leather and making harnesses. In another place was a forge and blacksmith.

Farther on we saw the kitchen-gardens where young Indians, cracking whips, were scaring off hungry birds that ruin the seed and fruits. I was not able to estimate how much was under cultivation as the hour was late, but the amount must be enormous.

Workmen cost next to nothing; the Indians, being devout Catholics are happy with scant rations, a few clothes, little money, and many indulgences. The same system is used—only on a much smaller scale—that was in vogue at the old Missions.

The hides, meat, tallow, and horns of the animal all are utilized. The soil is made to yield ten-fold but the work falls on the shoulders of a few as the mines absorb most of the labor and all the free capital. But the day will come when the miner, satisfied or disillusioned, will turn to agriculture for his livelihood. Moreover, the squatter-occupants will file claims on these fertile fields, and the titles of the owners—and very few are legal—will pass on to them. While this is happening the ranches will suffer severely and this vast land, now so sparsely populated, will take on quite a different character.

Of this the Franciscan and his brother-manager are fully cognizant. This may be why the people around here are so bitter toward the curé. In one way or another, with his vast herds and his intelligent method of ranching, he may easily have amassed another fortune in addition to what he already has, if we are to believe local gossip.

In the afternoon, having eaten and rested, we were feeling more energetic and so pressed on hoping to find at San Juan shelter which would be furnished us ungrudgingly. We had only a two-mile trip ahead of us and we made fast time as the road was level and neither rough nor dusty. This, toward the close of a beautiful day, was nothing for two such seasoned pedestrians.

Soon Mission San Juan [Bautista] loomed up in the distance. Low and rambling in appearance it spreads over a wide area like an old chateau or convent. Situated on a little knoll it overlooks the surrounding plains. Near it trickles a brook of pure, clear water.

Monterey, a small port and formerly the capital of Upper California, is about a two days' trip from here. San José is about the same distance. The former lies toward the west; the latter is north of here. We travelled the sixteen leagues separating us from Santa Cruz in two days and reached our destination more in need of rest than food.

On September 14, 1850, we rested at the Mission. Its buildings are in a fair state of preservation and are occupied by Americans, Spanish, Mexicans, and even Frenchmen. I do not know by what right they were there and whether they are the proprietors, tenants, interlopers, or merely sharpers. The servants' quarters, however, are in ruins. While the church is still standing the exterior is dilapidated. I am unable to say what condition the interior is in as the curé was away with the key in his pocket.

The most remarkable thing I found—something I had not seen since leaving France—were the orchards planted with apple and pear trees. These were in full bearing and were enclosed in a space measuring three or four hectares. There were several hundred trees all told which were heavy with ripe fruit. It was a sight to rejoice the eyes and make our mouths water—poor travellers like ourselves, who had not seen fruit for eighteen months. The Mexican tenant of this earthly paradise in California allowed us to inspect his domain and gave us permission to eat as much fruit as we wanted—adding that there was no forbidden fruit in his garden.

The doctor and I accepted this offer without hesitation, for there was such an abundance that a hundred famished gourmands might pass an entire day here regaling themselves and the loss would never be noticed. As much for hygienic reasons as for good manners we indulged only moderately and spent the time mainly in chatting with the Mexican, who understood only a few words of the French language.

From this conversation I gathered that the Mission property is in litigation and that several claims are now being contested by the Mexican government and the United States. Those now holding Mission lands have only provisional titles.

The fruit crop this year has been sold to a speculator who has also contracted to pick and transport it. He is leaving any spoiled or defective fruit behind, and is taking only what is perfect. The price received was eight thousand dollars. It is a happy arrangement for it gives the owner only the trouble of counting his profits.

What astonished us was the amount of waste fruit littering the ground and going to rot which could easily be made into cider. Our guide told us he could not find anyone out here who knew how to make this beverage and that machinery for squeezing the apples and making the juice ferment was not available. I had often made cider in France and knew the basic principles. The doctor said he knew how to set up the press used for squeezing and crushing the apples and all he would need to have was some kegs which could be purchased in San Francisco.

The Mexicans offered us all the apples that had fallen on the 152 ground, or were about to fall—something like five thousand kilograms—and two hundred dollars toward building the press. They were also to bear half of any additional expenses and split profits with us.

To us this offer seemed munificent, and, if all went well, it might lead to other offers. This may be fortune, in the form of apples, knocking at our door. It would be absurd not to seize this wonderful opportunity. So, after a few moments' deliberation we accepted this proposition and drew up an agreement binding on both parties.

I was chosen to find a native of Normandy who knew how to make first-class cider, to get some kegs from San Francisco, and to arrange to market the cider when it was shipped. This sounded very fine and everything that evening looked roseate.

All night long I dreamed of making my fortune and early the next morning I hurried off with a light heart for San Francisco after saying good-bye to Doctor Briot and my boarding-house keeper, a Frenchman named Coche who had been out in Africa where, so he said, he knew my brother Adelstan. He was born near Jussey, but is now settled permanently in California.

#### **[SAN JUAN TO SAN FRANCISCO]**

I walked along what seemed like an endless path that led across the immense plains where the ground, riddled by gopher holes, was arid and parched from lack of water and too much sunshine. The scenery was monotonous owing to the absence of trees and habitations.

By way of diversion, like the milkmaid with her pail of milk in La Fontaine's fable, I built castles in California, visualizing mounds of apples from which flowed rivers of cider. I travelled in this way as far as I could until my strength gave out and I had to stop for a rest and supper.

Fortunately I had taken the precaution to carry along a bottle of plain water. Without it I should have died of thirst for I did not find any water for two leagues. After eating two biscuits and a cake of chocolate—a modest but satisfying repast and all I had with me—I then lay down at the foot of a solitary stunted tree and with the barren plains stretching out on every side as far as the eye could see I went to sleep for the night. My slumber would have been deep had it not been for the cries of coyotes and the noises made by horses and wild cattle that broke the peace of the night and interrupted my sleep.

I was fortunate enough during the day to find a little house on my route, but it had no caretaker and apparently no occupants to give me food and shelter. But by this time I had grown accustomed to almost anything.

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I have met several groups of Sonorans going back to their own country there to enjoy what profits they have accumulated at the placers during the winter season. Many expect to return to California next spring—a round trip of some thirteen hundred leagues. But what is that for men who are used to hardships, fatigue, and sleeping in the open, men whose only diversions are gambling, fighting, and, perhaps, when times are not so good, banditry.

Sonora, so it seems, is very rich in gold and silver mines. It is reputed to be even richer than California. But the mines are situated in the Apache Indian country and this tribe is warlike, vicious, and not dependable. So the miners from there who are not very courageous prefer to leave home and come to work in the placers of California rather than be harassed, robbed, and perhaps scalped in their own land.

At noon, when I was about four leagues from San José, I came to an inn run by Germans. Here, for one dollar, I was able to appease my appetite. My companion during lunch was a man called François Diaz, a Frenchman from Bordeaux, who has lived in this country for several years. He is married and owns a ranch somewhere near here. As he has a large family he would like to sell his property and return to France where he can educate his children. Had I possessed several thousand piasters we might have made a deal. He regretted my lack of them as much as I did. We parted the best of friends after eating and talking together at the table for two hours or more.

I stopped when it got dark near a hut occupied by four Mexicans which stood on the road a league this side of San José. In appearance these men were unprepossessing, but their hearts were of gold for they generously offered to share their modest meal with me and let me sleep under their roof. For this they refused to accept payment. I accepted their invitation to supper but declined their offer of shelter, pretending I preferred to sleep out in the open, for I did not know what might happen inside or how many blood-thirsty insects might have their permanent habitat there.

