

# **Golden dreams and waking realities; being the adventures of a gold-seeker in California and the Pacific islands. By William Shaw**

GOLDEN DREAMS

AND

WAKING REALITIES;

BEING THE

ADVENTURES OF A GOLD-SEEKER

IN

CALIFORNIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.

BY WILLIAM SHAW.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER AND Co, 65, CORNHILL.

1851.

GROVE, PRINTER,

TRINITY STREET, SOUTHWARK.

**ADVERTISEMENT.**

NOTWITHSTANDING the numerous publications that have appeared on the subject of California, it is hoped that the present volume will be found interesting as a description of personal adventure, and a vivid and faithful picture of the vicissitudes and privations experienced by gold-seekers.

The author does not belong to that class of reckless adventurers, who, destitute alike of character, industry and means, resorted to the "Diggings" vainly expecting to realize independence without much toil.

Having chosen the sea as a profession, he sailed for India as a midshipman in 1845; but his early predilection for travel inclining iv him to visit other countries, he left the service, and in the year 1848, the tide of emigration, which then set in towards South Australia, carried him to Adelaide. Seeing there no prospect of a suitable occupation, and his active temperament disliking the idea of living in idleness upon an annual allowance, he had determined upon returning to England; but tidings of a plentiful harvest in the modern El Dorado proved an irresistible temptation, and he accordingly set sail for California. Owing to this hurried departure, the stipend, payable to himself only, became void; while uncertainty as to his future movements made him defer writing for further remittances; he was consequently left to his own resources: how these served him in the time of need, his narrative will fully explain.

The condition of California, which the author here describes, is such as must excite painful apprehensions concerning this v new state of the Union; while the sufferings of the unfortunate gold-seekers will serve as a warning to any who may imagine that opulence is to be obtained at the "Diggings" without trial or danger. True it is, that wealth has been accumulated; but only by legitimate traders, or by such as make a lawless and lucrative traffic in the follies and infirmities of the working population.

The author's notes of what he witnessed and encountered in his wanderings (made at the time, but not with a view to publication), afford fresh evidences of the demoralizing effects of the Californian gold mania; and if, as he trusts, his narrative should prove serviceable as well as amusing to the public, it will be a source of gratification for him to think that it has been in his power to dissipate

the “golden dreams” of others, without their having, like himself, to experience the disagreeable “waking realities.”

*August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1851.*

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## CHAPTER I.

Author leaves Adelaide for California—Crew and Passengers of the Mazeppa—Port Nicholson, New Zealand—Discomforts of the Ship—The Malay Crew, their Habits, Tempers, and Superstitions—A Water-spout.

It was in Adelaide that the golden tidings of a new El Dorado in California first reached me; and when I was in a mood most favourable to be excited by the marvellous reports that were brought of the wealth of that auriferous region. My prospects of success in South Australia, whither I had emigrated from England in the winter of 1848-9, were by no means promising, and I had actually engaged a 2 passage home, in consequence. Restless, dissatisfied, and impatient of inaction, I eagerly caught at the glittering bait that dazzled the senses of so many; and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my friends, and their representations of the uncertainty and dangers of such an expedition, I resolved on seeking my fortune at the 'Diggings.' Accordingly I transferred my birth to the Mazeppa, a small clipper-built ship of 170 tons register, which was chartered for San Francisco. She had formerly traded to Singapore, and was manned by a Malay crew, seventeen in number. Previous to our sailing I was much amused by hearing the Malays and a party of Australian

aborigines bandying the withering taunt of “black fellow,” with other epithets in broken English, which they had picked up from the lips of sailors and bullock-drivers.

The Mazeppa was the first ship that left South Australia for the gold regions; crowds flocked, therefore, to bid farewell to the little band of adventurers, and we left the wharf amidst deafening cheers from the Adeladians.

Besides the captain, supercargo, and two mates, there were five cabin passengers, who paid sixty pounds each for their passage; and sixteen in the steerage, who paid only twenty pounds each. Most of the latter were old colonists; sharp, shrewd fellows, who had seen a great deal of life and undergone many hardships: bushmen and blacksmiths, a carpenter and a shoemaker, some Germans and myself, formed a heterogeneous mess.

Owing to the extreme sharpness of the bows of the vessel, the forecastle was very narrow, and the crew were crowded into an inconceivably small space; the steerage, also, measured only sixteen feet square, by four feet ten inches high: close packing for sixteen passengers. Our scale of provisions, however, was exceedingly liberal; far superior to any given out of English ports, and no ship-regulations were imposed on us: each one was left to his own discretion, and the greatest good feeling and harmony prevailed on board. In the steerage we were very social; and though, being for the first time in my life thrown amongst such a rough lot, I felt somewhat embarrassed, yet, being of a flexible disposition, I soon got accustomed to my companions, and found them a very good set of fellows.

#### 4

The wind being fair we reached Port Nicholson in ten days after leaving Adelaide, and put in for water at Wellington. While the Mazeppa lay here, I went on shore, and walked to the settlement of the Hutt, which is situated in a fertile valley, a short distance from the town. It is picturesque, and has all the appearance of a thriving settlement: a considerable area of ground was fenced in and under cultivation; the soil is very rich, producing fine crops of wheat, oats, and barley.

The New Zealand bush is more scrubby than the Australian wilds, the trees are more majestic, and better adapted for timber; scantling, broad-paling, and shingling, have been sent in large quantities to California; very fine spars, of great length and durability, felled in the New Zealand forests, are sent to Sydney for masts of vessels.

After leaving Port Nicholson, we encountered heavy weather, and took a northerly course, sighting Pitcairn's Island. On entering the tropics, we felt in full force all the inconveniences of our confined berths and the proximity of the Malay crew; from whom we were only separated by a thin partition. The effluvia from coloured people, always so disagreeable, and odious when aggravated by heat and uncleanness, now became intolerable; and, to add to our disgust and discomfort, cock-roaches and other vermin swarmed everywhere. The ship had formerly been sugar laden, which accounted for the quantities of cock-roaches; the filthy habits of the Malays generated the smaller vermin: scarcely any of the Malays had a change of clothing. The forecabin, what with the exudations, the heat, and the vermin, exhaled the most noisome odours that ever steamed from a heap of putrescence. Our small steerage acted as a safety valve for the escape of foul atmosphere from the forecabin, which, together with the nuisance of rats, in addition to insect vermin, rendered the deck the only tolerable sleeping place: the rats bit us in our sleep, and one of us was awoken by a rat browsing on his eyebrows.

The Malay crews are differently treated to any other: they have no separate watches, but keep the deck all day, and are supposed to be on the alert all night. In unsettled weather they can seldom rest for any time without being disturbed, and in cold weather they are completely disabled; want of proper rest and clothing producing sickness. Whenever illness occurred among them, the captain had one infallible specific—"a dose of jalap," which he administered on every occasion and for every complaint: not that he believed the physic beneficial, but simply because the Malays detested it, and on that account avoided being on the sick list.

Malay crews usually include a "Serang" and two "Tinguls," corresponding to our boatswain and his mates. These petty officers carry a knotted piece of rope, called a 'colt,' which they use pretty



freely; they are seldom resisted, it being a part of the Malay creed to reverence their superiors. The helmsmen are usually Spaniards, and go by the name of "Sea Cooney."

The Malays have very peculiar notions respecting food, and, like the Jews, abhor pork. As they will not touch food cooked by others, it is customary for them to have a 'Bandari,' or cook of their own, with a separate galley; which somewhat resembles a huge box turned on its side. The food generally allowed them is rice and fish; the rice is cooked in a large copper caldron, raised on stones and heated by a wood fire; the fish, usually dried snapper, or some other coarse salted fish, is fried on the embers. They are esteemed clever at cooking; certainly the rice is steamed so that each grain may be separated. It is astonishing the quantity of rice they can devour at a sitting; they feed on it three times a day, eating it from wooden platters with their fingers: they are otherwise scrupulously clean in their eating. Flour, curry and tea, are seldom given them, except in fair weather. Shark is a favorite fish with them; I have seen them gorge themselves with it till almost unable to move. I have tasted it myself, but do not relish it: it is white, like cod, but very dry, and has a coarse flavour.

The pay given to Malays is generally about twenty shillings a month; but, notwithstanding the small wages, bad victualling, and the amount of labour required of them, they seldom express discontent. The officers maintain the strictest discipline; instant punishment follows any offence. A Malay will submit to severe bodily chastisement, but will not forget an indignity: to be spit at, or to be touched on the head, is equally an affront; they sometimes resent the knocking off the turban with deadly revenge. As they always carry a bright knife in their belt, it is rather unsafe to play practical jokes on them. An instance of their revengeful disposition occurred before we left Adelaide. The captain of a vessel in port, got irritated with a Malay boy and struck him with the back of a carving knife; shortly after, when the captain was sleeping at mid-day in his cabin, the boy, who had brooded over the insult, picked out the identical knife and plunged it into the breast of his slumbering victim; then, rushing up the ladder, jumped over board. He was pursued by the ship's-boat, but, raising his hands aloft, he purposely sunk, sooner than be taken and delivered up to justice.

Most of the Malays are Mussulmen, and extremely superstitious: they believe that the wind can be controlled by their holy men. The Bandari, who acted as their priest, was an Arab who had made

the pilgrimage to Mecca, and, consequently, was in high repute among them. In calm weather he would tap the foot of the lower masts with a small stick; but never risked his reputation for miraculous powers unless he saw evident signs of an approaching storm. On certain feast days the Malays had little work given them to do: during the fine weather they would assemble together of an evening, and, squatted on the deck, would sing their national airs; some imitating musical instruments with their mouths, others taking up the strain at intervals, not with melodious effect. Dramas also were enacted among them, consisting of dialogues, accompanied with pantomimic gestures, in which they sometimes worked themselves up to a high pitch of excitement. Not understanding the Malay tongue, I could not elicit their meaning; but I imagine them to have been celebrations of festivals common among the Oriental nations. These Malay ceremonies usually wound up with the burning of sandal wood below deck, its fumes being supposed to dispel all evil spirits from their berth; they certainly drove us out of ours.

We had a Chinese cook and carpenter on board, who readily fell into the habits of the Malays; the Celestials being a more intelligent race, though they seemed to have less craft and courage than the Malays. It was highly amusing to witness the 10 grimaces, and listen to the jabbering of the Chinese when abusing each other; the carpenter was phlegmatic, and the cook irascible, and to see these two oddities quarrelling over their 'chow-chow' was highly ludicrous.

Off Cape Natividad we witnessed a striking phenomenon. The weather had been extremely sultry, the sea was perfectly calm and seemed alive with animalculæ, appearing as if charged with electric matter. We were enjoying the cool of the evening on deck admiring the gorgeous splendour of a tropical sun-set, the clouds (reflecting variegated colours of intense brilliancy), and speculating from what quarter the wind would be likely to arise, when suddenly the clouds near the horizon assumed a most portentous appearance; our attention was then directed to a violent effervescence in the water within a hundred yards of the ship's bows, momentarily increasing in agitation, and resembling a whirlpool. All eyes were immediately directed to it, when presently a dense vapour ascended from the cavity; on looking upwards we saw that the clouds hung remarkably low, one of them being in a manner suspended from the heavens in the shape of an inverted cone; which gradually descended, seemingly attracted by the water, and united itself with the vapour emitted

from the sea. The water-spout kept increasing in magnitude, forming a vast cylinder of watery vapour, twenty feet in circumference, almost over our heads. It was a critical moment: there was not a breath of air stirring; the ship remained motionless; the violent eddy around the base of the water-spout seemed to approach: if the vessel were attracted toward the yawning abyss, we knew that our destruction was inevitable. The officers were not idle; orders were given to furl the sails, but the utmost consternation prevailed on board: the affrighted crew were no sooner thrashed aloft, than they disregarded the orders, and knelt down in the tops and cross-trees seemingly petrified. Those on deck were equally terrified; regardless of the blows of the 'colt,' they prostrated themselves on the deck, imploring their gods with the loudest vociferations to vouchsafe their interference.

The passengers' demonstrations of fear were quieter: their pallid, terror-stricken appearance, with hair on end, bespoke their apprehensions, and the 12 greatest confusion prevailed. Presently, to the astonishment of all, the Bandari, almost in a state of nudity, emerged from the forecandle hatch, with only a pilgrim's scarf thrown over him; in one hand he held the Koran, in the other a piece of the miraculous black stone of Mecca. He commenced jumping about in the strangest manner, chanting a hymn, and shouting out to the water-spout; this being of no avail, he suddenly darted into the galley, and hurled its contents at the water-spout. Strange to say, this "burnt-offering" seemed to have been effectual, for the cause of alarm shortly retired from view. This was ascribed to the priest's influence, and raised him high in the estimation of his followers.

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## CHAPTER II.

Coast of Lower California—Kelp—Harbour of San Diego—Red Indians—Town of San Diego—Hospitality of the Residents—The Belle of San Diego—Dress of the Spanish Women—Fandangos—Beauty of the Female Population—Costume of the Men—Exercises and Amusements—United States and Mexican Soldiers—The Mission of San Luis Rey—A Day's Shooting—Yankee Backwoodsmen.

WE had been for three days coasting the barren shores of Lower California, the mountain ranges, without a blade of grass upon them, continually in view; when, being in want of water, we altered our course, and steered for San Diego. On approaching within eight miles of the coast, a vast quantity of the *fucus giganteus*, or kelp, appeared above the surface of the water; as we approached the shore, it gradually thickened so much that, the 14 wind falling light, our progress was completely impeded by it: for miles around, the sea was covered with this prolific weed, hanging perceptibly fifteen feet downwards; pelicans, gulls, and other marine birds, had built their nests on its surface.

Kelp is an excellent guide for coasters, as it usually floats seven fathoms, so that no danger can accrue to vessels keeping on the verge of it. The boats were lowered, a tow-rope attached to them, and with cutlasses we cut our way through the kelp, and drew the vessel onwards. After being thus employed for about an hour, a breeze sprung suddenly up; before we could slack the line, the vessel shot a-head, and the boats got entangled with the weed broadside on. During the southerly gales, kelp has been known to drive its way into the harbour with such force as to part the cables of vessels laying at anchor.

Rounding a promontory, we entered the harbour of San Diego, and dropt anchor abreast of some wooden buildings. This harbour is deemed one of the best sheltered in the Pacific: its entrance is not more than seven hundred feet across, and might be easily defended, as a huge mountain rises abreast 15 of the anchorage. Some large deserted hide-houses and tents, and a grave-yard with numerous recent mounds, marked the site of what will soon become a populous port. To the southward, on a rising ground, is the presidio, or town, about three miles distant from the port; its white-washed houses glistening in the sun. Throwing out our lines, we caught abundance of mackerel; and a boat coming alongside from the town, we heard marvellous accounts of the gold region, whither we were bound.

The following morning, I, and two others, started for the town. There is nothing more refreshing than a run upon the green sod, after pacing for months the hard deck of a vessel; the day was fine and the country beautiful, as with elastic steps and joyous spirits, we bounded across the

verdant plain leading to the town. The outskirts were principally inhabited by Indians; some of their habitations were made of *adobe*, or sun-dried clay, and were black with smoke; others consisted of sticks and branches woven together, in shape and appearance not unlike a faggot-stack; better adapted for a summer than a winter abode. In a few of them I observed bedsteads, mattresses, and 16 snow white linen sheets: the sight of a European bed in an American wigwam was so astonishing, that I entered one of the huts to satisfy myself of the fact.

The Mission-Indians are of a red copper hue, and they are usually clothed in loose cotton garments. Both sexes are flat featured, and present a bloated appearance anything but prepossessing: in their habits they are both dirty and slothful. They are very submissive; which may be attributed to the awe and obedience early implanted in their minds by the priests.

The Indians are little better than serfs to the white population; like the Gibeonites of Scripture, they are “the hewers of wood and drawers of water.” They plait wicker-work very ingeniously; I have seen rush baskets so closely interwoven as to be waterproof, serving for buckets.

On entering the town, we passed by two large tumuli, one containing the bodies of Americans, the other of Mexicans, the memorials of a bloody battle which had been fought here a short time before: the earthen fortifications were riddled with bullet holes.