These Mexicans were lean, dirty, swarthy, and in the habit of drinking heavily, a habit which did not seem in the least to upset them. As a general thing the proletariat, when not incited by cupidity, envy, or the advice of ambitious outcasts, has more merits than vices. What good they do is done quietly, without ostentation, and without ulterior motive. For this reason they are more deserving of praise than the middle classes. This, at least, has been my experience from personal contact, after a year in California, with the proletariat of all countries and particularly with the generosity of my hosts to-day.

On the morning of September sixteenth, after shaking hands with 154 the four Mexicans and after many *gracias* and *adios*, a French truck-gardener living near here gave me a lift in his cart; at seven we were in San José. Here I learned that Mr. Jourdain, Doctor Briot's friend, was back from Los Angeles. This is fortunate for the doctor. Their friendship, however, is in the nature of a political connection, and, I am afraid, will be of short duration for both like to argue and both are quite

stubborn even over unimportant trifles. The doctor and I, our political views being at variance, always agree, for we never discuss politics.

My first care in San José was to find some one who knew how to make cider and whom I could send over to San Juan. Finally I located a Charles Dupont, a native of Normandy who agreed for the sum of one hundred and thirty dollars to give us his services until the first of November. After paying him this amount in advance he started off for his new position.

Later I called on Mr. Langlois, brother of the postmaster at Hâvre, whom I found seriously ill, although he confidently expects soon to be well again. He told me his brother, to whom Alphonse de Labouillage, assistant postmaster in the same port had introduced me shortly before I was sailing, had become involved in a speculation that was doomed to be disastrous both to him and to his brokers.

According to what Mr. Langlois here in San José had told me, he had tried to establish a line of boats plying between Hâvre and Chagres connecting with a line direct from Panama to San Francisco to take care of the emigrant travel. This plan, feasible a year ago, is no longer practicable as twelve lines are now furnishing this service.

The Mr. Langlois who lives in California was among the first to come out with merchandise on which he made a handsome profit. Through poor investments, dishonest associates, and illness, he has lost almost everything when he might have been a millionaire. Just now he is using his last resources.

My next visit was to Dechanet, who paid me back fifteen dollars on our old account, which he had made by gambling or working. This will keep me for another fifteen days, so I shall not have to depend on Providence.

On September seventeenth after lunch I started off on foot for San Francisco. A league from my starting place I passed Santa Clara Mission; both the Church and other buildings are in a fair state



of preservation. Travelling for another three hours with the bay on my right and the coastal range, which runs the length of the peninsula, on my left, I went on in the direction of the setting sun.

As I passed a respectable looking house I decided to camp near it, 155 hoping the occupants—a group of Americans who appear to be in comfortable circumstances—would be as hospitable as the poor Mexicans were last evening. So I knocked politely and asked if I could make arrangements for supper and a room for the night. A man answered the door and remarked rather sarcastically that they never sold or gave away anything. This reply saved me two dollars.

After the rebuff I went on for a short distance and made a humble supper off what provision I had with me. Then, wrapped like some ancient philosopher in my blankets, I dropped to sleep pondering over the ways of the human heart. It must have been an hour after I was comfortably settled when two young pretty Americans—who must have been the wives, sister, or mistresses of these men—evidently conscience-stricken, came to offer me some dinner. They were too late, however, for I had already dined off of biscuits and chocolate, and the only other thing I needed was sleep, so I merely thanked them for their kindness. There is a time for everything!

I was only able to get a superficial idea of Santa Clara as I passed by to-day. This Mission, formerly a very flourishing one, however, deserves more than passing mention, though its belfry—the only one I have seen in California—is too small to be artistic. A fine avenue lined with broad oaks connects it with the town of San José. It has its own private landing-place on the bay, about two leagues from here. When the capital is moved from San José to Vallejo, as it will be in the near future, it will lose much of its importance, for San José will never be more than a third-rate city. Its main attraction will be its pleasant location, its commerce, and its agricultural possibilities, which will make it a small business center.

The Mission properties, with their orchards and vineyards, are extensive. I have been told that some nuns are negotiating now for the buildings, hoping to establish an educational institution. What gives a semblance of activity to the place to-day is the fruit industry, truck gardening, and the

opening of an important quick-silver mine. These products are shipped away in small boats ranging from four to ten tons—the only kind that can be used at low tide.

On the eighteenth, feeling greatly refreshed, I left this place of belated hospitality and arrived early in the day at the landing-place for Santa Clara. En route I met a Frenchman who raises vegetables somewhere between here and San Francisco. He was on his way to deliver a load before returning to the village, so we made the trip together.

As we were going toward the bay we stopped at a dairy operated at one of the *ranchos* by a group of Frenchmen, Germans, and Americans. Among this group were two pretty women. For the sum of 156 three thousand dollars the *ranchero* had leased them the place together with seventy cows and as much land as they could cultivate. This amount was paid off in quarterly installments. Just now they have no more animals and are not doing any extensive cultivating. They seem like simple country farmers without ambition or initiative.

True this quiet rural life may not be lucrative—and I doubt whether it is—but at the same time it is a pleasant and delightful way to live. To have congenial work, congenial companionship, plus dairy products, meat, and fresh butter, tea, and brandy, and to fall asleep at night watching the cattle browse over the hills, such a life as these colonists live recalls the Arcadian days of the long ago and harks back far from the shores of the Pacific in the nineteenth century to life in the open as our ancestors knew it. Towering trees for shelter, fresh springs in abundance, vast pastures, fertile fields, fish in the neighboring bay, game on all sides, harmony between associates—this would be complete happiness were it not for the omnipresent cancer which haunts and darkens the picture—the three thousand dollars yet to be paid, overhead expenses, and incompetency; which alone suffice to remove the glamour from such an existence.

Mr. Blanchard, my travelling-companion, and I were hospitably welcomed with open arms and all these good people insisted that we share their dinner. We had no excuse for refusing this kind offer. We enjoyed drinking all the milk we wanted, which is still worth nearly a dollar a liter in this country. Everything was excellent and everyone was very cordial. The only thing that was poor was

the white cheese, served for desert, which was not made of properly curdled milk. I do not mean this by way of criticism; I would not be so ungrateful.

During the dinner hour the conversation turned largely on the present and future prospects of this company, and what difficulties they were having in marketing their products owing to the great distances between points of consumption. San Francisco is a day's trip away, and the village of San José though nearer is not sufficiently important. If the little company had a small steamer on the bay, in less than four hours they could land produce in San Francisco and have a lucrative dairy business. As the purchase of a boat hinges on making profits, and the profits depend on the purchase of a boat, they are in a sorry dilemma.

Full of the kindest feelings, at two o'clock we left our gracious hosts, typical ranchers in this new El Dorado. Travelling on until sundown we had supper at a ranch, but left immediately after as the road was well-defined and the night perfect. We joined a *ranchero* on horseback who was accompanied by two children on another mount. 157 This good man was quite affable and made all kinds of friendly overtures. Every five minutes he pulled a half-empty flask of brandy from his hip pocket in token of his friendly attitude. We accepted one drink out of politeness, but refused the others. He told us about one experience he had had when, under the influence of liquor, he was gored by a bull and badly hurt.

At ten that evening, weary and tired we dropped down under a tree near the road. In such instances it is wise to choose your tree carefully. When sleeping under an oleander, a tree which has heavy foliage, there is grave danger of not waking up bright and early in the morning.

The next day, the nineteenth, at dawn we started on. By ten we reached a hotel, incorrectly called the Halfway House. Literally speaking this means that it is located halfway between San José and San Francisco. It is run by a Yankee called Hunter who speaks French.

Hunter is a pleasant, courteous, well-mannered man who studied for a time in France at one of the polytechnic schools; graduating from there in 1834, he then went into the Navy. From this he was given his discharge to return home to his family in America. As he was leaving France with some

valuable merchandise his ship was wrecked. He has already been ruined and re-established three times. No obstacles are too great for an American!