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The principal houses of Diego surround a spacious square, in the centre of which, flanked by two pieces of heavy artillery, stands a lofty flag-staff, from which floats the American banner; an additional star on which, reminds the haughty Spaniards of their subjugation. The houses forming the square are large white-washed buildings of adobe or sundried bricks, with red tiled roofs; the principal ones are built in the form of a quadrangle, entered through an arched gateway, leading into an elegant flower garden; a verandah, stretching from the roof, projects all round, under which is a terrace of tessellated pavement. The houses have seldom an upper story, and access to any portion of the building is obtained from the terrace. The apartments have boarded floors, kept scrupulously clean, and covered with matting in the centre; a few chairs and a table constitute the necessary

furniture: occasionally mirrors and paintings of the Spanish school, mark a more refined taste or greater wealth.

The port being little frequented, the greatest simplicity of manners and habits prevails; strangers, especially if they be English, are well received. 18 Availing myself of the hospitable repute of the residents, I entered boldly several houses. In one of them, after passing through several apartments, I espied its inmates in what I imagine was the kitchen: the lady of the house, a stout, matronly dame, was scolding in shrill tones some black domestics who were pounding maize, while around her were grouped three beautiful blushing damsels. The old lady did not seem in the least disconcerted at my intrusion; saying 'Buenos dias, Señor,' she, after a short conference, led the way to an elegant apartment, followed by her daughters. The latter understood a little English, and we soon became acquainted; during my residence at Diego I visited the family constantly, and the senora placed much confidence in me. The daughters had none of the prudery habitual to European girls; and we passed many pleasant hours smoking cigarettes together in the observatory at the top of the house.

The Spanish residents here are mostly of old Castile descent, but the belle of the place bears the unromantic name of Snooks; her father is an old English sailor, who touched at the coast in a whaler five and twenty years ago. The 19 hardships of whaling, combined with the fascinations of a Spanish syren, induced him to leave the vessel; he settled on shore, commencing business as a ship-chandler, and by industry and perseverance he raised himself to opulence. Notwithstanding his long residence abroad, he is still a fine specimen of the jovial British tar; and his house is always open to his countrymen. The fruit of his marriage was this one daughter; she is exquisitely moulded, both in form and feature, and her lustrous dark eyes are deeply fringed with black lashes. Her dignified aspect, and graceful deportment, inspired respect and admiration; her amiability of manners and temper enhancing the fascination of her personal charms.

The dress of the Spanish women of San Diego is simple and elegant: the skirt is long and of ample dimensions, the bodice fitting closely to the bust and round the throat; a silver crucifix is generally appended to the neck, and a black scarf, or mantilla, is thrown with studied negligence over the

head and shoulders, serving to protect the wearer from the sun, or the scrutinizing glances of the men.

## 20

A good feeling seems to exist between all classes, the poor and the rich associating together without arrogance on the part of the one, or undue familiarity from the other. Fandangos are held almost nightly, and at these entertainments any respectable person is admitted. The music usually consists of a violin and guitar, played by amateurs. The intricate movements of the dance require considerable skill, and admitted of much graceful action; of a kind very different from the violent exercise of Scotch reels and Irish jigs, or the shuffling steps of English country dances. At these assemblies there were generally several Mexican families, some of Moorish extraction; whose complexion is several shades darker than the Spaniards, and of a deep olive hue; their figures and features are well modelled. Some of the women are very lovely brunettes, with large lustrous eyes, and long wavy raven black hair. I am not apt to imagine a Dulcinea in every slipshod peasant-girl, but I think I may safely affirm, that during my rambles in Diego, I did not see what might be termed an ugly woman; certainly I met with numerous very lovely girls.

## 21

The dress of the Spaniards and Mexicans is very handsome and picturesque; both wear the poncho or serape, thrown over a black velvet jacket, slashed, braided and embroidered, and decorated with small silver buttons; the trowsers, of black velvet or plush, are open from the knee downward, shewing the white lining, the edges being fringed with buttons; a scarf of some bright colour is usually twisted around the waist, the ends often serving for a purse; the boots are sometimes worn high, and huge spurs with large rowels are always attached to them; a broad slouched hat generally shades the forehead; a bright bowie knife stuck in the waist, or in the side of the trowsers below the knee, completes the equipment. Both Spaniards and Mexicans are attached to equestrian exercises, and expert in using the lasso: the horses are high blooded, but small; they seldom stable them, but use a tether, which they always carry on the saddle. It is not customary to trot; their favorite pace is a hand gallop, which the horses can sustain for a long time; when at full gallop they can rein in their steeds at an instant, or turn in through the doorway of a house to speak to the inmates.

During the heat of the day they take a siesta; in the evening, gambling, smoking and cockfighting are their favorite pastimes. Nearly half the male population of San Diego had left for the gold mines of Upper California.

A United States regiment was quartered at San Diego, to the great annoyance of the inhabitants. Most of them seemed raw youths just taken from the plough; there was none of that discipline and smart appearance characteristic of British troops. A democratic spirit of equality seemed to prevail between the officers and men, and the barracks at times presented a scene of drinking and disorder. The regiment had served in the Mexican campaign, and according to their own admissions, they distinguished themselves more by pillaging than hard fighting; being adepts at robbing hen-roosts, stealing cattle, and valiant on foraging expeditions. A fellow shipmate who had been carousing rather deeply, unsuspectingly fell asleep in the barrack sheds; having forgotten to secrete his watch, in the morning he missed it, but never discovered the thief; nor was the watch restored. Fortunately I had taken care of 23 his purse over night, or he would probably have been relieved of it also.

A corps of the Mexican army was stationed a short distance from Diego, waiting till the boundary question was decided. I visited their camp, and found that they were decidedly better appointed troops than the Americans; but, notwithstanding their more showy costume and better discipline, they had not the stamina and powers of endurance of the raw Kentuckians.

About six miles from the town, in a beautiful well watered valley, is the mission of San Luis Rey. The buildings, constructed of mud, bricks, and stone, are rather extensive. It was formerly surrounded by well-stocked gardens, and large cattle 'corrals;' but the padres, dispossessed of their power, have deserted the mission, and it had a most desolate appearance: the gardens were but negligently attended to by a Spaniard, who provided the shipping with supplies of fruit and vegetables.

The missions formerly monopolized the whole trade in hides and tallow, for which the port of Diego was famous; over their fertile territories 24 ranged immense herds of cattle, tended by their



Indian disciples. On their overthrow, Yankee and English merchants established agents here; who, marrying into good Spanish families, secured these commodities in warehouses for shipping, when they arrived. At the port, large dilapidated barns, for the reception of hides, with tan-pits and tallow warehouses, still remain. The exports being discontinued—from the absence of their owners, who had left for the diggings—rats and stoats in formidable numbers filled the store-houses, feeding on the rotting hides.

Desirous to have a day's sport, I and a shipmate took our fowling-pieces at day-break, and penetrated the mountains. It was the roughest country I ever traversed: precipitous cliffs, deep ravines, wide clefts, and dense scrub, impeding our progress. We saw several wolves in the mountains: probably their lair had never been disturbed before; for I feel assured that the indolent Spaniards would not upon any consideration have gone on an expedition so fatiguing as ours, for so little purpose. We bagged between us, six 25 hares, seven rabbits, an eagle, and two or three birds of the partridge kind.

In this secluded and romantic spot, I could have settled very comfortably; but, stimulated by the accounts which we had heard here of California, an access of the gold-fever carried me away.

Our list of passengers was considerably augmented by the embarkation of some Yankee backwoodsmen; some of whom had travelled over the rocky mountains, others through Central America. One of those who had come the latter route was half crazy from drink and dissipation: he had not shaved or washed for two months, and had altogether a most repulsive appearance. The other over-landers looked equally miserable; their cadaverous features bearing marks of recent suffering, their long beard and hair clotted into knots, and their clothes and boots tattered and way-worn. The only articles they possessed were blankets, wallets, and fire-arms.

This addition to our company rather incommoded us; for to some who had agreed only for a deck passage, we could not refuse shelter in wet and squally weather. The subject of nationality was often injudiciously broached, and caused many violent political discussions. I noticed that the Yankees, even when, for the sake of peace and quietness, their pre-eminence had been admitted,

would continually assert the immeasurable inferiority of the 'Britishers' to their own free and enlightened countrymen.

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### CHAPTER III.

Arrival at San Francisco—Hopes and Fears—Scene in the Harbour—Desertion of the Crew—Landing—Town of Francisco on Sunday—State of Society—Aspects of the Place and People—Symptoms of the Gold Fever.—Sale of superfluous Clothing—An extempore Grog Shop and its Catastrophe—First Night in California.

ABOUT the beginning of September we entered the bay of San Francisco; above which the land rises high and bold. On entering the Golden Gate, as the entrance to the harbour is called, our anxiety was intense; for soon our golden dreams would either be realized or dissipated. We now began to moderate our eager expectations, and duly consider the dangers and hardships likely to be undergone; indeed, we almost regretted leaving for uncertainties a ship, which had at least provided for our necessities, 28 protected us from the inclemency of the weather, and afforded us companions.

A strong battery, called Fort Montgomery, which, from its elevated position, is capable of guarding the entrance, commands the harbour where the channel is about a mile across. Up a bight called Sausalito, used as the man-of-war station, were numerous American frigates; and far off to the right, lay merchant vessels innumerable. Almost in the centre of the harbour is the small island of Yerba Buena; and at the back was a range of lofty mountains, the peak of Monte Diabolo towering above them all. A forest of masts filled the harbour; and, though many of the vessels were apparently deserted, flags of every nation floated in the breeze, the American stars and stripes being predominant.

Our little vessel threading its way in, we dropped anchor on the lee of a Dutch ship, the Burgomaster Jansen. The first boat which boarded us came from a Sydney vessel, the doctor and mate of which were plying about the harbour as watermen; they came to offer us information

respecting the country. A custom-house officer came on board the same 29 evening, who levied a poll-tax of one dollar on each passenger; duly registering our names as citizens of California.

About midnight we were awakened by an attempt of four of the Malays to escape in the whale boat, which was prevented by the vigilance of the mate. Next morning, however, the gig was missing: it had conveyed some of them ashore, and we perceived it lying high and dry on the beach. The captain, who prided himself upon the awe in which the crew held him, went ashore, pulled by four of his men, saying that he should pay his respects to the authorities, and bring back the deserters in irons; but on his return to the beach he found the boat's crew gone, and was compelled to come on board in a waterman's boat, which he did in a towering passion. The following night the ship's boats were hauled on board; but the rest of the crew escaped by floating ashore on stray planks. The tide being impetuous, running six knots, some were upset, and drifted lifeless on the beach: the old Serang was among the number who perished through thirst for gold.

Our last evening on board was a thoughtful one. 30 Our brilliant anticipations had been sobered down by the description given us of the El Dorado; and the aspect of things damped, if it did not dismay us. But the time for exertion had arrived, and we all felt the necessity of unity. Knowing the mutability of some men's minds and the helplessness of many, it was with great misgivings that I listened to the various projects propounded: I resolved to decide on none, but wait the course of events.

The next day, Sunday, we landed in Francisco, at Miller's Point. Numerous tents and boxes, and quantities of baggage and merchandize, were strewed about the beach above water mark. Near the landing place was a locality, called in American phrase a 'point,' that is to say, a rendezvous for workmen; about three hundred of the lower orders were here assembled, waiting to be employed. Most of them had knives stuck in their belts, and their strange attire, unkempt hair, and unshorn visages, were anything but commendatory.

Far off to the right rose high hills. The town of Francisco is built on a succession of elevations; tents, canvass booths, and other rude temporary 31 houses were scattered over the heights, perched

wherever there was available space. The central and most densely populated part, termed the city, consisted of wooden frame-houses. In the plaza or square, and its vicinity, stupendous taverns, gambling-houses, and other extensive edifices, were situated. The rent paid for some of these houses is almost incredible: from sixty to eighty thousand dollars was the rent of some taverns—houses of timber, iron, zinc, or canvass. Lumber was selling at this time for five hundred dollars per thousand feet; it mostly came from China, Oregon, and the States: twenty millions of feet is said to be shipped yearly for the Californian market. Although it was Sunday, hammers sounded, and work of every description went on actively.

Skirting the beach was a vast collection of tents, called the “Happy Valley,”—since more truly designated the “Sickly Valley;”—where filth of every description, and stagnant pools, beset one at every stride. In these tents congregated the refuse of all nations, crowded together; eight people occupying what was only space for two. Blankets, fire-arms, and cooking utensils, were the only worldly property they possessed. Scenes of depravity, sickness, and wretchedness, shocked the moral sense, as much as filth and effluvia did the nerves; and such was the state of personal insecurity, that few ‘Citizens’ slept without fire-arms at hand.

The constant wearing of arms by such a disorderly set, amongst whom quarrels were frequent, caused many disputes to terminate disastrously; but the unsettled state of the country, and the many desperate characters prowling about, made it necessary to be armed for self-protection: the weaker party was only sheltered from oppression by a loaded revolver, as there was no assistance to be expected from others. Steel and lead were the only arguments available for redress, and bystanders looked on unconcernedly at acts of violence; the cause of the dispute, or the justice of the punishment inflicted, being seldom enquired into.

It would be difficult to describe my sensations after the first day's ramble in Francisco. I had witnessed so many startling sights, that had I not been well assured of their reality, I might have imagined them phantasies of the brain: buildings were springing up “as at the stroke of an enchanter's wand;” valuable merchandize was strewed about in every direction; men of every costume and colour—Down-Easter's with sharp-set faces, sallow Southerners, gaunt Western

Squatters, vivacious Frenchmen, sedate Germans, sturdy English Colonists, Californians and Chilians, Mexicans, Kanakas and Celestials, hurried too and fro, pursuing their various avocations; and business to an incalculable amount seemed to be transacted. Looking at the rude sign-boards inscribed in various languages, glancing at the chaos of articles exposed for sale, and listening to the various dialects spoken, the city seemed a complete Babel.

Gold was evidently the mainspring of all this activity. Tables, piled with gold, were seen under tents, whence issued melodious strains of music; and the most exaggerated statements were current respecting the auriferous regions. But amid scenes of profusion and extravagance, no sign of order or comfort was perceptible, nor did any one appear happy: wan, anxious countenances, and restless eager eyes, met you on every side.

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The aspect of personal neglect and discomfort, filth, rags, and squalor, combined with uneasiness, avidity, and recklessness of manner,—an all-absorbing selfishness, as if each man were striving against his fellow-man—were characteristics of the gold-fever, at once repulsive and pitiable; and, notwithstanding the gold I saw on every side, a feeling of despondency crept insensibly over me.

Having landed our baggage on the beach, finding we could not obtain safe stowage, and that it was not the custom of the country, nor indeed practicable, to retain a superfluity of clothing, four of us agreed to erect an awning of sheets, and dispose therein of our stock of wearing apparel to the best advantage to passers by. So constructing shelves and a counter of stray planks, we emptied our trunks of their contents, and exposed the articles to view. I realized by the sale of my personal effects seventy dollars. The beach around was covered with cast-off clothing; varnished French boots, satin and sild waistcoats, and similar luxurious but unfit articles of apparel, being discarded for others of more serviceable and durable materials. 35 Boxes and baggage were perched on the ledges of the cliff, as safe from being pillaged as if they had been guarded; severe and summary laws against felony deterring the most knavish from stealing.

One of my shipmates, having a few barrels of spirits, proposed retailing them, in conjunction with myself. Being unable to procure a tent for our temporary grog store, we run a few posts in the ground, nailing quilts around and above for covering. On the first night of sleeping under our shelter, my comrade, who had been drinking in company with some Mexicans during the day, fell asleep with a pipe in his mouth; and at midnight I was aroused by a suffocating smoke which filled the place, his clothes having caught fire. In trying to put out the flames, which had reached the quilts, the frame-work of our 'store' came down upon us; my comrade, completely inebriated, lay on the ground insensible of danger, so pulling him by the leg from underneath the burning canopy, I extinguished the fire. I then wandered about till daylight, inwardly resolving never to associate in an undertaking with a man given to habits of 36 intoxication. The morning was bitterly cold, and when I returned, my shipmate lay as I left him. The dew and cold had somewhat sobered him, however; and after sundry admonitions I left him. Thus passed my first night in California.

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#### **CHAPTER IV.**

Lodging-Houses in Francisco—A Night on the Floor—Taverns and Eating Houses—Feeding Time, and Table Manners—Gaming Houses and their Attractions—Bankers and Players—Fate of ruined Gamblers—Pistols the only Police—Barricades of Merchandize—State of the Roadways—Torrents of Mud, and Stepping Places of Beef—A Californian Curtius.

THE lodging-houses in Francisco are usually long barn-like tenements, but owing to a deficiency of sleeping places, sheds, stabling, and skittle grounds, were called into requisition. The one I sometimes resorted to was about sixty feet long by twenty in width; it had no windows, and the walls, roof, and floor, were formed of planks, through the seams of which the rain dripped through. Along the sides were two rows of 'bunks,' or wooden shelving, and at the end was some boarding, serving as a bar for liquors; here the proprietor slept. From about ten till twelve at night, men flocked in with their blankets round them—for no mattress or bedding was furnished by this establishment—and a dollar being paid, your sleeping place was pointed out to you.

If early, you had a chance of securing six feet of the top shelf; otherwise, you stretched yourself on the floor. The bunks were decidedly preferable; for, sometimes of a wet night, upwards of eighty people would be packed together: Yankees, Africans, Chinamen, and Chilians, all huddled together on the ground. As it was customary to sleep in one's clothes and boots, abominable odours arose, and creeping things abounded.

When coiled up in your blanket, the smoking, chewing, and (as a necessary consequence) random expectoration, often prevented repose. Towards morning the heat and effluvia became intolerable; on some occasions, of a wet night, I have been oppressed with a vomiting sensation, and crept out in a profuse perspiration to inhale fresh air; sometimes I found a greasy cap close under my nose, or awoke sucking a boot. Restless sleepers, or unpleasant dreamers were not desirable neighbours; for a kick in the ribs, or on the head, in such a case, was an unavoidable occurrence. Loaded pistols and other deadly weapons being numerous also, an accidental discharge would have lodged an ounce of lead in the body of those next. On fine nights, therefore, I always preferred the open air to such indiscriminate companionship.

But though the sleeping accommodation—if such a term may be used—was wretched in St. Francisco, there was no lack of places of refreshment.

There were eating-houses to suit the tastes and pockets of people of all varieties of means, and of every nation. The table d'hôte at the best taverns was about three dollars, at others a dollar; at the corners of the plaza, and principal streets, were stalls, where coffee, cakes, pies, &c. were vended to those unable to pay the costs of tavern fare. Some eating-houses resembled our English chop-houses; these were decidedly preferable: each person sat at a side table, ordering what he chose from a printed bill of fare; and if at all voracious, or choice in his selection of food, ten dollars were easily expended. The eating-houses are peculiarly Californian in character; they are long plank buildings in the shape of a booth, having two rows of tables, placed parallel to each other, extending the length of the room. The sides and ceiling are covered with calico, as a substitute for paper, having prints stuck over it, by way of decoration; the bar, for the sale of wines and spirits, is at the end of the room; the kitchen is underneath. The fare is of the most heterogeneous kind; dishes

of the most incongruous characters are placed on the table at the same time: boiled and roast meats, fresh and salt, potted meats, curries, stews, fish, rice, cheese, frijolis, and molasses, are served up on small dishes, and ranged indiscriminately on the table; there is a total absence of green vegetables.

At certain hours in the day, the beating of gongs and ringing of bells from all quarters, announce feeding time at the various refectories; at this signal a rush is made to the tables. It is not uncommon to see your neighbour coolly abstract a quid from his jaw, placing it for the time being in his waistcoat pocket, or hat, or sometimes beside his plate, even; then commences, on all sides, a fierce attack on the eatables, and the contents of the 41 dishes rapidly disappear. Lucky is the man who has a quick eye and a long arm; for every one helps himself indiscriminately, and attention is seldom paid to any request. It is perfectly immaterial the nature of the *fixing* (as a viand is called), whichever is nearest, commonly has the preference; and as they generally confine themselves to one dish, it is difficult to get that from their grasp. Molasses is a favourite *fixing*, and eaten with almost every thing. Some of the less refined neither use fork or spoon, the knife serving to convey to the mouth both liquids and solids, which is done with surprising velocity. The voracity with which they feed is equal to the rapidity of their movements; ten minutes being the usual time for dinner, frequently less. As it is customary to rise together from the table, this national characteristic of the Americans excites the emulation of foreigners; but is most vexatious to the slow German. Dinner being over, the table is replenished for a second party; whilst the greasy knives are wiped, preparatory to being replaced, it is not unusual to see one of the satiated picking his teeth with a fork. The quid is then resumed, 42 pipes are lighted, and volumes of smoke mingle with the steam of the approaching repast.

The best eating-houses in Francisco are those kept by Celestials, and conducted Chinese fashion; the dishes are mostly curries, hashes, and fricasees, served up in small dishes, and as they were exceedingly palatable, I was not curious enough to enquire as to the ingredients.

In almost every part of Francisco there are gaming houses; the principal ones being the El Dorado, Parker House, Denison's Exchange Verandah, Aguila D' Oro, the St. Charles, and Belle Union: these are in the immediate vicinity of the Plaza, but there are numberless others less notorious.



These 'hells' are chiefly spacious "frame-houses," imported from the States; the interior is hung with coloured calico, and paintings and mirrors decorate the walls: there is usually a bar at the farther-end. Square card tables extend at intervals along the sides of the room; there is no other furniture but chairs, which are occupied by players and spectators.

It is very exciting to enter these Pandemoniums: loud music resounds, amidst which is heard the clinking of money, and the place is redolent of the fumes of wines, spirits, and tobacco. These houses are the favourite lounge for those who seek shelter from the dust of summer, the mud of winter, or the ennui of idleness. Day and night these hells swarm with people, of all grades and nations; the heat and odours arising from the motley crowd, mingled with smoke and gas, render the temperature very oppressive; and foul atmosphere seriously affects the nerves and lungs of frequenters of the tables, as their sallow and harassed countenances testify.

Every device likely to beguile the stranger is resorted to, regardless of cost; gamblers being well aware that the force of example is apt to induce those who only entered as casual spectators to stake money. From the twanging of guitars and scraping of violins, to clashing of cymbals and banging of drums, musical sounds of all kinds attract the ear of the passer by: in the *Aguila D' Oro*, a band of Ethiopian serenaders beat their banjoes, rattled their 'bones,' and shouted their melodies. But the most successful decoy has been the introduction of women: in some gaming-houses fascinating belles, theatrically dressed, take their stand at roulette tables, purposely to allure men to play; and, there being a scarcity of the fair sex in this country, these syrens too often prove irresistible.

Rouge et noir, faro, roulette, and monté, are the general games. At each table, sit two bankers, vis-a-vis; the centre of the table is piled with doubloons, gold eagles, and dollars. The bankers play to each other, presenting two cards, upon either of which the player stakes his money; the result depending on the card next drawn from the pack. The game being simple, there is little opportunity for deception; but the bankers are generally successful. If the player continues, fortune may favour him for awhile; but, the resources of the bank, however heavy the stake, are generally adequate to the demand, though I have seen banks broken. While the players are eager and excited, the pale countenance of the banker maintains its serenity, not the movement of a muscle indicating what

is passing within. Very few know when to play, and have sufficient presence of mind to leave off. When successful, the infatuation of gambling chains them to the table, and when reverses occur, still hoping fortune will turn, some play on till they lose all they possess; then beggared and dejected, they rush out to seek anew the means of obtaining or terminating existence.

Everything is conducted in the most orderly manner; not a word is uttered; habitual players mostly winning and losing with apparent indifference. I have seen bags of gold dust lost in a few hours. Novices cannot always bear their losses with *sang froid*: distorted countenances, clenched teeth, compressed lips, and blood-shot eyes, betoken the state of their feelings; and suicide is a common occurrence. Adjoining one of the principal gaming houses, a 'Down-Easter' owned a hard-ware stall, vending pistols, bowie-knives, and other weapons; which, doubtless, furnished the desperate gamester with the means of ending his miserable career. On one occasion I saw a man who had lost heavily, fall dead on the floor; he was said to be a married man from the States. Almost all losers drown their regrets in drink; and to keep up the excitement of these infatuated men, the bankers generally treat the players with wines and spirits, as long as they continue to stake.

In some rooms, loaded revolvers garnish the table on each side of the banker; he generally, however, secretes a small one in his breast. On the slightest disturbance, the rigid countenance of the banker becomes agitated, and without enquiring into the cause of tumult, the ring of a pistol ball commonly suppresses confusion. At night, it is by no means safe for a winner, to return home; for outrages have been committed in the very heart of the town. I have seen a winner, at some tables, peremptorily called back; the banker insisting on his continuing the play.

When I first arrived in Francisco, the streets were piled with merchandize of ever description; high tiers of goods formed barricades before many houses, as warehouse room for stowage adequate to the shipping discharge could not be had; but the pathways abreast of the houses had been partially cleared of goods by a government proclamation. Fronting the harbour, was a large space of ground allotted for custom-house purposes; where cases, casks and bales, to the amount of thousands of pounds value, lay in bond, exposed to the weather. The duties being extortionately high, and these

exports mostly unfit for 47 consumption, the most costly productions, adapted only for a high state of civilization, perished when the rainy weather set in, for want of redemption.

In the roadways of the principal streets, the mud was in some places four feet deep; they were full of holes, and to form a footing, empty cases and casks were sunk in the slough; but it taxed the agility of the pedestrian in leaping from one to the other. Incredible as it may seem, I have found a foot-hold across streets and pathways on Mexican beef, bags of flour, and bales of other damaged goods, devoted to that purpose. The roads having been worn and loosened during the summer, continual rains from the hills made them a flood of mire; and at some crossings, the 'soundings' varied from two to five feet. In one street a boat floated down the torrent of mud, much to the amusement of the spectators; mules and carts frequently foundered, and were with great difficulty dragged out. It is reported that a man's hat having been seen floating above a notorious quagmire in Pacific Street, on raising it, the head of the wearer was seen underneath; when extricated from this 'Serbonian bog,' he begged that the horse which was underneath 48 him, might likewise be rescued, but his steed was too deep down to be got at. I cannot vouch for the veracity of this story; however, no Californian Curtius, voluntary or involuntary, closed this chasm At length, the impediments to traffic, and the injuries to the trading community, became so great, that the authorities were roused from their apathy, and caused chaperal and trunks of trees to be sunk in the most dangerous quagmires: some of the foot-ways were improved likewise; the side paths costing four dollars a foot to repair.

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## CHAPTER V.

Bound for the Diggings—Passengers and Accommodation on board the Diana Cutter—Rifle and Pistol Practice—Settlement of Benicia—New York of the Pacific—A Supper Party and Floating Store—Stockton—A Party of Gold Seekers—Escape of Malay boy—A Quarrel and its Settlement—A Canvass City—Lynch Law—British Colonists and Americans—Specimen of American Justice—An extempore Liquor Store.

I HAD arranged with the second mate of the Mazeppa to go to the 'Diggings,' as soon as the cargo was discharged; which duty now devolved on the mates and supercargo, all the crew having left the ship. On going on board to see for my companion, I found him and his fellow officers with their coats off, hard at work; but, as the vessel in which we were to start was ready to sail, there was no time to lose, and the second mate, therefore, at once prepared to leave the Mazeppa. On apprizing the captain of his intentions, the skipper seemed incredulous, and thought he was joking, until he stepped over the side of the ship.

We had taken our passage in the Diana, a cutter of only twelve tons; which was crowded with thirty deck passengers, consisting of English Colonists, Americans, Germans, Mexicans, and Chinese. Each passenger catered for himself; the provisions of my comrade and myself consisted of biscuits, ham, and brandy.

As we had no awning or other protection from the sun, we felt the heat exceedingly; and at night a heavy dew fell, producing extreme chilliness. In vain we sought room for stretching ourselves to rest, for space was not available; at last I squatted down across the legs of a German, which gave him great uneasiness, for he spluttered out "tousand tifels" "donder und blitzen," and kicked about with his cumbersome boots much to my discomfort. Seeking safer accommodation, I crawled over some sleepers to another quarter; the vessel was beating up against the wind, and at every tack, the mainboom swung round and aroused me with a heavy blow. 51 Again I shifted my place, and after much difficulty, settled to sleep for'ard on the chain cable; where I was bruised by the links of the chain, wetted by the spray, and felt cramped and cold. I thought of the luxury of a feather bed between four walls; and took care to secure sleeping room earlier another night.

The following morning we were surprised to find ourselves sailing up a narrow river, with a dense swamp of thule beds or high reeds, extending on each side for miles inland, which obscured the view and rendered firm landing impossible. Rifle and pistol shooting was the only amusement all day; and the crew of a boat, which met us at the bend of the river, hearing the firing, thought there was a sharp action going on. It was almost miraculous that no fatal accident occurred, as loaded guns and revolvers were strewed about the deck in all directions. One old man, a Mormon, with a

beard reaching to his waist, dealt destruction not only among the birds but the fish, which were in abundance, never missing his aim.

At the entrance of Sui-Soon Bay is the settlement of Benicia, an entrepôt between Francisco and the gold regions. It is well adapted for a port; the shelter and anchorage are both good, and natural wharfs extend a mile down the river side, where vessels of 500 tons can lay moored abreast of the shore. It is conjectured that, at a future day, Benicia will rank second to Francisco: as it is a matter of considerable importance to discharge goods near to where there is a market for them, and Benicia being more accessible from the provinces of the interior, shippers will naturally prefer chartering vessels to that port. The site is also well adapted for an extensive city; it has been surveyed and marked out into various lots and streets, and numerous buildings have been already erected. Benicia is also used as the naval and military depôt of Upper California; the barracks, magazines, and government store-house are situated on a high promontory, a short distance from the contemplated city.

The wind being foul, we dropped anchor at New York, which is situated on the opposite side, lower down the river. My companion and I got the loan of the boat, and rowed ashore with two others in quest of more provisions. The evening was very hazy, the thule beds ran out a considerable distance, consequently in seeking the entrance of the harbour we ran stem on amidst them. In vain we shouted out, to ascertain the bearings of the settlement, no reply reached us; and it was not without great difficulty we pushed off from the swamp.

After rowing some time to and fro, we at last came to the entrance of the harbour; a strong tide was setting out, and long and strenuously we pulled against the current, the oars bending almost double with the strain. A bonfire blazing in the distance indicated the haven, and rounding a point, the vast hulls of the wall-sided Yankee vessels loomed in the mist; these we passed, and grounding the boat on a mud bank, walked up to the bonfire. Around it were clustered sailors, hunters, settlers, and a Mexican woman, the sole female of the city, eating their supper. Our appearance excited some sensation, the victuals were hastily laid aside, and, with the national curiosity, they wanted to know the business of us 'strangers.' Two dead wolves and a deer, the produce of the day's sport, lay near

the group; the former made me start, for I was leaning against one of them unawares: before leaving California, however, I became more familiar with these ugly animals.

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Quitting the motley group, we walked up to examine the three wooden buildings, which composed the city of New York. A large store ship was moored close to the bank, and stepping across some planks, we went on board. The captain combined the store-keeper with the navigator; the old man had a long clay pipe in his mouth, and with a strong nasal accent told us that "he guessed he could sell wet and dry notions as cheap as any mortal in Californy:" he must have had an elastic conscience, for one-and-a-half or two dollars a pound were the prices of most of his commodities. He probably made several thousand pounds by retailing his cargo.

Soon after our return on board, the Diana weighed anchor; and that night I was fortunate enough to obtain sleeping room. The cold mist and exhalations arising from these thule marshes are considered very unwholesome; but we forgot our cramps and other annoyances when we reached Stockton.

Stockton, named after an American admiral of that name, may be considered the termination of the river San Joachim: the stream formerly 55 extended further, but rushes now choke its bed, impeding further navigation. The Embarcadero had a novel and striking appearance: the banks were fringed with trees, overhanging the water's edge; cutters, schooners, and other small craft, moored abreast of the shore, had their cables and hawsers attached to the trunks of the trees, while their masts and rigging were hidden in the foliage pendent over head. The basin is capable of holding a hundred small craft, and vessels of 150 tons may lay alongside the shore.

Stockton is situate on a plain, and as a central point, it is well adapted to supply the placers of the interior; but it is considered unhealthy, from the swamps surrounding it, which are flooded in the winter time. When we arrived, tents, wooden frame buildings, and calico houses, were being rapidly erected; along the bank were piled heaps of merchandize, in chests and casks, destined for the diggings; while mules and drays, with a concourse of bustling people, were hurrying to and fro;

clouds of dust at times obscured the view, and cracking of whips and shouting were heard on every side.