His last calamity was a life-sized affair; he attempted nothing less than to establish a new city on a well-selected site on the bay. This was named South San Francisco, since it adjoined the main city. Taking an option on the land he had plans made, lots mapped out, and an advertising campaign put on. His announcements and advertisements appeared in all the local papers. Large sums were spent, but purchasers were scarce. In the end nothing remained of this fine project but some uninhabited shacks and fifteen thousand dollars in unpaid bills.

The speculation Mr. Hunter is engaged in now is equally hazardous but it has a chance for even greater profits. Three friends are in with him and each one has taken up a claim of sixty-four hectares on two ranches whose owners are about to abandon them. By selling this land to one another ownership is established and, if there are no prior claims on it, the title will then be valid. However, they may have to go through the courts—a matter of years—and in the meanwhile these squatters will probably compromise, or abandon half or three-quarters of the land they have usurped.

Before dinner our host regaled us with a detailed account of this affair, which he described with a cold-bloodedness and aplomb that denote a complete absence of the moral sense and absolute ignorance of ideals and standards set by civilized citizens for mutual protection.

The Hunter House, which is not completely furnished, is a wooden edifice. The stages running between San José and San Francisco stop there both ways. It is fairly comfortable, and I dined passably for a dollar. Near the inn, seated on a bench, was a young and elegantly-clad woman, holding a novel in one hand and a parasol in the other.

We were told that this woman poses as Madame Hunter. Be this as it may, certainly deep love and devotion would be needed to endure such isolation with the rain and mud of the winters and the heat and dust of the summer season without compensation. It is indeed a strong test.

We left at noon and at one o'clock took a siesta under a tree. From three until evening we walked across flat country devoid of shade. We camped at night near a tent owned by an American who wanted to sell us supper. He offered us a piece of meat without bread, wine, tea, or brandy, and asked two dollars apiece. We both objected to this exorbitant charge which was out of all reason and nothing less than exploitation of transient travellers. In the end he accepted half a dollar each. But we deemed it expedient after this trouble to look for another place farther down the road.

Half an hour later we were lucky enough to find a hospitable tent. It proved to belong to Gerard, a successful miner and the partner of Parisot from Quiers, on the upper Saône, who has just located here about two leagues from San Francisco and plans to open a dairy.

The pasturage costs him nothing; he merely rents enough ground for his tent, a garden, and a little extra land for his own pleasure. He owns about thirty cows; from them he gets enough fresh milk to net him fifty dollars a day. His venture looks like a good speculation.

We spent the night in his tent sleeping on the hard ground. As we are accustomed to it we would have slept soundly had it not been for some bulls which bellowed incessantly. The night passed without further interruptions and we were up bright and early with the dawn.

### **[SAN FRANCISCO, 1850-51]**

After taking leave of our hosts we wended our way toward Mission Dolores, arriving there an hour later. Here Mr. Blanchard left me and went on to San Francisco. We had heard rumors on the road that another extensive fire had destroyed the commercial section of the city, but we had no details of the disaster.

For this reason I stopped at the Mission where Elier de Grivel and his cousin have been staying since the Hotel des Deux Mondes was 159 reduced to ashes and the fourteen hundred dollars they had invested in it had vanished. I found my two friends there busily engaged in gardening and stoically accepting the losses they had just suffered.

The San Francisco I found upon my arrival had already been partially rebuilt and was ripe for a new conflagration. Doctor Briot has placed at my disposal the shack he put together out of odds and ends of lumber some six months ago, which is on the outskirts of the city.

So this was where I made my headquarters. And here hundreds of white rats and millions of fleas in the sands near my shack kept me company in my tiny box-like residence just nine meters square. Outside, the shack was made of rough boards; within it was arranged like a ship's cabin with three bunks one above the other. A box served for a seat, a plank for a table, and a hole covered with glass for a window. On the floor was a layer of fine sand—the camping-ground of a colony of fleas which hopped around looking for a chance to make a good meal off me.

Despite my caution I supplied them with sustenance all evening, though I slaughtered enough of the creatures to fill a large graveyard. And by the time I was ready to retire my legs were literally covered with these blood-thirsty insects. So throwing myself down on the highest bunk I took a small bottle of alcohol and, letting my legs dangle over the sides, I rubbed them together rapidly, put on alcohol, and so got rid of all these inconvenient parasites. This was the price of sleep. But the next day I had to repeat the same performance.

The evening I arrived the *Grétye*, a ship from Hâvre, came into port. On board was our third shipment of merchandise. As Veron has resources he ought to be able to help get them out and help pay the customs and the freight. He prefers, however, to spend his time and money for the benefit of Mr. Lamolère, although he derives no benefit from that connection.

So I am obliged to look after our mutual business by myself. In order to release even a small part of the goods I had to get a consignee who was willing to take charge of releasing and selling them for our company. Since the French houses have suffered severely from the fire and their financial standing has been weakened I went to an American firm, Starkweather, McClenchat & Co. Despite their long name I think that our affairs will be well-handled.

The goods from our first two shipments have been in the customs so long that they will have to be sold at once. Had there been no fire we would have considered it a lucky speculation.

In the mornings I breakfast, or rather have a bite to eat such as 160 bread or a biscuit, then I leave to go out and transact my business which is handled either on a commission basis, or by outright purchase. Frequently I succeed; at other times I come back empty-handed.

One of my first experiences was so strange that it is worth relating; it will show you what strange businesses I have been in in California. One day I was hurrying across the lowlands near my shack when I discovered a case of eggs that had just been unloaded from Mexico. Nearby was its owner, so I began to bargain with him intending to buy them. His price was reasonable and considerably lower than what we pay at the stores.

As the strain was too much for my purse I suggested that he dispose of half to a Mr. Delafond, an associate of Mr. Covillard, who runs a restaurant. We made a low price to him on a lot of three dozen which were damaged, and a dozen that were good. His price for the perfect eggs was one franc twenty-five centimes. We purchased fifteen hundred dozen for five hundred and thirty-five francs.

In order not to lose any time in disposing of such perishable merchandise we began to work at once. We plunged our eggs in buckets of water, those that came to the surface being put aside and the others washed. Any that showed defects were discarded. Then we left them out in the sun to dry.

For a week I was an egg-merchant. Eggs being worth around sixty cents a dozen I sold mine for one franc eighty, two francs fifty, and three francs seventy-five, as I had a chance to dispose of them, and could find a responsible purchaser. Within eight days I had my principal back and four hundred francs profit.

This little stroke of business compensated for the failure of the cider-making proposition at San Juan that had looked so promising. The cider had reached San Francisco but, a few days after, cholera broke out. For this reason it was difficult to find consumers who would pay five francs

a bottle for it. Neither would anyone store it for me at a reasonable figure. So it was left out on the public wharf in the open air where it soon fermented, as I had been unable to buy any kegs. The freight came out of the pocket of Mr. Dupont, the manufacturer lost the time he had spent in making the cider, the proprietor lost his apples and about fifteen hundred francs he had spent in the experiment, and all that was left out of the business was a few sticks of wood that had been used in making a crude press. It was a complete fiasco.

In due justice to everyone concerned I must say that the cider spoiled because the apples were too ripe. Although I had been fortunate enough to find someone to make it it was quite another thing to find market for it in San Francisco.

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October 26, 1850. For the last ten days Ernest de Grivel has been ill with a bad case of typhoid fever; he is not as yet out of danger. His cousin, Elior, has put him in a sanitarium where he can get the care he needs. He came to see me and I have sent him a letter which the consul asked me to deliver.

Adolphe de Finance is spending two days here; in spite of his poor health he made quite a success at the mines and cleared three thousand francs profit. He suffers constantly and left the mines as soon as warm weather was over; he intends to return to France when he is able to stand the voyage. This, I think, is a mistake, and a doubtful way to cure a chronic illness. Moreover, if he has no business at home how can he support his growing family, particularly his two daughters?

On Tuesday, October 29, 1850, a great celebration was held in honor of the admission of California as one of the states of the American Union. For the past fifteen days the papers have been full of announcements and notices and the walls have been plastered with enormous posters.

No effort has been spared to make it a success and two thousand persons have subscribed for the dinner and ball at one hundred francs each. At sunrise the cannon was fired off, and the celebration inaugurated. Shouts and noises were heard from every quarter of the city, interspersed with shots



from guns and pistols. While this was going on the various organizations assembled, banners in hand, and formed a large procession which was to parade the streets.

At ten that morning the parade started. In it were groups of pioneers, Freemasons, and many other fraternities, each wearing their own insignia and walking in groups. There were also groups of Chinese, sailors, firemen, soldiers, ministers, and the officials of the city. At regular intervals marched bands of musicians.

The parade was long and colorful. At the end came a colossal chariot drawn by six horses. On it sat thirty children dressed in blue trousers with belts and shirts of white wool, carrying shields or escutcheons, signifying the thirty states of the Union. All wore liberty bonnets—not, however, as a sign of such liberty and lawlessness as we find out here.

In their midst sat a pretty and rather delicate little girl about six years old.\* This was California, their youngest adopted sister, whom they surrounded with care, attentions, and adulation. Hurrahs by the thousand greeted this ingenious allegory as it passed the spectators. By nature the Americans are very impressionable. Anything that strikes their imaginations and makes their hearts flutter is translated into noisy manifestation.

This float is the subject of a famous painting. The little girl was Mary Eliza Davis, a granddaughter of the pioneer, George C. Yount. She was born in San Francisco in 1845, became the wife of Dr. George J. Bucknall, and is still living in her native city. She is San Francisco's first Anglo-Saxon child and an honored member of this Society.

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The fire-engines were also there, shining, powerful, and impressive-looking machines, decked with flowers and streamers and drawn by four horses. A typographical press that was being operated also passed, mounted on a float. From it printed literature was distributed to the multitudes, including a song, composed for the occasion, that was to be sung in the main plaza when the orator's speech and the Marseillaise were over.\*

This ode was written by Mrs. Elizabeth Maria Bonney Wills, a lady of old New England family who came to San Francisco in 1850. One of the original copies of the ode, printed for distribution at this Admission Day celebration, was given to the California Historical Society by the author's daughter, Mrs. Marianna A. Wills, together with the jewelled brooch bestowed upon her mother by the Common Council in token of their appreciation of the ode. Mrs.

E. M. B. Wills established and conducted in San Francisco a fashionable school for young ladies with which her daughter was later associated. Mrs. Marianna Wills was a member of this Society when she passed away in San Francisco, in November, 1925.

All this time the Chinese were firing off pinwheels and crackers; these inventors of gunpowder are fond of celebrations, although firecrackers are not only noisy but extremely dangerous in a city built of dry wood where one lone spark could readily start a large fire.

Toward evening, as everyone was getting hungry and tired, the noise lessened considerably, but inside the houses where large and small dinner parties had collected the merriment continued. In the evening there was a display of fire-works, the day ending with a ball.

It was a gala-day for many, but, after all, what did it all amount to? Personally I went on my way as usual and dined as I always do. After watching for a time this extraordinary spectacle, at nine in the evening I returned quietly to my palace of fleas, my present residence.

But all bright days have their dark side; scarcely any public gatherings are held that are not darkened by some calamity. It was by one of the saddest catastrophes you can imagine that the gay and joyful day was terminated. Just as the daily boat that plies between San Francisco and Stockton left the wharf loaded with passengers who had come to see the celebration, her boiler exploded, and the crew and passengers were blown into the sea. As everyone was attending the fête there were only a few persons near there to rescue them. After some time forty dead and as many injured were taken from the water.\*

The Marysville *Herald*, Friday, November 1, 1850:TERRIBLE DISASTER AT SAN FRANCISCO

The boilers of the Steamer Sagamore exploded on Tuesday afternoon at about five o'clock, as she was leaving Central Wharf. The explosion was tremendous, leaving her a complete wreck. The Sagamore was running on the Stockton route. There were a large number of passengers on board, including several females. It is estimated that there was a loss of nearly fifty lives, though it cannot be exactly ascertained, as the passengers had not yet purchased their tickets and there was,

consequently, no register of the names or of the number of persons on board. Many of the survivors are very badly injured.

We believe this is the first steamboat explosion that has occurred in California.

The latter were rushed immediately to the hospital and given first aid treatment. There they were made as comfortable as possible and left, while the crowd returned to watch the celebration. But at two o'clock that morning fire broke out in the hospital, which was built entirely of wood and, in less than half an hour, the building. All those who had escaped drowning perished. What could be more tragic!\*

The City Hospital, owned by Dr. Peter Smith, was situated at the head of Clay Street. Some of the patients were severely burned, but it is reported that there were no lives lost.

And yet this nocturnal tragedy passed almost unnoticed. The violins continued to play, the singers to sing, and the strident voices of the croupiers to repeat their monotonous refrain, "Place your bets, gentlemen, place your bets."

The next morning the city was quiet once more. The papers carried a detailed and enthusiastic account of the evening's celebration and only briefly mentioned down in one corner the sad accident, concluding 163 by saying, "They had five times their normal load and everyone would profit-by their experience for in such a new country each day brings its quota of extraordinary calamities."

As I have already mentioned, I have been taking my meals with a Mr. Covillard. Since he is an unusual type I shall point out some of his characteristics. First of all he is a native of Lyons. In his youth he was apprenticed as a silk-weaver but he was so intelligent and had so much artistic ability that, by the time he was thirty, he was making his own silks and growing wealthy.

Under the régime of Louis Philippe he succumbed to that bane of all silk-weavers—socialism—and became an ardent member of the brotherhood. He had hoped, in building up his business, to base it on the workingman's platform. But the artist in him gained supremacy and his socialism suffered.

When the revolution of 1848 broke out he was forced to liquidate his business. As his relatives and friends gave him no assistance he was ruined. Without growing discouraged he saved what he could from the wreck, left his wife and two children in France, and went to California by way of Panama. On the boat he met Mr. Dillon who was going out to take over the consulate. With his polished manners, his social graces, and his ability as a conversationalist, he attracted attention and aroused interest.

After arriving in San Francisco he opened a restaurant with the remnants of his fortune and took in two partners although he knew nothing about them. Their business was prospering when a strange miner walked in one evening—he was an accomplice of his partner—and stole several cases of wine, an important asset to this business. The police were notified, and when I was going in for my evening meal I found the establishment in a turmoil.

Covillard, innocent as though he was, was very much excited and told me all about the unpleasant episode which may ruin him. The matter was finally settled through the intervention of the consul, and damages were paid. The guilty partner has left for Chile; the perpetrator of the theft has returned to the mines—probably to repeat the experiment.

As a result of the fracas the restaurant has lost its best customers, and Covillard has been forced to sell out to pay his share of the broken crockery. Outside of his political leanings, which are not accepted by most Frenchmen and are as a general rule ignored by Americans and foreigners, he is an affable and estimable citizen.

Doctor Briot's shack is doomed to disappear by the extension of Kearny Street. I am going soon to live on Pine Street in a hotel run 164 by Vert and Montmert, two Frenchmen. My room is on the ground floor off the main part of the building and is small and convenient.

There I shall open offices as a dealer in merchandise and furniture. At the suggestion of Doctor Clergeon I am taking in as partner, clerk, and interpreter, Joseph Isnard, a hungry young man who

has no money and who would starve if the doctor and some other friends did not look after him and invite him out to dinner.