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Our party consisted of the second mate and two of the passengers of the Mazeppa, two Celestials, and a Malay boy. The mate possessed great influence over the two Chinese, as he spoke the Malay language; and he had paternal controul over the boy, whom he had adopted from a child. The Malay boy had secreted himself on board the Diana without our knowledge, and, as we were not disposed to defray his expences, he having no money, was advised to escape as he best could, without observation: advice we should not liked to have followed ourselves, as the laws are extremely stringent; but, knowing the young urchin's astuteness, we had no very great apprehensions respecting him.

We had erected our tent on the shore, and having arranged our baggage, were sitting down to supper, speculating upon his fate, when a splashing in the water and a gurgling sound reached our ears; peering through the darkness, we perceived an object moving in the water, and exclamations of 'Saib! Saib!' confirmed our supposition that it was the Malay boy. Presently Mahomet, dripping like a drowned rat, shivering with cold 57 and fright, rushed up the bank and threw himself down before the fire, where for some moments he glared around; listening attentively as if expecting pursuit. He told us that, after our departure he hid himself, waiting an opportunity to escape; but having been observed, and seized in the attempt, he was laid hold of by the neck and arm and taken ashore; his oily skin enabled him to slip like an eel from the grasp of his captor, and he plunged into the water, and swam across the harbour to us.

Our little party was not without the elements of discord, and considering the difference of dispositions it would have been marvellous if harmony had prevailed. After supper we retired into the tent, where we tapped the brandy cask; and as liquor excites the passions and lets loose the tongue, disputes and differences arose as to our future course. During our tumultuous consultation, two or three rough visages had been scanning the interior of our abode, much to the alarm of Mahomet, who buried himself under a heap of blankets. The cause of the intrusion was soon

explained: we had unceremoniously appropriated a boat spar for the roof pole of our tent; and the 58 claimants as unceremoniously pulled it down, so that the tent fell in on the top of us all. This occurrence interrupted our squabbles; which we were not sorry for, having need of rest and sleep.

In the morning, I and the mate (whom I shall call Mac) went into the town to enquire about the diggings. Stockton has a more primitive appearance than Francisco: there were comparatively few wood buildings, the stores and taverns being mostly of canvass nailed on to frame work; and the want of stowage was very evident in the quantity of goods everywhere exposed. The greatest bustle and activity prevailed, however; a large amount of business seemed to be transacted, and gambling was carried on more extensively, and money more recklessly squandered, than I had hitherto seen. Provisions and services of all kinds were very dear. Mac, who abhorred a long beard, as he did every thing like Yankeeism, and not having a razor, went into a barber's tent to get shaved; for which service, the barber had the audacity to charge four shillings; Mac reluctantly gave the dollar to the negro barber, vowing that in future he would shave 59 self with an iron hoop sooner than be subject to such an imposition.

About this time there was a great deal of excitement respecting the administration of the laws. It had happened that an emancipist from Van Dieman's Land, who had not been cured of his evil practices, had been tempted to steal a few articles of little value from a tent; a meeting was instantly convened, the case was summarily adjudicated, and the punishment of death was decreed. Appeals were made for mercy, but not even a respite could be obtained for the culprit, who expiated his offence with his life, twelve hours after it was committed; although a small felony is usually punished by the loss of an ear. I can only attribute this harsh judgment to the enmity which the lower class of Americans have to the British settlers of New Holland; those arriving from Sydney and other ports, alike incur the odium of convictism, which naturally engenders a feeling of mutual dislike. The British Colonists invariably wore blue woollen shirts, the Americans red ones; the colours thus became a badge of party, and each distrusted and avoided communication with the other.



A fresh cause of commotion was the arrest and trial of a young man of good family from the States, who had wilfully shot a German dead with a revolver. A dispute as to the merits of their respective countries had arisen between them, and the German having passed certain severe strictures upon America, was pitched out of the tent; he returned to retaliate, when a revolver was pointed at him, and on his advancing, a bullet pierced his abdomen.

The place allotted for the dispensation of justice, was the hulk of a superannuated brig; the bulwarks had been raised, and an awning of canvass fore and aft served for a roof; around the after part, by the taffrail, sat the jurors, wearing beards of long growth, roughly attired, and armed with bowie knives. They were seated in the most uneasy postures, squirting pools of tobacco juice, and twisting their legs about in contorted attitudes; some actually turning their backs to the court. The Alcalde and his lawyer were seated at a table in the centre, and the proceedings were opened by the state counsel; who was apparently a gentleman, and stated the case, calling witnesses 61 who clearly proved the prisoner's guilt. The lawyer for the defence was a character diametrically opposite, and from his peculiarities what would be termed a 'popular man:' one who well understood knew the national weaknesses of the Americans, and how to turn them to account. Without attempting to disprove the evidence, he skilfully pandered to the passions of his audience; representing his client as a martyr, who endangered his life in defending the reputation of the republic. Such flowers of rhetoric told effectively; the jury, if they had not made up their minds before-hand, were primed with excuses for perverting justice, and, as was expected, returned a verdict of 'not guilty.' Indeed such was the violence outside, that it was rather dangerous to express an opinion on the subject, adverse to the culprit; I was therefore not surprised at the jury being afraid to condemn him.

Two of our party having come to the determination of retailing brandy, of which they had a cask, we found on our return, a large board suspended over the entrance of the tent, having written on it in large chalk letters "REAL COGNAC STORE;" 62 the cask had a tap in it, a few glasses were arranged on a bench, with a box of clay pipes and some plugs of tobacco, which constituted all their stock in trade. One of them had made himself appear a thorough Yankee in dress and manner; the other sat on the ground in a melancholy mood at our departure, as if anticipating future misfortunes;

for he distrusted his colleague, but could not live without some stronger nature to lean upon. It was with reluctance that we bid the disconsolate man adieu, wishing him success; but with many secret forebodings as to his share in the partnership, knowing the character of his associate.

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## CHAPTER VI.

Starting for the Diggings—Company of Adventurers—Scenery—Camping for the Night—Overlanders from America—A Sandy Desert—Sufferings from Thirst—Onwards!—Famishing Men and Mules—A Brandy Drinker—Despair of deserted Companions—A Night of Horrors—First Sight of Verdure—Rush to the River—Inhuman Selfishness of Gold Hunters—Picturesque Country—Antelopes and Elks pursued by Wolves—The Sierra Nevada—A Mountainous Country—A Tumulus—The Gold Region in Sight—Curiosity of the Gold Diggers.

BUCKLING our traps upon our backs, Mac and I went in search of a company of adventurers bound for the mines; we soon joined a party of twenty, accompanied by two guides, having charge of five pack mules loaded with provisions for the store-keepers at some remote diggings. Fastening our 64 blankets on the mules, each of us carried on our backs a week's provision; our guns were also strapped on behind, but pistols and bowie knives were more conveniently worn in the belt.

The company were composed mostly of Americans of different grades, two Chilians, a Frenchman, two Germans, and two Cornish miners. Our followers, the two Chinese and the Malay boy, stuck pertinaciously to us; one of them, the cook, we persuaded to return, which he very reluctantly did; the other two persisting in following us, we consented, thinking they might be useful. Mahomet, the Malay boy, carried, strapped to his back, a brass bowl for gold-washing: an utensil somewhat similar to the barber's basin that Don Quixote mistook for Mambrino's helmet, it consequently bore that facetious appellation.

It was three in the day when we started; our track lay through an undulating country of park-like land, majestic and umbrageous trees being scattered in clumps about the plain; the principal trees were oak, sycamore, and the Californian cypress (a red wood). The herbage looked parched, and

cracked like glass under foot. In the distance 65 to the right, rose the Sierra Nevada, and other ranges of 'golden' mountains, seeming as if they touched the clouds.

At seven in the evening we halted. We had not seen a single party during the day; but here met a band of fifty American over-landers, who had just arrived at Stockton. Camping in a clump of trees by ourselves, we quickly kindled several fires, one to each mess; and, heartily glad to relieve our backs, we unstrapped our burdens, directing the Chinaman to prepare supper. Mac and I went in search of water, and found a water-hole about two feet in diameter, which had been nearly exhausted by prior visitants; but as we had a desert before us, we thought it advisable to secure what water we could before leaving the prairie.

When we returned to camp, we found supper ready. Mahomet had, by stratagem and agility, captured a small animal resembling an opossum or a squirrel, which was grilling on the fire. The Malay boy prided himself on his feat, saying "Very good, Saib! my country dish;" the Chinaman who superintended the cooking, was evidently well-acquainted with the animal, and equally pleased. 66 Mac and I, far from satisfied with its appearance, examined its skin, without being able to make out what it was; and in vain questioned the Chinese; "All same cat," was his answer. We knew his countrymen were by no means scrupulous in their eating; but our stomachs were two empty to be fastidious: whatever it was, we made a delicious repast.

After supper we visited our overland neighbours by moon-light; they were sadly emaciated and way-worn, with haggard eyes, long matted hair, and beards of two months' growth; their forms seemed to have shrunk, for their clothes hung loose on their attenuated frames, like rags on scare-crows. Most of them carried rifles; their provisions were transported in two high spring waggons, drawn by bullocks. They were the remnant of a party of settlers from the backwoods of Illinois, and had come the Gila route. The difficulties they had encountered were indescribable; ascending and descending mountains, and crossing rivers, dogged by Indians and wild beasts. Many had died on the way, and the latter part of the track, they said, resembled the route of a retreating army; the road 67 was strewn with abandoned goods and broken-down waggons, funereal mounds were raised by the way-side, while carcasses of bullocks, and skeletons of men, bleached in the sun. Arriving in a

country like California, devoid of comforts and hospitality, their broken constitutions and exhausted frames were scarcely able to endure the hardships in the gold diggings, for which object they had made such sacrifices.

I lay down to rest before the blazing logs, the over-landers' narrative recurring in my slumbers. Awoke by the harsh voice of the muleteers, I arose at day-break, to commence a 'journado.' Heating some coffee and lighting our pipes, we started to our feet; the ground was saturated with dew, and the mist clearing away, the sun arose in all its splendour, the muleteers prophesying a hot day.

Before leaving the woodland we scared several dusky brown animals the size of a lurcher—wolves, or cayotas—in the chaparral, or bush; but they stealthily avoided us. About ten we entered on the plain: as far as the eye could reach we saw sandhills without a symptom of vegetation; the heat had opened cracks and fissures in the earth, which emitted a fiery heat; and pyramids of dust arose at intervals, borne with velocity through the air: sometimes appearing in the shape of tall columns, sixty feet in perpendicular height, moving majestically over the plain. Those who have not walked on sand ankle deep cannot imagine how wearisome it is. At noon the heat of the blazing sun was literally scorching, the thermometer being at least 120°: the parching effect of a Californian sun is most debilitating; the dazzling glare of the sand irritated and inflamed the eyes, and clouds of dust enveloped us, followed by hot winds so arid and suffocating that the very inside seemed to be dried up, and the pores of the skin closed, producing heat of blood and excessive thirst.

Most of the party had water kegs and bottles, which, as joint property, they carried alternately: the Muleteers had skins of water for themselves and animals; Mac and I luckily had each an Indian-rubber bag, which contained a gallon of water, sparing us much suffering and no little peril; we drank from them very moderately, however, being uncertain when they would be again replenished.

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We came to no water that day, but were told that we should find some the next morning. At dusk we squatted down in the sand, covered with dust; being without wood we could not light a fire.

For the first time for months, I denied myself a pipe, lest it should increase my thirst; taking a slight draught of water, being too exhausted to eat, I fell asleep, oppressed with fatigue; but was continually awoken by the howling of wolves, which hovered around. I was aroused at break of day by Mac belabouring me; and at first felt glad, but soon recoiled at the prospect of such another day's journey; the day being as hot as the preceding one.

We hastened onward, but the water-hole on which we relied was dried up; in vain the earth around was scooped out, it yielded nothing: never shall I forget the consternation and dejection pictured on men's countenances as we gazed at one another. During the night, in expectation of speedy replenishment the water vessels of some had been emptied; I thought of the parable of the foolish virgins, as I looked on the flushed faces and glazing eyes of the unfortunates. Their case was truly pitiable: they at least expected commiseration, but the harsh summons of the muleteer cut short any considerations of humane sympathy. "Onwards, men! onwards! Forty miles off is the Stanislaus! Each "man for himself, I say: I've darned little to "spare."

Onwards we went. Fain would I have swallowed at a draught the small remainder of our supply of water, my vitals seemed on fire; but the Malay boy's life and my own depended on it. Overpowered with heat, exhausted by exertion, burnt up with thirst, those without water to moisten their parched lips and throat could with difficulty keep pace with us. By degrees they divested themselves of their burdens and their clothes, which they left strewn on the plain; each mile they became more enfeebled; in vain they beseeched us to halt: our lives were at stake. Two of them actually licked the bodies of the mules for the sake of the animal exudations, to relieve their thirst; but a thick coating of dust prevented their deriving any beneficial effects. One man in his desperation seized hold of the water-skin hanging to the mule. "Avast there, stranger!" cried the muleteer, and a loaded pistol intimidated the sufferer. The poor mules with hanging ears and glazed eyes, snorted with agony and dropped continually from exhaustion; a sharp thrust with the goad, however, roused the animal to stagger on. Young Mahomet behaved with uncommon fortitude; hobbling between me and Mac, the poor boy feverishly lisped out for water, and piteously besought us not to leave him to the wolves. One of the sufferers, evidently of a drinking propensity, possessed a flask of brandy, but had poorly provided himself with water; the brandy which he drank as a substitute, instead of

alleviating his thirst had produced feverishness; in this extremity, with haggard looks, he came to each of us successively, offering his brandy for a gill of water; when he saw his proffered flask rejected, he learned, perhaps for the first time in his life, the superiority of the necessaries over the luxuries of life.

In the afternoon, those without water, who had with difficulty kept pace with us during the day, having become almost delirious from imbibing brandy, finding that they could not proceed further, or excite our compassion, determined, if left behind, to keep together; four of them did so. Never 72 shall I forget their imploring looks of despair, and the imprecations following our departure. This desertion appears cruel, but our hearts were hardened: self-preservation, that most imperative of nature's instincts, prevailed over all other feelings. Had we stayed we could have rendered them but temporary service, and our own lives depended on our speed. The unfortunate men in all probability soon became insensible, and fell a prey to wolves or Indians: both equally on the alert for helpless stragglers.

The prospect of speedy relief made us almost disregard our sufferings, and walking fast, we halted at dark about twenty miles from the river. No wood was to be had, so we camped without a fire; chewing tobacco for the moisture it excited was resorted to by some; and the majority having finished their water at supper, the probability of an attack being made on those who had any left, was hinted at by the muleteers. We were too fatigued to watch, but to guard against an attack we slept together rolled up in our blankets, with pistol in hand and the water bags attached to us. During the night vigils the wolves again visited us; but the imploring 73 cries, irritated exclamations, and angry discontent of those without water, were far more distressing than the howling of wild beasts. As we could find little repose, some of us started before day break; those who remained behind proposing to follow us at leisure.

Walking at a terrific pace we soon sighted the woodland. Oh! how refreshing to the eye is the sight of verdure after being nearly blinded by the glare and heat of glittering sand. As we neared the Oasis even the very mules, though their eyes were bandaged, seemed conscious of its vicinity, and snuffed the breeze impatiently; one of them, an old traveller on the road, pricking up his ears

neighed loudly, with a sound like the flourish of a trumpet. Revivified by the sight of verdure we pressed onward, and soon entered the cooling shade; the river presently appeared in sight. The mules were disencumbered, and throwing down our burthens, we ran to the banks, and without doffing our clothes, eagerly rushed into the cooling stream, mules and men indiscriminately up to the neck. Never in my life had I experienced any thing more refreshing than this bath: the dust seemed to have 74 penetrated our vitals, every pore of our skins was choked. The river was about a quarter of a mile in width, with a shelving bank, the utmost depth about eight feet; the water was perfectly clear to the bottom, and salmon leaped about in every direction. The sun's rays struck fiercely down, but shady trees protected us from its heat and shed their refreshing influence around. When we had sufficiently cooled ourselves, we took off our clothes and laid them on the rocks, to be washed by the action of the current.