As much on his own account as out of pity for the son of an impoverished family like our own I reluctantly yielded to the request of Clergeon and made an agreement with him. These are our terms: All the money from commissions is to be handled by me, I am to pay all expenses, and at the end of the month any surplus is to be divided. With tears in his eyes he gratefully accepted my proposal. I was surprised, even touched, by his attitude and his sincerity.

We are now on the high road to fortune. Isnard speaks the three necessary languages fluently. I already know the ropes, and how business is done. A rich American, Mr. Jones, who owns eight hundred building lots in San Francisco, offered me ten per cent commission on any sales I can make for him. This will not interfere with my brokerage business. If I have a run of good luck this year should make up for my losses in 1850.

I have just arranged with Mr. Buckliu [B. R. Buckelew], the prosperous editor of the *Public Balance*, to contribute a daily French column to his paper. \* He has agreed to assign me twelve hundred words a day; the agreement does not stipulate what I am to furnish, whether it is to be on politics, literature, science, or whether it is to be serious or humorous.

For the history of this paper see H. R. Wagner, *California Imprints*, San Francisco, 1922, pp. 45-46 and 49.

Mr. Buckliu's idea is to get French subscribers and French advertising for his paper. This new occupation is to be outside the company's business and is wholly a personal matter. Our organization, however, will derive certain benefits through the French announcements I shall have the right to run, free of charge, in his daily.

So you see I have turned editor-in-chief, writer of advertisements, reporter, translator, and proof-corrector. For this I am to receive six dollars a day, one hundred copies of his paper, and a share of the profits from any notices I bring in, as well as from the advertisements. I estimate that it should all amount to fifty or sixty francs a day.

Fortunately the printer understands French fairly well in addition to English. English words, however, have no accent marks. I have two newsboys to sell my hundred copies. One is Mr. Picot de Moras, a retired ex-officer who came from Jussey. He is a first cousin of Baron Picot d'Aligny, and a relative of the Vicomte de Chifflet who 165 was first president of the Court of Besançon in the last days of Charles X in 1830, which the government of Louis Philippe did not recognize as legal. Picot de Moras seems to be a black sheep; his family should be glad he is far off in California.

My other news-vendor, his companion, is Mr. J. B. de Finance of St. Marie. He must not be confused with the family of De Finance, one of whose members, Adolphe de Finance, is in California. The latter I met in 1849 at Hâvre when he was looking for his namesake, a passenger on the *Cérès*. He himself came out on the *Georges*.

De Finance is a heavy-set, good-natured man, by occupation a carver of ivories. Although he has had little education he is quite ambitious. He can be ingratiating and courteous when he has some ulterior motive; he is rude and impolite in contrary cases. He has little wit, judgment, delicacy, or constancy, and is utterly devoid of any moral sense. He has already seen something of the world, having been in Spain and Algeria before coming to California.

When he came to offer his services to me he was as meek, humble, and inoffensive as a lamb. We discovered later that he was a wolf in sheep's clothing. Such is his history. I venture to predict his ultimate downfall.

It is in these humble circumstances that you find me early in January, 1851, comfortably installed as editor, commission-merchant, business man, and one of the busiest of Californians. From eight in the morning to the late evening all the Frenchmen who have just landed come to ask my advice about places, and merchandise—advice, in fact, about everything, financial assistance included.

These newcomers often present some perplexing problems. Among them are promoters, miners, agriculturists, inventors, tourists, and budding writers who bring me voluminous manuscripts of no

particular interest—which would fill our entire paper, leaving no space for news items. Such is their longing for publicity that they offer all this prose to me for nothing. But I treat everyone politely, without discouraging them.

Two attempts have already been made to give the French population a paper in their own language. Jules de France, soon after he reached California set up Doctor Briot's press and issued three or four more or less humorous numbers [of *Le Californien* ] which did not sell well and only served to increase his debts. As he had no credit he was obliged to end his journalistic venture—his supreme ambition—which he defined as “making songs and laughter.”

Again in September, 1850, another attempt was made with better equipment and under better management. A Canadian, Octavian 166 Hoogs, who had a few dollars and some credit, leisure, energy, and Yankee ingenuity, assisted by Mr. J. Ancelin [Anselin], from Rouen or Hâvre, founded a paper [the *Gazette Republicaine* ] that came out as a tri-weekly.\*

First issue September 12. Hoogs is said to have come from Boston. No existing copies of this paper are known.—Wagner, *California Imprints*, p. 41

It was a first-class sheet of medium size printed entirely in French. But it was poorly edited by Mr. Ancelin, editor-in-chief, and his assistant, [H. J.] Mirandol, an intelligent, alert, and energetic young man who had gambled away his fortune on the Continent. Over here he had also formed poor connections, allying himself with a house that did not have proper backing—Gauthier, Mirandol and Pioda.

The paper was clearly printed by Crane and Rice, American printers, but accent marks were omitted. They had notices and advertisements, but subscriptions were lacking.

The French population is still too poor, too scattered, and too nomadic, and the means of communication is too expensive and uncertain for success to crown such an enterprise, unless backed by ample capital. Fifteen numbers were sufficient to exhaust the resources of the money-lenders, and the paper went out of existence leaving behind discouraged promoters and uneasy creditors.

These were my predecessors in the field of French journalism in San Francisco. To follow their errors would have been imprudent and any new venture would be hazardous. The time is not yet ripe for a French press to be installed here that can stand on its own feet. This is my deduction, and this is why I am not more deeply interested with its owner, Mr. Buckliu, in the *Public Balance* but merely send in translations.

What I have never seen and never expect to see is a capitalist, a big merchant, or a man of affairs who uses the press to get results. It is used, as a rule, by men of an inferior order. I come in contact, mainly, with the editor-in-chief, Mr. [Eugene] Casserly, a noted lawyer. He is a good writer and a good talker, but he is so dominating that he wants to control the entire staff on his paper. After a discussion and disagreement between the literary and financial factions under him Mr. Casserly resigned.

He then raised funds and started another paper. This he named *The Very True Public Balance*.<sup>\*</sup> He took Ancelin along to edit the French column so that the reader at first glance could not distinguish the difference between the two papers. As Buckliu had money he started a lawsuit which he won. This forced Casserly to change the name of his paper to the *Daily True Standard*. Moreover, he had to pay the costs.

No paper with just this title has been known.

Now, on February 1, 1851, we have two papers carrying a full 167 French column. To assist him Ancelin has added to his staff a passenger from a ship from Hâvre, the *Joseph*, who bears the aristocratic name of Albert Besnard de Ruchail. He is a Frenchman who fell in love and who came out to make a fortune for a charming but penniless English girl whom he wished to marry. But since coming to California he has completely forgotten her. After trying many different things he finally failed in Sacramento.

On his ship the crowd was less exclusive than on the *Cérés*; there were comedians, outcasts, women of the lower classes, and workingmen. One of the officers was Mr. Siebert, a brother of General



Siebert. After the trial, Casserly vs. Buckliu, the new editor [of Buckelew's *Public Balance* ] was Dr. R. C. Matthewson, a more serious and amiable man than Casserly.

Of my interviews with this gentleman I shall always retain pleasant memories. He had been one of the later arrivals in California, having made the trip overland from New York to California. He had passed through the country of the Mormons, a religious and political sect in those days unknown in Europe, and published an account in English of his impressions of his travels among these eccentric and polygamous people. I am translating this account for publication in the French column of our paper. It will run through several numbers. So far as I am aware it is the first account in the French language of the history of the fanatics who inhabit Utah and the country of the River of the Jordan, and who have founded this New Jerusalem, called Salt Lake City. From my journalism and business affairs I am now making one hundred francs a day, and fifty francs for my associate.