Having refreshed ourselves, it would have been humane to have hastened to the relief of our deserted companions; but no such charitable feelings prevail amongst gold hunters: all pity and sympathy was deadened; those who had remained behind were given up for lost, and onwards we went.

Our route now lay through a most picturesque country: huge masses of rock, lava and other volcanic products, were strewed about the plain, interspersed with slate and black red rock; scattered trees, sturdy oaks and lofty pines appeared at intervals. A herd of antelopes and elks, pursued by two wolves, came almost within rifle shot; these 75 graceful animals seemed in the greatest agitation, leaping from rock to rock on the ridges of the hills, tossing their long antlers and bounding swiftly backwards and forwards to escape from their pursuers; to whose fangs they would probably fall a prey, owing to their extreme trepidation. Towards dark we imagined we saw a drove of mustangs, or wild horses; but they were a great way off.

In the evening we camped at the base of the first range of the Sierra Nevada, whose snow-crowned summits were visible. Wood and water now abounded, so making a blazing fire, we sat down to supper with excellent appetites. The mules which were tethered in the long grass, were recovering from the fatigues of the journey over the plain. The tethers used in this country are made of

horsehair; they are very strong, and are used because cayotas will gnaw to pieces hempen rope, but will not touch horsehair.

The following day we crossed a narrow river; and here commenced the toilsome ascent of mountains only accessible to mules and pedestrians: range after range successively appeared to view. These mountains were mostly scattered over with 76 oaks, pines, poplars, chesnuts, laurels, arbutus plantanus, and occidentalis. The soil was of various hues, but mostly of a deep red; the rocky portions very difficult to ascend. Cataracts, 'arroyos,' and deep ravines varied the scenery; in some places pyramids of rock piled together, and 'gulches' of unfathomable depth, that made one dizzy to look down, showed that some great convulsion of nature had occurred.

At night we camped in a beautiful valley, and in the morning we found at its extremity a curious tumulus of earth and stones, which had evidently been raised years before the discovery of diggings; its artistic arrangement and the work bestowed on it showed it to have been the sepulchre of no ordinary mortal: the usages of the Indians precluded the possibility of its being of aboriginal construction. Various conjectures were hazarded upon the subject: some said it was the work of the Jesuits, others that it had been raised by early Spanish discoverers; to decide the question it was proposed to open it, and the Germans were most eager for a scientific investigation; but the guides scoffed at so fruitless an undertaking, saying that we should 77 have digging enough ere long without sextonizing. We continued our route, the appearance of the country being still the same as the day before; the climbing was excessively tiring and destructive to boots and shoes. In the evening we halted on the summit of a mountain, whose descent we thought advisable to undertake by day-break the following morning. We hoped to reach our destination next day, and wearied with hopes and conjectures, we lay down to rest. In the morning we rose early, and at eleven in the day, from the summit of a lofty peak, we beheld the gold country, the river, and surrounding tents. The 'digging' was in a deep valley having an abrupt mountain acclivity eight hundred feet high on one side, and on the other a plain bounded by mountains.

As we entered the camp, crowds left their work to ask questions and ascertain what provisions the mules conveyed; but we were not disposed to be communicative, and retired to a sequestered



spot to sleep. We all felt sickly during the latter part of the 'journada;' the air on the mountain had been extremely keen, especially at night; the perpetual snow-capped crest of the Sierra Nevada 78 seeming but a short distance, and we felt the sudden transition from heat to cold. Those accustomed to walk on English high roads can have no idea of the harrassing fatigue of traversing sandy plains, and ascending steep and jagged mountains, keeping pace with a mule's jog trot.

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## CHAPTER VII.

The Gold-diggers—A Bush-hut—Implements and Mode of Working—Labour and Product of Gold-digging—Law of might—Barbarous Fight—Yankee Diggers and Speculators—Camps of Different Nations—American Aggression—Picturesque Location—Rainy Season and its Effects—Wading a River—Sickness and Inhumanity—A Dainty Supper—Waking from Golden Dreams—A German Sangrado—A Plague-stricken Settlement—Gambling and Dissipation—Despair of the Dying—Effects of Bleeding.

On the evening of our arrival we walked along the banks of the river for two miles; on each side were diggers, working at distances apart or congregated together, according to the richness of deposit. Owing to the absence of the precious mineral, or other causes, the distances apart were sometimes very considerable: about twenty feet is the space 80 generally allowed to a washing machine. The majority of diggers excavated close to the bank; others partially diverted its course to get at the river's bed, which was considered the richest soil. At a bend of the river a company of eighty were digging a fresh channel to turn its course: on the sides of the mountains, in 'gulches' formed by torrents, and water courses, men were at work likewise. The generality of diggers seldom go further down than four feet: indeed a white rock usually lays about the depth of two feet under the soil; this rock is difficult to penetrate nor does it remunerate the labour. Gold is rarely found on the surface of the earth; being weighty it sinks downwards through the loose earth and settles on the rock.

This settlement was situate at the foot of the mountains, and consisted of numerous tents owned by the diggers, and a few large tents called stores, where dry and wet goods were sold. The private tents usually accommodated six men, others contained twelve; but all were crowded. After looking at the various diggings, (which in mining phraseology is called 'prospecting'), we fixed upon what we thought to be a profitable locality for 81 future operations. Accordingly, ascending an elevation overlooking it, the Chinese carpenter and ourselves speedily felled some young saplings, and driving two strong posts in the ground we fixed a long spar longitudinally; on this spar rested the saplings and branches in an inclined position; then placing turf at the bottom, our bush-hut was finished that night. The following morning we went to a store, and opened an account for provisions and the needful implements; the following were the items of our bill.

A Rocker 30 dollars Space, Shovel, Pick-axe, and two Tin Pans 18 " 12lb. of Biscuit, 12lb. of Salt Pork and Beef, 4lb. of Frijoli, and 6lb. of Flour 50" A Frying-pan, Sauce-pan, and two Tin Mugs 12"  
Thus our first Stock in Business cost us 110 dollars=£22 sterling

Commencing within a few feet of the water's edge I handled a pick and spade, shovelling out the earth to Mac, whose shoulders were best able to carry a burden; he delivered the soil to the Celestial, who stood in the water shaking to and fro the rocker; he then handed the auriferous sediment to the inspection of the sharp-eyed Malay boy, who washed it in 'Mambrino's helmet' till nothing but pure gold dust remained.

The rocker in shape and size resembles a child's cradle; about six inches from the top is a drawer, the bottom of which is made of tin or iron, drilled with holes like a cullender; into this drawer the earth is thrown, water being plentifully applied to it, so as to loosen the substance. By shaking the cradle backwards and forwards the earth becomes slimy, and sinks through on to a tray below, placed in a slanting direction with a ledge at the end; by constant rocking, the particles of earth are held in solution by the water and wash out into the river, while the mineral, from its superior specific gravity, sinks on to the tray, where the ledge arrests it. The upper drawer containing the large stones and fragments of rock being removed, the under tray is then taken out, and the results of the washing are seen near to the ledge, where minute particles of gold dust, grit, and some grains

of black sand are usually observable. The gold and refuse mixed with it are then put into a baking tin and reworked carefully; the black sand being usually 83 abstracted with a magnet, or blown off sheets of paper by the breath; some who work on a larger scale use a more economical but expensive apparatus of quicksilver; which, by the force of attraction, separates the refuse particles without the slightest loss of the precious metal.

The arduous labour very sensibly affected our limbs for the first few days; but when we became more accustomed to our tools, it wore off. Unremitting labour from sun-rise till sun-set was necessary; our very existence depending on the day's produce. Indeed, but for the excitement and the hope of great gain, gold-digging might be pronounced the severest, and most monotonous of all labour. We changed our digging occasionally, but we generally obtained sufficient gold-dust to procure us the necessaries of life. Twenty-five dollars' worth was the most we ever secured in a day, and that only on one occasion; from fifteen to eighteen dollars seemed to be the usual average of daily findings, not only with us, but most others; and our station seemed to be considered by old hands as prolific as any other.

At the 'placers,' a violent jealousy pervades 84 most of the diggers: one morning Mac and I made an early exploration, 'prospecting' for a likely spot, and pitched upon one at a distance from a rocker; in the midst of our operations, three Americans came down, and coolly commenced measuring off the ground in our vicinity. The laws of the placers with respect to land occupation are very undefined, but in the present instance the calculations of the intruders were incomprehensible to us; they were very indifferent about giving an explanation, merely saying that we were within their limits, and they "guessed we had better remove." As it would have been a case of contest vi-et-armis, we beat a retreat.

Lower down the river a great disturbance had occurred: a company of eighty had been latterly occupied in digging a fresh channel to get at the old bed of the river, which they conjectured contained the deposit of centuries; having dammed one end, they diverted its course into the new channel, causing an overflow of the banks, and flooding the diggings of others. Indemnification was asked, but rejected; the inundated diggers, therefore, commenced digging in the old river-bed,

exclusively appropriated for those 85 who belonged to the company; when a murderous attempt to eject them ensued; knives and picks, rifles and pistols, were freely used. The company being strongest, were triumphant; though not before deadly wounds had been inflicted on both sides.

I viewed the barbarous encounter from an eminence; at its termination, when I visited the field of battle, I was horror-struck at the sanguinary atrocities which had been committed: some men lay with their entrails hanging out, others had their skulls smashed with the pickaxe, and bodies lopt with the axe; while a few lay breathing their last, seemingly unscathed, but shot to death with bullets.

Soon after our arrival we shifted our location; the wind had changed, wafting with the breeze the effluvia of some dead bullocks, which lay putrifying in a hollow a few hundred yards from us. We thought of removing the bodies, but the stench was overpowering, and we dreaded catching typhus. Legions of wolves hovered around the spot by moonlight, attracted by the carrion carcasses, but they seemed disinclined to make a repast off them. 86 Ascending another eminence, we camped in a clump of trees, rearing a pretty sylvan arbour; and after supper, wearied with a hard day's work, Mac and I, as usual, smoked our pipes together and discussed our present and future prospects. We never permitted the blacks at these conferences; they lay rolled up in their blankets, stretched before the blazing logs.

The night air was mild, and all around was hushed in silence, when the quick ear of the Malay heard approaching footsteps; the moon giving a ray of light, we were enabled to perceive some men coming towards us, who had just returned from a day's sport and were fully armed; two of them being the men who had accused us of trespassing. The presence of our black confederates they made a source of complaint: evidently imagining them to be in a state of slavery or vassalage to us, who pocketed the fruit of their labour. We assured the men that we exercised no compulsion over the blacks, who might leave us at pleasure; and, notwithstanding they had previously declared that coloured men were not privileged to work in a country intended only for American 87 citizens, some of them were inconsistent enough to ask the Celestial and Malay to work for them for pay; but nothing could shake their allegiance to us.

Some time afterwards, this feeling against the coloured races rose to a pitch of exasperation: at several diggings capitalists had hired numbers of Chinese, Cooleys, and Kanakas, to work for them; and this system of monopoly was even carried on by Americans of property and position, who employed Delaware and other Indians in their pay, to work the creeks far inland. This gang-system was very obnoxious to the Californians, and several parties of that description were abolished; the obligations and agreements entered into being cancelled and annulled by the fiat of the vox populi.

On the bars of various rivers there were several large bodies of people of separate nations. At the Chinese camp, called "Angel camp" were numerous Celestials; while at the Calaveras and other parts of the Monkelume, there were numerous bands of Sonorians, Chilians, and Kanakas, working on their own account. The mines becoming more thickly populated by Americans, they, relying on their numerical strength, commenced acts of hostility and aggression on any 'placer' inhabited by coloured people, if it were worth appropriating or excited their cupidity: ejections constantly occurred, and driven from the placers, thousands left the country; while others penetrated farther into the hill ranges. These conflicts were often serious in their results; retaliations were made, and where might was right, retributions upon unoffending individuals often took place, which were nigh producing a war of race against race.

We were encamped in a picturesque spot: branches of trees overhung our habitation; at the back was a beautiful park-like land studded with trees; in the distance rose mountains of various hues, extending chain after chain as far as the eye could reach, and towering higher and higher till they seemed to touch the heavens. A vast gloomy forest lay to the left, to the right was the scrub, and in front within a hundred paces flowed the glittering river over its rocky bed, from which rose abruptly a steep mountain covered with red fern and trees. The dews in California are so heavy that our blankets would be saturated by morning; the day heat was also excessive, against which the cooling river was our usual remedy.

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In California the year is divided into a wet and dry season; the wet season is from November to March, during which period foggy weather and chilly south-west winds prevail; while arid

north-east winds blow in the summer, or dry season. We had hitherto been subject to intense heat, sufficient to scorch us up; the sight of every thing parched affecting the senses almost to giddiness. Now we experienced the reverse, about three weeks after our arrival rainy weather set in quite unexpectedly; we had made no provision for it, our hut was ill adapted for bad weather and the rain pouring through or frail habitation perfectly deluged us. Our first consideration, therefore, was to make it more tenantable, which we partially effected by fastening blankets around the interior; but nothing could withstand the violence of the weather: the rain pouring down continually, and with irresistible force, our temporary protection soon gave way; torrents of rain poured incessantly. Vegetation seemed to shoot out suddenly, verdure appearing almost instantaneously on every side. At mid-day it was a July heat, of an evening and morning the chill of January.

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Notwithstanding the weather, however, we worked as usual; but, though in the dry season we had not minded, when in a profuse perspiration and oppressed with heat, taking a turn in the water, now that the river was filling, none liked standing long up to the waist in snow-water from the mountains. When we thought of former exposures and contemplated our present position, the terrors of ague, rheumatism, fever, dysentery, and other accompaniments of a Californian winter occurred to our minds.

On returning to our hut one evening, we found it almost demolished by wind and rain; setting to work we reconstructed it; but our clothes were all of them wet through, the dripping of the roof being almost as bad as exposure to the weather. Scraping out the leaves which had formerly been our bed, but were now rotten and wet, we lighted a fire at the entrance; and never did ship-wrecked sailors wish for a clear sky more earnestly than we did. Taking a wistful survey of the firmament, Mac, whose opinion on such a subject was infallible, declared the clouds to purport much rain, or as he termed it 'foul weather;' so enveloping ourselves in our blankets, prepared for the worst, we got to sleep as we best could. Our black adherents suffered extremely from the wet and cold, as the shivering duets performed by their chattering teeth plainly told us. The next day we went again to work; but symptoms of sickness, which the Celestial was the first to feel, made us anxious to give over. We exhausted our ingenuity in contrivances to make our 'whirly' withstand the elements, as

our hut, from its penetrable nature, resembled a shower bath; but the country around was becoming so deluged, that an ark would have been the fittest abode for the season.

The river was rapidly flooding, and as the store was a mile down on the opposite side of the river, and our provisions were becoming low, we thought it advisable to obtain a small stock in case of emergency. Mahomet and myself volunteered to fetch some; after a careful and circuitous route through bush and swamp, we arrived at what was the fording; just below was the river-bend, where the cutting had been made to divert its course: this undertaking, attended with so much labour and afterwards cemented with bloodshed, had been rendered abortive for want of due precautions. 92 The mountain torrents, swelling with unexpected force, had carried away the embankments; and when we came to the old ford and saw the agitated waters, perplexity seized us both. Mahomet looked sagaciously at the current, then picking a few pebbles from the bank, sat himself down and pitched them successively into different portions of the river, complacently watching the results: this, he told me, was his country fashion of finding out the depth of water, as by the bubble produced by the falling stones, the depth of the water was ascertained. We finally selected what we thought a fordable spot lower down; a Mexican on the other side seeing our indecision, stopped short as he saw us enter the river, with which he was well acquainted, and as we waded he shouted 'Si' (meaning yes) to indicate a safe course; and when we entered on unsafe fording, he warned us of our error by violent gestures and stentorian shouts.

Having effected the crossing, we went to our customary store, kept by a knowing 'Down-east' youth, whom we found seated astride on the top of a sugar cask chewing lustily at a plug of tobacco; he was a good-natured fellow, for when 93 he saw the plight we were in (both of us being wet up to the waist, and Mahomet rueful and shivering) he pulled from his pocket a brandy bottle and handed it to us to drink. I never perceived in his transactions with us that hard bargain-making spirit common with many of his countrymen. Having made the necessary purchases, we re-crossed the river and reached our hut. The rain poured in a perfect deluge: never did mortals more anxiously survey the elements and pray for fine weather than we did.