Let me tell you more about the Marquis de Pindray whom I last saw in Union Town when I was coming out from the placers. Last May or June he got in touch, through the La Chapelle brothers, with Colonel Victor Prudon, who he knew was heavily involved, and offered to buy his ranch with all the live-stock, send the animals to the placers, and divide the profits. In this way, so he said, Prudon could pay off his debts and save his property. The transaction was closed and the contract signed stipulating the price agreed in the purchase.

De Pindray should have filed at the same time another deed stipulating certain reservations, but he feigned illness. He retired, taking along the signed agreement but promising to file the counter-deed and bring it over the next day.

Several days went by and De Pindray failed to appear. Prudon after looking for him everywhere finally found him and asked him for the final papers. Assuming an injured expression and striking a theatrical pose, this rascal drew himself up to his full height and uttered 168 these crushing words, "Do you dare doubt the word of the Marquis de Pindray? I had intended to bring you the counter-deed but since you demand it this insult has turned me against you. My word should have been enough."

Prudon was stunned, and convinced that such a villain would stop at nothing short of murder. He did not have the determination of an American who, under similar circumstances, would have demanded justice on the spot. He left in a daze, cursing his fate, and raging at his own carelessness, the treacherousness of the scoundrel and his acolytes who had purposely deceived him.

This episode over, De Pindray and La Chapelle, his valet, left for Union Town and the placers of Trinity River, taking along the animals from Prudon's *rancho*, together with some of his servants. After he had squandered all his proceeds from the sale of these creatures—he sold off everything except a few horses—he did not reappear in San Francisco until January.

Prudon, at that time, got out a court order requiring De Pindray to make a report on the sale. This De Pindray did; his statement showed a loss of ten thousand dollars. Then he ordered Prudon to pay his half of the deficit at once or turn over to him the entire ranch. Prudon, being already heavily in debt, could not raise this amount and could not afford to go to law. With the aid of friends and acquaintances an attempt was made to reach some kind of a settlement.

As arbitrators Prudon named Doctor Clergeon and the consul, Mr. Dillon; De Pindray chose me to defend his interests. At the present writing—early in the month of February—this is the way the affair stands. In the course of these negotiations La Chapelle, a young journalist and one of the accomplices, had been trying for some time to get a settlement from De Pindray for his services.

At first this was bluntly refused, but when he pressed the matter De Pindray lost his temper and challenged him to a duel, offering to meet him at any hour of the day or night. He also remarked that if he tried any tricks he would kill him. But the prudent journalist, a man of letters but a coward and parasite, was careful not to accept the challenge, and so avoided meeting his adversary face to face.

Anyone who is observant and attempts to analyze the various types of men around him would be doing an injustice if he confined his interest solely to the eccentric and vicious characters.

For this reason, having sketched the silhouette of the strange De Pindray, I shall attempt to portray one of the outstanding American characters in San Francisco—Charles Duane. He is a man some twenty-five or thirty years old, large, blond, a man of superb physique. 169 He seems to be of more than ordinary intelligence and is generous even to the point of being prodigal. A born leader, ambitious, and a good mixer, he is usually to be found in one of the gambling houses. A notorious politician as well, he has a thousand votes at his command to be disposed of at elections by the simple plan of having his adherents vote three times in different sections of the city. Naturally he is flattered and bowed down to by all the political leaders. Although he has no visible means of support he lives regally on credit.

Such a man might easily come to be a public dictator if he were so inclined. Girls and women, even those of the highest type, are captivated by his sympathetic manner, his flattery, his delicate attentions, and his pleasing compliments. With his capriciousness, his viciousness, and his undeniable charm he would be a dangerous man in any walk of life—whether in society, political life or love-affairs.

Men like this have in times past—and they will again in the future—use every influence to cheat at elections, put their confederates into public office, and stoop to graft in disbursing the city finances.

The first thing to do—and the patience of all honest men is nearing its end—will be to form vigilance committees. Such a dictatorship, being impersonal and incorruptible, can assert itself over and above the courts and be used to serve only the interests of public safety. And then the guilty will be fortunate if they escape the gallows and are merely exiled to foreign countries.

For several months now armed thugs have been escaping punishment after committing criminal assaults. A series of fires has occurred as well, due to someone's carelessness, and justice has been powerless or incapable of discovering the underlying responsibility. This has brought suspicion on the police, courts, and all public officials. When the papers announced on February 19, 1851, that one of my fellow-countrymen had been murdered cold-bloodedly and without apparent provocation, public indignation ran high.

Here is the article that was published at that time in the *Public Balance*:

We learn with regret that Mr. Anedee Fayole, actor and manager of the French Theatre in the city has just been assassinated in the office of his theatre when he refused to admit free of charge a certain individual, Charles Duane, who had no right to this privilege. The latter shot him with his pistol, knocked him down, and struck him with his sword. The life of the victim is despaired of and the criminal has been arrested. We are now waiting to see whether the law is sufficiently strong to protect us from such assaults in San Francisco. We trust that prompt and swift justice will be meted out in the interests of the public order and private safety. This is the wish of all his friends.

The following day, February twenty-first, the Court of Records, where Charles Duane was being held for a preliminary hearing, was crowded with a mob of curiosity-seekers. After hearing the witnesses, 170

SHIPMENT OF THE PRISONERS. Charles P. Duane, Martin Gallagher, Billy Mulligan, Wm. Carr, Edward Bulger and Woolly Kearny, sent from the country, by the “Vigilance Committee of San Francisco,” at two o'clock, A.M., June 5th, 1856. From a letter-sheet in the collection of Mr. Templeton Crocker.

171 the guilty person was turned over to the jury, accused of an attempt at murder. Only a few hours later—some fifty thousand dollars had in the interim been spent in bribes—he was allowed to go free on a fifteen-thousand-dollar bail. But the citizens objected.

On the same day another tragedy occurred that incited a spirit of revolt in even the most peaceful citizens. Two ex-convicts from Sydney, [James] Stuart and Wilfred [Robert Windred], had stolen two thousand dollars from a business man, Mr. Janson [C. J. Jansen], whom they then tried to murder.

A committee of the most reputable citizens in the city was then formed, seven thousand men responding to the appeal. After considerable discussion and argument, the robbers were turned over to them. Within twenty-four hours they had investigated the case and decided to put them out on a

warship where they were to be tried by the usual jury. This unique decision was not made solely to intimidate culprits; its aim was far-reaching.

This attitude made the men who had gone bail for Charles Duane, G. W. Thompson, F. D. Kohler, and De Vire, uneasy; they withdrew their guaranty, and the culprit has been returned to prison—where his friends do not hesitate to come and offer condolences and attempt to devise plans to get him out of this dilemma.

Fayole, who had been dangerously ill for eight days, was convalescing when Duane's friends came to him and made a proposition that was very tempting to an impecunious artist. They pointed out that if the accused man were condemned the victim would derive no material benefit, but if he would have the case dismissed he would receive a sum of money—enough to pay his expenses for two months while he was convalescing in Los Angeles in Southern California and enjoying a vacation. He was asked not to prosecute the case on the grounds that the victim and chief witnesses were not available; moreover, no jury in the State would have been willing to have sentenced the culprit.

This, then, is what was done, and Charles Duane escaped clean as snow from prison and justice by paying only a small fine.\* But I am anticipating events for the sake of convenience. Let me go back to February twentieth.

Charles P. Duane was exiled by the Vigilance Committee of San Francisco, at 2:00 A.M., June 5, 1856.

Day after day the newspapers carried reports of numerous outrages, robberies, murders in the city at night, and even in daylight on the main roads. It seemed as if every prison of every civilized country had sent the elite of its inmates out here to colonize this country.