The following morning, Mahomet awoke with spasms, the Celestial was worse also; and having no spirits to administer to the boy, I went to the nearest tent where they had brandy, but, to use their own words “Christian men wanted liquor, “and they would be darned if they would give “any to black cattle.” I fetched some from the store which relieved him. Unmindful of the weather, Mac and I sallied out to our excavation; we had to do double work, but fortune smiled on us, and we obtained a full ounce of gold.

In the evening, I took my gun, and went in search of something suitable for an invalid; 94 returning, after a long cruise, empty-handed, I passed close to the ‘gulch’ where lay the rotting carcasses of the oxen; and thinking that their effluvia might have attracted some bird of prey, walked cautiously up, keeping well to windward.

The sportsman who springs a covey of partridges could not have felt more inward satisfaction than I did on espying a flock of carrion-crows clustered on the putrid mass. Birds or beast of some kind must be had, as a trophy at least, if they were not eatable, and determined to get one or two, I approached within range. Intent upon their banquet, the crows had no scent for powder, and letting fly with both barrels before they were aware of their danger, three fell; and now came the most intolerable part of the matter—picking them up from such a heap of putrescence; however, I overcame all squeamish repugnance, and bagging my prey, returned joyfully to my comrades. I distinctly stated to them the peculiar circumstances under which the birds had been shot, but they were too eager for a fresh dish to be deterred by any squeamish feeling, and it was unanimously agreed to cook them for supper. The crows actually smelt of 95 carrion, but were very plump; and when plucked and boiled by the Celestial, they ate much better than I anticipated.

The following day both Mac and myself experienced a shivering sensation; the Chinese and Mahomet were also both worse. By this time ‘a change had come o’er the spirit of our dream’ of gold. Notwithstanding hard labour, hard fare, and rigid economy, the state of our finances was not encouraging; we had slept out some nights in the rain, subject to sudden transitions from heat to cold; all which had somewhat cooled our glowing expectations. The thoughts of sickness depressed us more than all; for we knew that few in California were disposed to be humane. However, we



determined to hold out as long as we could against the inclemencies of the season, watching its effects upon our dependents, whom we could not desert in their present state. Our illness increasing, it was with the greatest difficulty we could exert ourselves sufficiently to keep the fire alive and cook food, for the pains in our limbs made moving a labour; while the dismal moans of the others were distressing, and filled us with alarm. 96 On one occasion, after an agitated sleep, the boy sprang up shrieking in a fit, and fell into the fire; luckily his clothes were too wet to catch a-light, and we pulled him out instantly; but after this occurrence we thought it prudent to bind him by the feet. We had petitioned for admittance into a tent in vain, so our only hope was a change in the weather.

Some days afterwards, however, observing a man coming over the hill, we hailed him and he came toward us; it happened providentially to be our good-natured store-keeper, who, perceiving our condition, humanely offered us shelter, which we gladly accepted. Poor Mahomet was incapable of walking, but as he had wasted away to a skeleton we had no difficulty in carrying him. Mac and I were received in the store itself, the two blacks were billeted in an adjoining tent.

The store was properly speaking head-quarters, the central spot at the diggings. A German chirurgian as he called himself—a man who combined the office of barber and hair-dresser in his own country—was the only one at the station acquainted with bleeding and drugs; he was a pompous fellow, 97 with a cadaverous countenance, that reminded one of death; he was imperfectly acquainted with English, but imposed upon people's credulity so as to pass off as a doctor. He had two specifics for every disease, viz: the lancet and bark tea; this mode of treatment cost him nothing, for from the surrounding trees he could obtain physic for his patients, *ad libitum*: he charged five dollars a visit, however. Mac wished to see this disciple of Sangrado, who immediately said “I must take a little blood:” his invariable practice; though the patient was weak to exhaustion, and rather wanting nourishment and stimulants. I vehemently opposed the use of the lancet, but without effect: it was customary with this German barber-surgeon to reduce his patients to a state of extreme weakness, so as to keep them under his hands; I, however, declined his services and recovered the third day.

In the morning I took a stroll around the tents; a most ominous silence prevailed: of the busy crowds not one was to be seen at work: all was as still as an hospital: we had not been the only sufferers; sickness universally prevailed; seeming as infectious as the plague. In every tent lay 98 sufferers in various stages of disease; out of two hundred, at least twenty had died, and not more than sixty were able to move; those convalescent would be seen gathered together in the stores.

One end of these tents is in general a refreshment room, in which are gambling tables; idleness is the root of all evil, and the few fortunate diggers would there be seen staking their gold dust on cards; gambling more deeply as they became excited, and invariably losing their all, if they continued playing. Others, seated on rough benches, might be seen breaking off the necks of champagne bottles; for if they had been fortunate, they took care to show it by ordering the most expensive beverages. Sardines, turtle-soup, lobsters, fruits, and other luxuries, preserved in tins, were to be had in these stores; but the consumers paid very dearly for such epicureanism.

I have frequently observed in Californians an absurd extravagance in their expenditure, as if the easy possession of gold tempted them to lavish it in luxuries; their selection of choice viands and wines did not proceed from refinement of taste (for I 99 have heard these spendthrifts disparage the very delicacies they ordered) but from a proneness to parade their easily-gotten wealth, imagining that it raised them in the estimation of others. Such ostentatious prodigality soon beggars them, and I believe that the majority wished themselves again in the back-woods, preferring beef broth and spruce beer there, to champagne and turtle in the diggings.

Those who were too ill to frequent scenes of dissipation, excited my compassion; they lay huddled together in tents, moaning and cursing, many of them dying, with no one to attend to their spiritual or bodily wants; and I cannot but think that many died from sheer starvation, or mere want of attendance. The most prevalent complaints were dysentery, fever, and ague, terminating in many cases in delirium; these unfortunate and dangerous lunatics would sometimes rush forth from the tents in a frantic state; and one, as if to revenge himself for the doctor's neglect, clutched the little man by the throat, and almost suffocated him. A morbid desire induced me to visit, or 100 rather

glance into, most of these wretched dwellings; and I could not avoid perceiving that whenever the lancet had been used there were the most debilitating and deadly symptoms.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Revenge of Indian Aggression—Indian Trail Discovered—Deer-Shooting and Venison Feast—The Watch-fire—Story of the two Trappers from Oregon—Indian Camp in View—Surprise and Flight of the Indians—Devotion of the Squaws—An Indian Repast—Retreat of the Assailants—Lynch-Law—Extent of the Golden Region—Report to Congress—Delusive Statements—Miners at Fault—Uncertainty of yield—Wet and Dry Diggings—Results of Gold Seeking—Inundation of the Diggings—Scarcity of Food—Deliberation and Decision—Author parts from his Companions—A long and lonely Journey—Golden Dreams and Waking Realities.

ON returning to the store, I found a crowd assembled, in consequence of intelligence received that two men had been speared by Indians in one of the outermost tents, and its contents ransacked and carried off. Exclamations of rage and vows of 102 revenge burst forth on every side, and pursuit was instantly resolved upon.

A party of twelve men, mostly Yankee backwoodsmen, agreed to go on the track; their chief dependence being placed on two Englishmen, hunters from Oregon. They were appointed leaders of the party, on account of their acquaintance with the northern tribes, whose hunting grounds lay on the frontiers of Texas and Oregon. Anxious to become one of the party, as I might never have a similar chance again, I asked and obtained permission to join them.

Frank and Harry were two fine specimens of the English colonist; they each stood six feet high, were muscular in proportion, and had iron constitutions; both were splendid riflemen, and were besides highly intelligent, warm-hearted, frank, and fearless. As trappers, few had seen more of bush-life than they, or were better adapted to undertake the pursuit of Indians. They greeted me as a fellow-countryman, with a hearty grasp of the hand—a pressure like that of an iron vice—but thinking me unable to undergo the hardships to be encountered, they would have dissuaded me

from 103 going; seeing I was determined, Frank signified assent with “Well, my boy, you are a countryman, and shall mess with me and Harry.” Trusting that the bark tea would put Mac on his legs by my return, I took a supply of flour in my knapsack, cleaned my gun and pistols, and with a single blanket slung across my shoulders, I started with the company in two hours.

We first went to the hut containing the murdered men, where a careful examination was made for marks to track the Indians by; foot-prints were visible around the hut, but no scuffle had taken place: the men had been transfixed when asleep, and stabbed afterwards. The trail leading through the scrub, we took that direction; no care seemed to have been taken by the Indians to conceal their course, or their numbers. I walked between the two leaders, who carelessly chatted on the way: though at every rising eminence, or patch of brushwood, they were vigilantly on the look-out.

Our course laid towards the most impassable and intricate part of the country. About three in the afternoon we came to a mountain stream, where the Mocassin marks, which had been getting gradually 104 more indistinct, now completely disappeared. The chances of recovering the trail now seemed hopeless: “The varmints have done us,” exclaimed some, but Harry, who had been pacing up and down the opposite bank of the stream, at last espied a slight impression in the edge of the bank. Leaping into a shrub, he noticed other marks; flour was also perceptible; and further on, amidst some fern, the soil bore a deep impression for several yards: it was apparently the track of one person, but the whole party had trod in each other's steps at this part, for we soon came to where they had retreated recklessly.

By the time these discoveries had been made, it was getting dusk; fearful of losing the trail, we encamped for the night in a hollow and kindled fires, which we kept low for fear of discovery. Having observed marks of deer near the spot, Harry started out to reconnoitre; knowing that these animals invariably come down to water at dark, he shaped his course along the bank of the stream, in search of the spot they usually selected. On finding it, he took his station in a tree hard-by, that they might not perceive or scent him, and in 105 about two hours re-appeared with a young buck on his shoulders. Cutting off sufficient for our supper and breakfast, we gave the remainder to the

others; and with a damper, which we had baked before-hand, we made a most luxurious repast on venison steaks.

The Oregonians and myself had the first lookout, from eight till twelve; so, sitting before the blazing logs, with our buffalo robes and blankets wrapped round us, we had long yarns together over coffee and tobacco. The life of these brothers had been one of startling adventure and vicissitude; they had been twenty years in Oregon, their parents, who had land grants far up the country, having taken them out when young. The cultivation of the soil was their principal occupation, but frequent and repeated incursions of the Indians had reduced them at times almost to want. Disappointed in their expectations, the parents died, leaving their sons, who had then just arrived at man's estate, only the precarious tenure of the land they had been brought up on. Inured to hardship, acquainted with the backwoods, and fond of adventure, they soon found farming too slow for their enterprising 106 dispositions, and disposing of their patrimony, they joined a company of Trappers. They had visited in their various journeys the Russian settlements northward, the wilds of Oregon, Texas, and Upper California; for a short time they had lived with a tribe of Indians, and had had marvellous escapes in the chase. One of the most remarkable stories narrated was that of a Trapper, who had been despoiled of his traps and weapons in the depth of winter by the Black-foot Indians; alone, at a great distance from civilization, and devoid of fire-arms, he yet managed to subsist upon prairie-squirrels, which he trapped with nooses made of his own hair: an extraordinary instance of patient and persevering ingenuity, which they assured me was true.

In the morning, at sun-rise, we again started numberless deer and antelopes; an animal was also pointed out, said to be a bear, but it was too distant to be made out satisfactorily: however, bears' prints were seen soon after. About eight o'clock we reached the spot where the Indians had camped the preceding night; we halted for a time to examine the remains, and perceived that the stolen flour had been used plentifully with venison. 107 About twenty warriors had been camped there; their accoutrements, and other things appertaining to them, were pointed out by indications apparent to the practised eye of the Oregonian, but incomprehensible to others. The Indians were evidently not far distant, and were marching rapidly to rejoin their squaws.

As we were now amongst the mountains, strict silence was enjoined; our fire-arms were looked to, and scouts selected to guard against a surprise. An eagerness to have a brush with our foes seemed to animate our troop to fresh speed; yet the veterans were perfectly cool, as if no bloodshed or risk was likely to be incurred. We had been ascending and descending mountains all day, the foot-prints becoming more recent at every elevation; the country was anxiously scanned, in expectation of sighting them; at last we halted on the summit of a lofty mountain, beneath which a fine valley lay spread out before us. "Here they must be!" simultaneously exclaimed several, as we viewed the magnificent landscape. The conjecture proved correct; for about a mile lower down we perceived a few curling wreaths of smoke ascending. 'Walk in 108 file, men, and be as nimble as cats,' was the word given: so, creeping slowly amid the scrub, we again halted.

Beneath us, in a dell five hundred yards off, sat about thirty men and twenty women of various ages, preparing supper; overhanging trees sheltered their rude wigwams, and a stream was at their back, in which five splendid mustangs were drinking. The men were wild-looking fellows of a reddish copper colour, wearing feathers of various colours stuck in their hair, which was long and knotted behind; beads and other ornaments were attached to their ears, fingers, arms, and neck. Around the waist some had a garment of cotton or rush, and others of buffalo hides; knives, spears, hatchets, and arrows with poisoned heads of flint or glass seemed numerous. The women were ugly to excess; short stout figures, with fat and flat faces, and small sunken eyes.

Two old shrivelled warriors sat with their backs to a tree, surrounded by men and women, who seemed to pay great respect to these sages. The marauding party had but lately arrived; as a garrulous fellow was engaging their attention, evidently 109 by the narration of their adventure, and apparently to the great delight of the old men, whose eyes sparkled, and whose every motion betrayed lively sympathy and interest. Two old women, evidently powerful in council, sat in front of the old chiefs, with the stolen articles at their feet; the more juvenile portion of the group were engaged in cooking the food for their approaching meal.

Some low scrub bushes lining the side of the mountain, concealed us from observation; here we crouched in painful suspense, waiting till the party were gathered together more closely. We were

spread out in a line, in order to encompass them; and at the signal of a whistle from Frank, who, with me, was at the extremity of the left wing, we were to march forward, and when within twenty paces, to discharge our guns and rifles; reserving the pistols and bowie-knives for close encounter. The rolling down of a large stone almost discovered us; but though the Indians peered upwards, the foliage was too dense for them to discern us. Their tranquillity was not, however, of long duration; for no sooner had they gathered together for their repast, than, crashing through the bushes around 110 us, crack went our rifles, as we precipitated ourselves on them. Fearful were the yells and whoops of the savages, as they fled in affright; and when the smoke cleared off, we perceived that they had turned to reconnoitre our numbers. Discharging our pistols, we pursued them; but the nimble savages were soon beyond our range; and seeing the impossibility of overtaking them, we halted to re-load.

Five of our troop, perceiving that some of the Indians were wounded and could not make off much further, followed up and slew them. As they fled across the plain, we had an excellent view of the chase, and observed that one of the pursued, on finding himself overtaken, had dropped, pretending to be insensible; the captor was about to brain him with the butt of his gun, when the Indian caught hold of it, and tried to wrest it from his grasp; but another of our party coming up, speedily felled him to the earth. Our first volley killed five instantaneously, and wounded six more severely. Some of the women, whose spouses had been killed or wounded, remained; and, in admiration of their conjugal fidelity, we spared their lives. Loud were 111 the wailings and imprecations of some as they dragged their husbands to the water to dress their wounds; but some of the party relentlessly despatched the surviving sufferers. Two very fine looking women, who covered with their bodies their wounded husbands, clasped the legs and arms of the slayers; one fellow was brute enough to hurl the unhappy women into the stream, and was about to kill the warriors whom they sought to preserve, when Frank and others, moved with compassion, averted the death-blows. Other women lacerated themselves, as is usual, to signify regret and the extent of their misfortunes. One old squaw had unfortunately received in her leg the bullet which was intended for her husband's skull; but as she was the possessor of several scalps, we did not consider her entitled to that compassion which a woman's sufferings must always excite amongst the stronger sex.

Knowing the treachery of Indians, we loaded our fire-arms before setting down to supper, keeping a watchful eye about us. The repast, of which we took possession, consisted of roots, venison, acorn-bread, boiled horse-chesnuts, and a dish of vermin; 112 the former were very palatable after our fatiguing march, but the slugs and worms we declined tasting. When we first sat down, some arrows were shot with great precision into the midst of us; one stuck firm in a large piece of venison, which we were compelled to throw away for fear of the arrow being poisoned. This was both vexatious and dangerous, so, snatching up a rifle, one of us alternately kept a look-out to prevent them coming within range. The coveted mustangs had fled, to our great disappointment.