Now and again the miners would leave their diggings, organize, arm, and start out on foot or horseback after the culprits. Those who were caught were given a mock trial and then hung. In some of the cities, 172 particularly in Sacramento, for the first time, on February 25, 1851, an attempt was made to establish the validity of a lynch law.

The crisis came when a gambler, an Englishman called Frederick J. Roe, who had killed a blacksmith named Myers because he was trying to protect a young miner whom Roe and three other gamblers assaulted when he refused to gamble, was arrested by a mob who pronounced them guilty despite the efforts of the authorities who called for a trial by jury. Roe was finally tried and sentenced to be hung.

The mob then raided the prison, got possession of the prisoner, and led him out to be executed. This proceeding was sanctioned by nearly five thousand citizens. A gallows was improvised in a tree and the condemned man, supported by several ministers, declared he had yielded to a sudden impulse. Then he asked for a glass of water, and murmuring these words, "God have mercy on my soul," he was hung.

According to my belief, however, he was not a desperado of the worst order, such as congregate here in California, but was merely unfortunate enough to commit murder at a time when public sentiment was at white heat, and chose for a victim a man who was a reputable citizen and who left behind a widow and children.

The crime took place at two in the afternoon, the arguments for the trial were over by six, and by eight the jury returned their verdict of "guilty of murder of the first degree." At nine that night the sentence was executed, despite the opposition of the lawyers, local authorities, and magistrates.

In civilized countries where the courts are the bulwarks of justice such a deed would be classed as the act of barbarians and savages. But anyone who knows this country, its customs, its irregularities, and how its officials are chosen by universal suffrage and dominated by unscrupulous politicians, knows that such a procedure is sanctioned by the sober citizens who merely desire to enjoy peace and safeguard their interest. But this strong sense of justice is far from universal; I know many cases where the reverse has been the case.

Not long ago a Frenchman of high birth who came out with me on the *Cérés* entered my office at the Hotel Richelieu on Pine Street and told me his troubles. I did everything I could to help him

earn a living. As he was a good hunter and an excellent shot I offered him my gun and ammunition, which I was not using, telling him that game was abundant and commanded a fancy price on the market and that he should be able to make enough profit from hunting to start up a business. He accepted my suggestion with alacrity, took my gun, and that was the last I saw of him.

Later I was told that he had sold my gun and ammunition, and 173 had left for the mines. At the placers he found Doctor Daing—a passenger from the *Cérès* who was working a claim of highly productive ore. The doctor welcomed him with open arms and took him into partnership. This was indeed good fortune for the newcomer, and everything seemed harmonious.

But such generosity did not satisfy the ambitions of this man who had no conscience and no moral standards. One fine day it was noted that their tent seemed deserted. For a time the miners in the neighborhood paid no attention to what seemed like a normal situation—although it was known that the doctor had three to four thousand piasters with him—but when someone finally went inside all that was found was a corpse. The gold had vanished!

The Sermans brothers, who were also on the *Cérès* and had come from the same section of France as Doctor Daing, on learning of his tragic end and the circumstances surrounding it offered one thousand dollars to anyone who would arrest the man to whom Doctor Daing had extended hospitality. Notices to this effect were sent to all the papers, both French and English, in California.

It seems probable that the culprit is hiding with the Indians and that he will live for a time with them, nameless and without a country, marrying, raising a family, and perhaps even rising to the rank of chieftain. Some time ago he lost his wife, and no one else knew his address. However, I know where he came from, but out of consideration for his family, which is very prominent, I shall try to forget I ever knew him. Furthermore, however strong our suspicions may be, we have no conclusive proof.

If many of our Neo-Californians have a pronounced taste for armed banditry many more are given to the less dangerous pastime of petty thievery and cheating. Here is an instance of this latter, a case in which I personally was the victim. The facts of the situation proved his guilt, and the instigator of

this crime does not deserve any consideration for, when he had a chance to make amends, he let the chance slip by.

This is the story. For three months Joseph Isnard had been in the brokerage business with me, and without much effort we had each made from five to twenty dollars a week profit with the chance of doubling this amount with a little extra industry. This, it seems to me, ought to satisfy a young man, who had no business of his own and no capital. Although I did not expect his gratitude, the least I expected was his cooperation and interest.

Isnard, however, disappointed me. He proved to be a gambler, an idler, and a woman-seeker. As I did not care to have our funds pass through his hands I had been paying his personal expenses in advance out of my own pocket. But I discovered that he was collecting the commissions due us as brokers and spending them, telling me our creditors were putting us off from week to week.

As I finally began to doubt the truth of his assertions I went quietly around to them and discovered that I had in business with me a liar and a swindler. What could I do? Should I give him a good thrashing with a stick? This would please him, probably, for he would then pose not as debtor but as creditor. Or should I take him to the police? If I did this I would have to look after the affair myself; he would ask for a trial by jury and would probably be acquitted; and all the expenses—and he might even ask for damages—would be charged to me.

At the present time, out in this country, a juror is like a boot-jack, or porter. The latter is stationed at the doors of hotels; the former is at the beck and call of the court. One is as irresponsible as the other. So it is not surprising that such juries frequently consist of friends, confederates, and accomplices of the accused person, and as the decision must be unanimous, eight times out of ten the guilty person escapes punishment.

The only thing left for me to do, in the case of Isnard, was to confront him with the men who had paid him their commissions and to expose his guilt in the presence of witnesses. As he was unable to deny his guilt he made a complete confession in their presence, asked my forgiveness on the grounds of his youth, wept bitterly, and promised to make amends if I would give him time.



Perhaps he was afraid I was going to have him arrested, for later events proved that he had no intention of reforming. And yet he is twenty-two years old!

I audited his accounts and found he had embezzled more than one hundred and forty dollars in less than a month. He signed a statement to this effect, exposing the shameful origin of his debt but probably inwardly hating me as the cause of his troubles. In concluding I shall tell you some anecdotes about him which will show you what kind of a man he is and let you draw your own inferences.

Two years passed by since I had accepted his note for this debt and I had not been able to collect it, when I heard that Joseph Isnard, by some strange coincidence, had been made translator and interpreter for the commission that was to pass on and verify the Mexican land concessions in California—a position that should carry a nice salary. I let a few months ensue and saw that he was looking prosperous, dining at the best cafés, and living off the fat of the land like a man favored by fortune.

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Then I gave my brother Ormand, who had been in California only a short time, the note for one hundred and forty dollars to present to Isnard at his office, and collect all or part of it. My brother found Isnard alone there and told him why he had come, at the same time presenting his note. Isnard took it under the pretext of examining it, went over to the window, tore it to shreds, and threw it out with the remark, “You see what I am doing with this paper; if you dare say a word, since you do not speak English and I have friends next door who do not understand French, I will break your neck.” Then he pulled a revolver from his pocket. The snake had changed into a wild animal! There was only one thing for my brother who was unarmed to do—retire. An American is always armed when he goes to collect a bad bill and might have killed his debtor on the spot by way of exacting justice, but such a reprisal would be repugnant to a Frenchman.

This little episode which I had no reason to conceal was soon known all over the city. Isnard, in consequence, was carefully watched by his employers and not given any serious responsibilities.

A few months later he was discharged. From then on his troubles began. He tried to get help everywhere, from his friends and acquaintances and even from those who were cognizant of his faults. He even appeared to repent and sent me two remittances on account, but this was all I ever received from him. I offered at length to settle for one hundred francs and he agreed, but never paid me. Finally he returned to France.

In 1860 I ran across a man in Paris who appeared to be some forty-five years old and who was either of the middle classes or a working man. He wore a shabby hat, coat, old trousers, and worn shoes. He was looking tired and worn. But he carried himself like a knight returning from the Crusades, despite his rags.