Fearful of being surprised and overpowered by a concentration of tribes, we did not think prudent to prolong our stay, and therefore commenced a retreat; when some distance off, we espied the Indians returning to bury their dead. After a rapid march in a different direction to that we had come, we halted late at night in a spot well adapted for defence against a surprise: a small thicket situated on an open plain. We kept up a vigilant watch all night, but were not molested; probably on account of our travelling so late, which prevented their coming up to us, as they could not perceive the trail in the dark.

### 113

About ten the following day, when we halted on a rising ground, dark objects were visible just entering the plain below, which were pronounced to be Indians; about two we made them out plainly. Seeing some of them mounted, a-head of us, we rightly conjectured they would not openly attack us by day; our danger was from an assault in ambush. Observing that those behind kept a certain distance off, while those in front seemed as if they were in great uncertainty, by appearing in different quarters, the Oregonians very knowingly remarked that this was an Indian dodge, intended to deceive and detain us until they increased in numbers; but that they would not attack us till dark, as they were great cowards. We had no desire to give them the opportunity by encamping out that night, and therefore pushed on, so as to reach the settlement that night, having walked about sixty miles in twenty-eight hours.



On our return we found the condition of the diggers was no better than when we left; and the most gloomy and morbid feelings pervaded. Mac, indeed, was rather worse than otherwise, and the two blacks had little vitality left.

114

Just before our arrival a man had had his ear cut off for committing some petty larceny. It may seem surprising that theft and murder were not of more frequent occurrence at the diggings, as many lived far apart from others; but every one was armed, and the punishment was so summary, that in case of detection the first dozen would constitute themselves a court and jury, and dispose of the case by consigning the offender to instant death. Hanging was sometimes resorted to for theft; the loss of one or both ears being the usual punishment inflicted for that or minor offences. This severity naturally prevented rapine and disorder, so that the digger would leave his tent exposed for hours, deposit his blankets or other articles at the foot of a tree, and leave his digging implements at the excavation with perfect safety, even in the vicinity of the most desperate rogues. Scattered over the plain there were many men deeply dyed in iniquity, who had escaped from the clutches of the law and would not have scrupled to rob a church in their own country, but who were afraid to purloin another's property in California. In the gold regions almost every large settlement has now its alcalde and sheriffs; 115 latterly the country has been portioned off into districts; periodical sessions and other legal modes of administering justice being now in force, and fully recognized.

The gold region is said to extend five hundred miles in length, by two hundred in breadth; the several 'placers' being wide apart from each other and the auriferous soil restricted within narrow limits. The bars and shoals of rivers and creeks, and gulches and ravines of the dry diggings are generally most favourable places for the operations of the digger. Some of these places, however, are soon exhausted, and others are not remunerative.

The Hon. Bufler King, in his report to Congress, referring to the gold-bearing districts and their origin, states that gold, whether in veins or detached particles, was found in combination with quartz, and that the water constantly pouring from the hills, cut in its passage deep mountain ravines, and united its streams with rivers. He supposes that coming in contact with the quartz, by

constant attrition it dissolves the stone and cuts the gold into fine flakes or dust. In the mountain ravines and 116 gulches of the dry diggings, gold is usually much coarser than that in the streams, and is frequently found united with the quartz; a circumstance probably owing to its not being subject to such violent attrition as that found on the banks of rivers; for, as a general rule, the size of the particles of gold is found to be proportioned to the velocity of the stream near which it is found.

With respect to the richness of the gold-diggings, the most conflicting statements are current. Of the emigrants who visit the diggings, not more than a third become resident diggers; the early settlers seem to prefer trade to obtaining a precarious livelihood on the mountains: the majority of Californians admit that sufficient may be found at the diggings to pay one's way, but doubt the probability of fortune-making. I have met some who will descant upon the quantities found; but it generally happens that these lucky windfalls did not come under their own observation. Others will even intimate that they have got, or know where they could obtain, two or three ounces a day; but in most instances their beggarly condition gives the lie to their assertions. There is an equal diversity of opinion with respect 117 to the fertility of various placers; but I believe that there is but little difference in the disposition of their products.

In this country, the experienced miners of Peru and Mexico are often at fault; superior dexterity is acquired by practice, but veteran diggers and scientific miners are not more successful than the novice. About twelve places have been sufficiently tested to be found worth labour; but even at these the greatest uncertainty prevails. You may select a spot, and make an ounce by mid-day, yet continue working for twenty-four hours afterwards without making that quantity.

As to which are the likely spots, nothing is sufficiently authenticated to serve for a general rule; the usual practice is to go what they call 'prospecting,' that is, trying a few pans of earth at different spots, regardless of any alluvial indications, and wherever the gold is found most prolific, there to commence operations.

The most profitable course of action is to work systematically in companies, by turning the beds of rivers, and other proceedings requiring co-operation and time; gold is almost sure to be procured

in 118 larger quantities by such means than by isolated efforts. Extensive operations require time and capital, and three weeks' labour is often needful preparatory to one week's work; but the gang-system, when properly directed, is usually found to have the most fruitful results.

In the dry diggings, where there is no need for the proces of washing, the gold is larger but inferior in quality, and people dig to a greater depth; but the wet diggings are generally preferred, the supply being purer and more certain, though the dust be more minute.

It is common to hear of fortunate discoverers of lumps of gold; but fortune seldom comes with both hands full, and these lucky spots "are few and far between:" when told of what has been gathered, we seldom reflect upon the hundreds and thousands who, less fortunate, plod on unnoticed and poorly remunerated. This is the case in California; some who have laboured perseveringly have been rewarded with rich deposits, but thousands working equally hard, though they can generally manage to gather gold enough to supply their wants, have never been able to find it in sufficient quantity to 119 bring it home, and feel ashamed to return with empty pockets, and, perhaps, ruined constitutions.

The store-keeper, or the gaming-house keeper, is the ravenous shark who swallows up all. The majority of gold-finders, if they avoid the demon of the hells, are at the mercy of the ogre of the store, who crams them first and devours them after. Many diggers, eager to increase their hoard, have by staying decreased their gains; but usually those who are fortunate enough to collect a few ounces, visit the nearest settlement, to have what they call 'a spree,' and with a sailor's improvidence squander their hard-earned dust: only in a few instances have men been sufficiently fortunate and prudent steadily to accumulate gold. Situate some hundred miles from a settlement, the digger who, in most instances must convey his own provisions, is necessitated to pay the most extortionate prices for the bare necessities of life. Where I was, on the setting in of the winter season, the store-keeper paid four shillings for every pound weight of goods, these being transported on mules to the settlement. Retailing almost every thing at the rate of from six to twelve shillings a pound, the store-keepers gave 120 credit, but the digger, unless he had a continuous supply of gold, soon fell into arrears.

The last mules that came in brought two casks of potatoes from the Sandwich Islands; a most welcome supply, as many, from eating salt provisions, were suffering from scurvy; these potatoes had a very rapid sale at four shillings a piece, and were eaten raw, like apples!

At this time the overflow of the river had flooded most of the diggings; ours was completely inundated. Not a vestige of our dwelling had withstood the wind and rain: the hut supports fell, and the branches were scattered by the wind. The habitations of most others suffered in a similar manner from the bad weather. As I viewed the ruins of our hut, and the desolation of all around, I thanked God that I had regained my health, and involuntarily shuddered at what might otherwise have been my fate; thinking with sadness upon the probable death of the companions who accompanied me hither.

These gloomy forebodings were deepened by the startling intelligence communicated by my two countrymen, the Oregonians, that there was not 121 sufficient food in the stores to last the winter through, and that before the roads became passable, starvation must overtake us. This was owing to the sudden setting in of the rainy season, a month before it was anticipated. Many were provided with tents and provisions to last the winter, others had a sufficiency of gold-dust to buy food, if it were procurable; but for those who had nothing but their exertions to depend upon, it was madness to remain. My Oregonian friends told me they thought it nearly impossible, and certainly unprofitable, to resume operations till the spring; they had a portable tent and a supply of gold dust, and intended either to make a brief trial of the dry diggings, or return to Oregon through the mountains on foot; and wanted me to accompany them either way. Proceeding at once to the chief store, I enquired of the store-keeper respecting provisions; he told me he intended selling off and starting, that other stores had not more than six weeks supply, and therefore provisions would soon rise to double their present price. I had about thirty dollars left, which would rapidly diminish, and being now unable to dig, I saw no chance of increasing my funds.

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In this state of perplexity I visited Mac, and told him the state of affairs. His spirits were surprisingly good; he suggested that a retreat to Stockton was the most advisable course; and, as

some immediate measure was imperative, after much deliberation, I determined upon proceeding to Stockton the following day. To have stayed till Mac was convalescent would only involve unnecessary expence to myself, without benefitting him; so going to the Oregonians, who intended staying a short time, previous to returning to Oregon, I commended Mac to their care; a charge they pledged themselves to fulfil. On the following morning, with painful regret, I parted from Mac, the last and best of my shipmates. Before leaving, I went to see the Chinaman and Mahomet; their days were evidently numbered: both were dreadfully emaciated, and so delirious that they did not seem to recognise me.

I had about two hundred miles of wilderness before me to traverse all alone; and on ascending the hill which overhung our settlement, to commence my solitary journey, the thoughts of leaving my comrade weighed heavily on my spirits. I missed the cheering presence of a companion greatly; but self-preservation stimulated me to exertion. In my knapsack were twelve yards of jerked beef, dried in strips, six pounds of biscuit, one pound of beans, and two of flour: blankets, water-bag, a pair of pistols, and a huge bowie-knife, completed my equipment.

Ascending the steep mountain so heavily laden, I was glad to relieve myself on reaching its summit; the wind was blowing hard and the rain pelted heavily down, as, giving a last long look at the diggings, I thought of the golden dreams and buoyant hopes which had lured us to them; and turned my back upon a spot where these had been so rudely dispelled by the waking realities of privation and suffering.

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## **CHAPTER IX.**

Leaving the Diggings—A Deluged Country—Wolves and Bears—A Solitary Bivouac—Tree-fires—Trees in California—Herds of Deer and Antelope—Wading a River—Signs of Indians—Wolf repulsed—Indians Spearing Salmon—Dangerous Fording of a River—Author saved from drowning by Indians—A humane Squaw—Curiosity of Indians—Their wonder at a Daguerreotype Portrait

—Costume and Characteristics of Mission or Christianized Indians—Fatigue of Walking on Loose Sand—Fertile Country again—Arrival at Stockton.

THE wind and rain blew mercilessly in my teeth as I walked hastily onwards, solitary, and filled by the most gloomy reflections; yet determined to reach Stockton at all hazards. The track being completely obliterated by the rain, the prominent features of the country were my only guide. Ascending and descending the slippery sides of the 125 mountains was most laborious. The arroyas or gullies were filled with deep water, cataracts came roaring down from the mountains, carrying avalanches of soil and trees with them; the very earth itself seemed to be afloat. Fearful to continue my route after dark, as I could not then find safe footholds nor avoid gulches and ravines, yet doubtful where to pitch upon a secure camping spot, I at last came to a sheltered position under a tree, which seemed unlikely to attract the observation of Indians, and relieved myself from my burden and rested my limbs. It was some time, however, before I could make up my mind to light a fire, for fear of Indians; but a couple of cayotas and a tiger-cat which had shewn themselves just before dusk, settled my wavering doubts: I had become accustomed to the howling of wolves, but was more inclined to risk the chance of being discovered by Indians, than incur the more certain probability of being grappled by a grizzly bear in the darkness.

The grizzly bears of this country are most formidable fellows to fall in with; the very *pressing* reception they give the traveller is too well known 126 to need description. Their speed being almost equal to that of a horse, notwithstanding their clumsy appearance and gait, foot travellers have no chance with them, as they can climb up a tree or gnaw the trunk away with equal facility. The most marvellous accounts of their bulk are current among hunters: some of these monsters are said to be the height of a jackass, and weigh fifteen hundred pounds. I have heard trappers confirm the common supposition that they will not molest dead bodies, and that by feigning death and holding in the breath, many have escaped their clutches.

Setting fire to the foot of a tree I cooked my supper, and then rolled myself up in my blankets to sleep; several birds which seemed to be vultures, flapped their wings over me as I lay. The wind sighed mournfully through the trees, and I could not help reflecting on the possibility of being

snatched up by some of the forest visitors; but exhausted with fatigue I fell asleep. On awaking in the morning I was agreeably surprised to find myself unmolested; the tree being almost burnt through, fell with a crash just before I started.

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The gum trees and firs of this country are admirably adapted to supply the wants of the traveller; for if the weather be ever so wet, he has only to strip off the bark from its base to find the wood perfectly dry underneath; a few chips cut out with a hatchet are easily kindled to set light to the foot of the tree, which, once fired, burns gradually and surely, throwing out a genial heat without spreading or blazing. I generally selected a tree about three feet in diameter, choosing one so inclined as certain to fall in a contrary direction to the wind, which served to keep up the fire, and whenever it fell to leave me unscathed. Woodmen, when felling timber, invariably stand close to the trunk at the time it falls, and thus escape injury.

California has very little of that dense brushwood which is termed bush elsewhere: the general aspect of the country is characterized by patches of scrub, clumps of trees, and groves of oak, in humid valleys; the Californian cypress and beautiful red woods grow on the ridges of mountains, and other exposed situations. Pasture is plentiful, high grass, wild oats, wheat, and other sorts of grain and 128 herbage, may often be seen growing spontaneously on the wide waste of the prairie.

On commencing my day's march, vast herds of deer and antelope came within rifle-range, galloping past and suddenly stopping short near me, as if they were surprised to see a solitary individual in the wilderness; once or twice I diverged from my course to try if I could shoot one, but it was in vain: their keen eyes and surprising agility required a more practised deer-stalker than myself to get a shot at them; the Indians use the lasso.

Indians and grizzly bears were my chief sources of anxiety; for them I was constantly on the lookout, seldom venturing on open ground without first casting a keen glance around. It rained as hard as it had done the day before; since day-break I had been making a continued ascent, and about two in the afternoon must have arrived at a very considerable altitude, for the air was cold in the

extreme, the rain falling like icicles. About four I came to the tumulus before-mentioned, which reared its mound in solitary grandeur; a strange mystery seemed associated with it, and I should not 129 have been disposed to camp in its vicinity alone. Proceeding further, I camped for the night near the outermost range of mountains.

On the following day the weather was somewhat more favourable: the roads were, however, but little better; arroyas, now deep with water, were frequent, and the streams in the low lands, which I had to ford, were frequently up to the waist. About noon I arrived at an arroya, or river, almost a quarter of a mile in width, forming a most formidable barrier on my route, the current running equal to a seven-knot speed; not liking its appearance I followed its course for some distance, hoping to find it shallower and narrower lower down; but disappointed in my search, sat down to ruminate. I had not progressed more than half the distance from the mines; the state of my provisions would not admit of delay; sickness, starvation, and ridicule at the diggings, would probably attend a retrograde step. Hope urged me onward, and summoning up my courage for the task, I resolved to run the chance, and cross the river at all hazards; so, unbuckling the burden on my shoulders, holding it by a slender cord with one hand, my gun above my 130 head with the other, and my knife between my teeth, I cautiously entered the water. On gaining the middle of the stream, I felt with painful anxiety the water rising higher and higher; and the current nearly carrying me off my legs, compelled me reluctantly to use the gun as a support and sounding rod: the general depth averaged from my waist upwards to the neck; for a minute I was immersed over head, but regained a footing without sacrificing my pack; and succeeded in crossing safely.

The country seemed very fertile; wild oats and wild mustard grew spontaneously in patches. About five miles from the river, as I was plodding slowly on, my eye caught a track of some kind. Robinson Crusoe could not have felt greater amazement at the foot-print in the sand, than I did when, on close examination, the impressions proved to be the well-defined foot-prints of Indians: happily the trail was in a contrary direction to my course, so keeping a sharp look-out around, I hastened on.



Camping that night on the verge of the plain, I luxuriated over the fire, not knowing when I should have another, and cooked the best supper 131 my means would admit. About midnight the howling of wolves awoke me; never had they been so clamorous before; they seemed actually hounding on each other to an attack, as if thinking to inspire me with fear by their hideous serenade: from rock to rock their dismal howls were echoed, and responded to in the distance by the fiendish laugh of a jackall. Casting a look around, a huge shaggy wolf stood within five yards, his eyes glaring at me like burning coals; snatching up a fire-brand, I hurled it at him, which made him turn tail, and beat a rapid retreat: my pistols were damp, or I would have made use of them; but fire is the wolf's detestation, and the brand did as well. Making up the fire and priming my pistols afresh, I again fell asleep, overcome with my day's exertion.