He stopped me on the bridge of Beaux Arts and said with great self-assurance, "Good afternoon, my dear Mr. de Massey." I looked up and recognized Joseph Isnard. "Not so dear as all that," I replied. "You know I have an old score to settle with you." He mumbled some excuses, told me he had not forgotten, and did not intend to repudiate his debt, and that he expected to get a good position in a day or so and would pay me. I gave him my address, but he never came. As I was thinking about him I could not help speculating as to what place a man of his stamp could occupy in France under a regular and orderly government.

I believe I saw him for the last time one evening in 1867 in Paris in a café on the Boulevard de Strasbourg. He was sitting with a man, obviously from the country, whom he was probably trying to exploit. I made no effort to recognize him.

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The last episode in the life of this crook which came to my attention is even more extraordinary, and I should not have believed it had it not been told and verified by my friends and relatives who did not know the past history of the man whom I mentioned.

This was in Langres in the winter of 1870-71, when the war was at its height. The Bureau of National Defense had just issued a call for officers and extra soldiers. Among the volunteers was an

artillery officer, who said he had been trained in the United States—perhaps in the Civil War. This commander had been stationed at the town of Langres, to take part in its defense in case of a siege.

Of the military merits of this superior officer I have nothing to say, not having seen his service records. I do know that he was very conceited. He had had practically no education but he spoke fluently three languages, French, English, and Spanish. While in Langres he stayed with the notary, Mr. Mermet.

My cousins, Mesdames Lanet, who are related to the latter, frequently met the commander, who often in the course of his conversation mentioned California. Mesdames Lanet asked him if he had ever known their cousin, Ernest de Massey. “Certainly, he was one of my best friends,” he replied. The commander was my old friend Joseph Isnard! And to think that this man had been able to get an officer's commission and perhaps even come to be on friendly terms with many honest and distinguished officers of the French army. It may be, however, that the government favored Isnard because he was the son of Maximilian Isnard, member and president from 1792-1793 of the Assembly.

After this lengthy digression let me return to my life in California. I continued to lead the life of a journalist, mediator, and broker, attending to the thousand and one things that came up and which left me very little time for literary pursuits. Through this avenue I came to know all the Francomtois in the city.

Among them was Mr. Agness from Luxeuil, an uninteresting person, Mr. Rouche from Jussey, Mr. Alexis Guapot of Vauvillers, and the two Thiaud brothers, also of Vauvillers, who were under the guardianship of their nephew Thuillon, their cashier and monitor. They were sent out by their brother who had made a fortune in the Indies and who did not wish his new social position clouded.

While they were living here the poor Thiauds played the clarinet in cabarets and ate and drank up all their profit rather than work in the mines. As their guardian found he had no control over them he left them and went to Mexico.

I also knew Captain Travaillet, who was in command of a ship but 177 later sold out his interests at a profit—to the detriment of the owners and lessee—and with the proceeds established a business in Oregon. This is one way of acquiring prestige in a new country! The Travaillet family came originally from Doubs; they had an excellent reputation. The Captain lived at Hotel Richelieu where I, too, made my head-quarters. He had a prepossessing appearance and a generous, friendly, affable disposition, and was not the only one out here who was ostracized from France. Bouchard, who succeeded Covillard as my landlord was similarly situated.

Bouchard, Captain on the long run from California to Hâvre, had left on a small ship—a bold and audacious venture—and had safely weathered the Straits [of Magellan]. When he got into San Francisco he decided to sell out on his own behalf. But he was not able to enjoy the fruits of this transaction by himself.

His wife, an ordinary creature, soon followed him and made trouble, and his daughter, whom he was having educated at Hâvre, followed her mother's example. Later when the opportunity offered she married Mr. Dubrenil. The parents soon separated without ceremony; they were gross, unpleasant, and ignorant people.

Doctor Briot, who always disliked medicine—sooner or later he will be forced to practice—finally located at San José near his friend Jourdain; there he runs a pharmacy and in addition raises chickens and rabbits.

Pidaucet stayed at the mines. Dechanet opened a little grocery store here in the city. Bernot from Besançon has been playing the flute for a living, sometimes in San José and again in San Francisco. Veron lost the two thousand francs he made at the mines through De Lamolère and Breton, an architect from Paris who came out on the *Cérès*. They thought they could make a success of farming without theory, experience, or capital.

He is now working for Mr. Humboldt of Langres—son of an old resident of that city—probably without salary. He has written begging me to send him, through Mr. Baladía, a trunk of his personal

belongings and any money due him from the sale of our last merchandise. As he said he was in need of funds I immediately complied with the request of my dear cousin.

I have had word from the mines and understand that my friends Elier and Ernest de Grivel who went up on the Stanislaus River, having heard enthusiastic reports of the mines on the Salmon, left too late in the season for these rich placers—where miners have taken out a hundred pounds of gold in a few months—and were stopped by the snows and forced to turn back. When later they finally got in, all the good 178 places had been taken, and their profits were small. It was in July, 1850, that I explored the same country. I recognized the rich indications at the time and would have returned had it not been for my associates who left our camp before I got back to the Trinity.

When the Hotel Richelieu failed I was compelled to move my offices to Commercial Street. Soon a fire drove me out. This was the first fire I had witnessed and which had claimed me as its victim. On that eventful night I had to move all my possessions twice, even though the fire was more than three hundred meters away. Two-thirds of the city was destroyed.

Doctor Clergeon was away that day and when I saw that the fire was about to destroy his house I called in some mutual friends to help me save his effects. I knew he was out of the city and had gone to look over the De Pindray-Prudon ranch to make them an offer for it. We saved everything that seemed valuable as the fire crept nearer.

However, we neglected to take out a little old trunk that seemed valueless—and it was there that Doctor Clergeon kept all his valuables—about two hundred thousand francs! When he returned to San Francisco and found he was ruined he nearly lost his reason. In the three weeks that we lived in the same room, night after night he had hideous nightmares.

The printing-office of my paper was burned, the paper went out of existence, and I had to look for some other occupation. The De Pindray-Prudon ranch was out of the question, so I yielded to the entreaties of my friend, J. B. de Finance, who was also ruined, and we went into partnership, each putting in the same amount of capital, and managed the business without hiring extra labor.

I was put in charge of the business, looked after the money and credit end, and did the buying, and fixed prices. My partner had no ambition but to follow in my footsteps. I had saved four hundred dollars, but put only half of it into the business. Thus our company began with a capital of four hundred dollars.

We rented a small place about two meters long by three deep in a location that had escaped the fire on Merchant Street, at the corner of the main plaza. Here I laid the foundations of the establishment that later developed into a book-store which carried French, Spanish, Italian books, and any Parisian papers that had a ready market in San Francisco.

This brings to a close my years of adventure. But if time permits I shall continue my memoirs on through the seven ensuing years, as I have done above, and describe events as I witnessed them—the end of De Pindray, De Raousset, the fires, the Vigilance Committee, the Filibusters, and the Dillon affair.

NOTES

BY

CHARLES L. CAMP

NOTES

The manuscript from which the present translation was made is the property of the Los Angeles Public Library and was purchased by them from the Torch Press in 1908. We are indebted to the librarian, Mr. Everett R. Perry, for permission to publish this interesting account.

The manuscript is apparently a copy of De Massey's original journal which he carried about with him while in California and mailed to his relatives in France at intervals during the first two years of his sojourn.

This narrative, beginning with the arrival in San Francisco, was printed in Volume V of the *Quarterly of the California Historical Society*, in 1926. The account of the voyage from France around the Horn is of great interest but is without particular bearing on California history. It may possibly be made the subject of another volume.

The asperity of De Massey's remarks upon some of the men and women of his day might have been softened by the omission of names but the mellowing effect of time has made such mutilation of the narrative seem unnecessary. It is obviously impossible to check up the accuracy of all observations on the character and personality of individuals. We can only undertake to set down what is written and leave the rest to the best judgment of the future.