The following day I passed the last range of mountains, and came upon broken ground composed of slate, granite, quartz, iron, rock and volcanic substances. I had been walking hard to come up with the river before dusk; but, much to my vexation, did not reach it until dark. The 132 moonlight was palely reflected on the silvery surface of the water, which sparkled with the leaping of salmon; the stream made a hollow murmuring sound, as it dashed over the rocky obstructions in its bed; and a grove of trees and shrubs, which overhung the edge, cast a deep shade around.

As nearly as I could guess, it was at least three quarters of a mile in width; though I made the fording correctly, yet the current had swollen, and was so altered in appearance that the passage was hardly recognizable. I gazed upon the sombre appearance of the water, and being doubtful as to the depth, felt no desire to cross until morning; when, looking up and down its banks in uncertainty, my eye caught a flickering of lights at a distance. Unable to comprehend its cause, curiosity prompted me to reconnoitre in that direction, and cautiously approaching, not without some uneasiness, I discovered a party of Indians.

Upon a closer inspection, I perceived about fifteen in the water, some holding flaming firebrands, and others spears, with which they speared the fish as they rose to the surface; a great 133 jabbering was going on, and when a fish was caught they evinced extreme delight. In the grove, a few paces from the banks, two fires were burning, with women clustered around them; some fine mustangs

were tethered close by. The exulting shouts of the salmon-fishers, whose exclamations I faintly caught, resembled Spanish, and confirmed my first impression that they were Mission-Indians; although to pursue the sport they had divested themselves of the apparel customary to civilized tribes. It was a picturesque sight to see them splashing about in the water, apparently quite in their element, brandishing torches over their heads, which, illuminating the water, showed in relief their dark figures and their long glossy hair hanging over their shoulders.

I felt very hungry, and seeing fish after fish speared and thrown ashore, longed to join the jovial company at the supper which was preparing; the presence of the Indians encouraged me to cross, yet before fully satisfying myself as to who they were, it was not prudent to declare myself. Dark clouds were scudding fast over the moon, so taking advantage of a temporary gleam of light, thinking 134 that if I sank my shouts would be heard, and that even savages would not hurt a drowning man, I slung my burden as when crossing the last river, and holding up my gun with one hand, with my knife in my teeth, plunged into the stream. The bed of the river was composed of large stones, and stepping cautiously I had safely crossed more than half way, when I stumbled and fell out of my depth; unable to regain a footing, yet retaining my gun, I cut away with the left hand the burden which impeded my exertion; and rising to the surface shouted loudly for assistance. Borne impetuously by the current, nigh suffocated with water, and almost insensible, I became aware by a glimmering of lights and splashing in the river that my cries were heard; but can only recollect that the gun was wrenched from my grasp, and a rope passed over me. If my sensations were the same as usual in cases of drowning, I cannot concur in the general opinion that such a death is easy.

On recovering my senses I found myself lying on my back, with a ponderous and excessively ugly squaw labouring to pump the water out of my mouth by kneeling on my chest with a heavy 135 pressure sufficient to break my ribs. The violence of her exertions had disordered her long hair, a mass of which hung over my mouth and face, smelling strongly and odiously of tallow and fish. She seemed exceedingly gratified when my eyes opened, and uttering a loud exclamation, which was caught up by a dozen others, a crowd gathered around us with torches which dazzled my eyes. To the honor of the sex be it said, the women were most assiduous in their attentions; seemingly

compassionate and (if it could consist with an Indian countenance) tender-looking. The feeling which next succeeded to that of gratitude for my deliverance, was doubt as to what would be my fate, and whether the Indians had rescued me from drowning out of pure humanity, or to feast upon me. Feeling myself entirely in their power, I hesitated whether to revive, and so learn their purposes at once, or pretend continued insensibility. While these thoughts passed through my mind, I heard some sentences spoken in Spanish, which set me at ease as to their cannibal propensities; so pushing the old lady off my chest, I raised myself and looked around.

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I then perceived two fires; some of the young men were minutely examining my gun with curiosity and evident admiration, another group were peering into my knapsack, an old woman handing out each article separately, which with my blankets she placed to dry before the fire; an old wrinkled fellow seemed particularly curious about the pistols, snapping violently the locks, as if he did not comprehend their machinery. But what amused me most of all were two interesting damsels, who had got possession of a daguerreotype portrait of my sister, with which they were excessively delighted; it being only visible at a certain angle of light, their rapid movements enabled them to get but transitory glimpses of the picture, the sudden appearance and disappearance of which quite astonished them: doubtless they thought it a work of magic. So loud was their joyous laughter, and animated their expressions of pleasure as they beheld it, that their emotions of surprise and wonder soon attracted others; who, judging from their eagerness and admiration, doubtless formed very exalted notions of European female beauty.

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On recovering, several questions in Spanish were put to me, but not comprehending them I only shook my head; they seemed disappointed, and as I knew a few words in that language, I muttered "Viajante," (signifying I was a traveller), and 'acosado de hambre,' (that I was hungry).

The men were busied dressing themselves after the sport; they wore loose coloured garments of calico or cotton, and buffalo robes, with a profusion of scarfs; the women were attired in loose fitting gowns, resembling European night dresses, with massive gold earrings and other jewellery.

They all came and shook hands with me, apparently most solicitous on my behalf; the squaw, who had been perched on my chest, seemed to take me under her especial patronage; nor could I dispense with her pressing attentions. My clothes being taken off, I was enveloped in blankets, and partook of an excellent supper of dried salmon and maize cakes. It was fortunate that most of them understood some English, and the fact of my being an Englishman afforded them real satisfaction; but what raised me higher in their estimation was my being 'Christiano,' (which with them means a Roman Catholic) as they 138 had perceived a cross pricked on my left arm, which they regarded as indisputable evidence of the fact. These people, brought up in missions under Jesuit tuition, early imbibe the strictest notions of veneration; no wonder, therefore, that the sign of the cross gave me the highest claim upon their consideration. My friends the Oregonians, proved correct, when they told me that the two leading characteristics in the Mission Indians were Catholic zeal and an inherent detestation of Yankees.

After an excellent supper I laid down to sleep in perfect confidence, surrounded by the dusky denizens of the prairie. On awaking at day-break, breakfast was being prepared, and some were performing their ablutions. My magic picture was eagerly asked for, to be examined by day-light; it was wondered at and admired greatly.

These Indians, it appeared, were about to travel further inward for winter quarters; had our meeting occurred in summer I would not have objected to accompany them for a time, to see the prairie and its usages; and it was not without regret on both sides that I took leave of my hospitable friends. These Indians are denounced as thieves, but 139 notwithstanding their admiration of several articles I possessed, every thing was restored me. As both men and women smoke, on my departure, I distributed my tobacco amongst them; for which they seemed very thankful: their honesty, and the service they had done me, deserved a richer return.

With considerable reluctance I entered again on the sandy plain, and seeing the green shady groves become more distant, thoughts of the anxiety and hardships I had before suffered on this route occurred to my mind. The weather was fortunately cool, and I was plentifully supplied with water, but walking through sand ankle deep was very fatiguing. Wishing to avoid the desert as much

as possible, I made uncommon exertions, and shaped my course differently to that we had taken on going to the diggings. Perceiving a flock of vultures hovering over a particular spot, I walked towards it, and found a fallen mule laden with a pack containing hosiery; the skeleton of another mule and other bones, partly buried in sand drifts, lay close by.

About seven at night I halted; wholly ignorant of my position, only knowing that I had walked thirty-five miles since ten in the morning, and had seen no wolves during the day. Thoroughly fatigued I fell asleep without lighting a fire. The following day, after the greatest exertions in ploughing my way through the sand, I gained the first clump of trees by six in the evening; where, making a blazing fire at the foot of a tree, I congratulated myself on my vicinity to Stockton, and on having passed through the ordeal without injury to my health.

Next morning, when pursuing my route, I passed by several recent grave mounds. The country now became very fertile and well wooded, the grass was as high as the waist; soon after sunrise I shot a species of pigeon. Steering my course by the relative position of the hills, about noon I struck the track we missed in our journey to the mines; which was a most satisfactory discovery. Having plucked the bird as I went along, sitting down about three o'clock I lighted a fire, filled my hook pot with water and boiled the pigeon; which, with baked acorns for vegetables, made an excellent dinner.

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On nearing the settlement, I began to reflect, not without misgivings, on what I should do for a living, and how reach Francisco. With a naturally buoyant disposition, not prone to despair, it was my maxim never to anticipate evil, but to grapple with the present difficulty as I best could.

So I pushed on vigorously, bent on reaching Stockton in the course of the evening; about eight o'clock lights became visible in the distance, and soon after I entered the town.

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## CHAPTER X.

Arrival at Stockton—Death from the Sting of an Insect—A hard Bed and a rough waking—A dear Loaf—Philosophic Motto—Increase of Stockton—‘Loafers’—Author engages as Carpenter and Tent Maker—Loses his Blankets, and gets shelter in a Tent—Engages as Cook—Hospital at Stockton—Shocking Scenes and painful Recognition—Sad Story of a Gold Seeker—Unexpected Welcome by American Sailors.

THINKING it impossible to find out my old shipmates, I made my way to the quarter frequented by teamsters, and warming my pot of coffee at a deserted fire, looked out for a sleeping place; to my great joy a space under a waggon was unoccupied, so lying down on some rotten wood and rushes, I was just falling asleep, when an exclamation of pain and horror from an adjacent sleeper aroused me. He was 143 a hale gigantic man of about thirty, who had been stung by a venomous insect, peculiar to that country, the sting of which he knew to be mortal; a convulsive tremor shook his frame, and the perspiration dropt from his brows, as he stood before a large fire with his hands clasped, exclaiming “The Lord have mercy on my soul!” Various remedies were proposed, but he shook his head: “No,” said he, “die I must,” and thus philosophically he resigned himself to his fate. He had been a volunteer in the American army, and with several comrades, had returned from the mines to winter. Intelligence of this disaster had a startling effect on most of the sleepers. I, as well as others, from a morbid curiosity, watched the gradual working of the venom. The doomed man, with the equanimity of a Socrates, joined in conversation, but kept drinking large draughts of brandy; violent spasms soon came on, and he shouted for more liquor; his features seen by the lurid light of the fire were horrible to contemplate, and it was not without violent struggles that he gave up the ghost.

Shocked and alarmed, I determined to take up my quarters elsewhere; after prowling about in 144 uncertainty, I came to a dilapidated tent, apparently deserted, in which, after groping about, by the aid of moonlight, a forge, anvil, and iron scattered about were perceptible. Too sleepy to be scrupulous, arranging some iron rubbish as comfortably as could be for a mattress, I laid down under a bench. The wind was very boisterous, a great portion of the tent was rent and torn from the

ground, and the flapping crack of the canvass and whistling of the wind were not very conducive to rest; “but weariness can snore upon the flint, when restive sloth finds the down pillow hard.”

In the morning I awoke by a foot being rather lustily applied to my ribs; it was the smith, who, in language by no means choice, expressed the greatest indignation at my occupation of his shop. As it is useless to expostulate with surly ill-conditioned people, I only made a brisk exit.

The bakers of Stockton had at this time formed a confederacy to raise the price of bread; and had bought up all the flour in the market. Having to pay six shillings to one of them for a loaf, I could not help wishing that they had a ruler like Pharaoh to punish their extortion. Leaving my 145 knapsack and blankets with one of the chief-bakers, I sallied into the business locality, and going to the spot where my shipmates had set up their tent, found it had been removed; the sign-board remained however, and looking at it attentively, my eye caught sight of an inscription,—“Fortune may command my life and state, my mind exceeds the compass of her wheel.” I guessed by whom this quotation had been written, and it struck me as very ominous. However such was the unsettled state of the country, and the migratory habits of the population, that it was not astonishing they should have been unable to make a permanent stand against the tide of difficulties. Wondering what had befallen them, and musing on the mutability of human affairs, I walked down to the quay in search of work.

In the rainy season, only the very best tents are found capable of resisting the weather, the demand for covering was therefore very great, and the supply totally inadequate to meet it; ships'-cabooes and frail cabins were called into requisition, and let at an exorbitant rental: though somewhat cramped in dimensions, they were decidedly more waterproof than the best tents.

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During my absence, the town had wonderfully increased; regular streets of wooden houses and canvass ones had been formed, presenting a very business-like appearance, while private habitations covered a large surface of ground. Vessels were busy discharging cargo, and steamers were puffing at the wharf: the latter, being intended almost solely for the conveyance of passengers, burnt wood

instead of coal for the engine-fires. In the streets, opposite the stores, stood atajos or mule-trains, which were being laden with goods for the interior; the packers being generally Sonorians.

An atajo, consisting of a large number, usually had a pack-horse in their company; the mules being then less likely to stray, as they have a respectful attachment to the person of the nobler quadruped. Most of the mule-trains belonged to the early emigrants, and were profitable concerns if well employed, but rather expensive otherwise, as the cost of each mule in food was about three dollars a day; at which rate, to use a vulgar expression, “they would soon eat their heads off.”

The gambling tents were full of players and drinkers, and dollars were plentiful; their 147 possessors, mostly newly returned diggers, looked sickly. Racking my invention how to obtain some of the dust I saw often so carelessly squandered, I strolled negligently I knew not whither; numbers of ragged, hungry-looking fellows returned from the placers, as unfortunate as myself, thronged the town. Another description of men, termed ‘loafers’ in American phraseology—that is to say idle mendicants, poverty-stricken men, who hung about tents to excite the pity of charitable individuals—were also very numerous. Some men who have a persuasive address and cool effrontery can insinuate themselves any where, and contrive to subsist entirely on others; but the appellation of ‘loafer,’ which conveys the greatest reproach, was a stigma I was anxious to avoid.

After endless applications for work, I at last prevailed upon a good-natured man to employ me as a rough carpenter; to hammer a nail straight and to use an axe is the least expected of such people, but I could do neither of these things satisfactorily, and was discharged at night. Four dollars amply repaid my labour, such as it was, and the following day my diligent search for work met with 148 unexpected success. The owner of a sail-loft needed workmen to stitch canvass for tents, for which there was a great demand; thinking myself capable of doing such apparently simple work, I declared myself competent; but when I took my station with other workmen, and had needles, palmpricker, and other tools put into my hands, I felt the truth of the old proverb “every man to his trade.” My inefficiency was soon perceived, and not being found sufficiently dexterous, I was told



in the evening that my further services would not be required; but with seven dollars for my day's work I went on my way rejoicing.

On going at night to the baker's, where I usually left my traps, I found they had been carried off by one of his customers; my blankets were my principal source of independence, for were the nights ever so wet and cold, wrapped in them I cared not for the weather and needed no shelter; without them I felt comparatively helpless. After a fruitless search, feeling that I could not safely lay exposed out in the open air, I peered into several tents; "loafer," cried one, "I'll see you d—d" says another, similar salutations on all sides repulsed 149 me; I could not discover the blacksmith's tent in the darkness, or I should have hazarded another kick in the ribs for a night's shelter.

About midnight I came to a small tent, where I espied two men seated at a supper of pork and molasses; judging by their physiognomy they looked good natured, so without further introduction I stepped inside. The greeting I received was not so rough as previous ones, and after considerable demurring I obtained their consent to lay myself down in a corner; their repast being concluded, they wrapt themselves up in their buffalo robes, pointing out the farther corner as the place I was to occupy. It was a frosty night, and lying uncovered on the damp ground I was restless and shivering with cold; in this desperate condition, when a snoring duet proved them to be both asleep, I crawled over and gently extracted a coat from under their heads, and was cautiously proceeding to remove a superfluous blanket, when the snoring duet suddenly became a solo; momentarily expecting a pistol ball would follow the detection of a supposed felonious intent, I listened in breathless suspense: the roaring of the wind probably saved 150 me; the duet was resumed by the second sleeper, and having secured a covering I crept cautiously back, and returned the coat and blankets before day-break without discovery. I then went in search of my blankets, visiting the most likely spots, and at last espied them wrapped round two sleepers, my first impulse was to take summary vengeance, however, I contented myself with their restitution.

Anxious to obtain work of some description, after visiting the most likely places without success, I accosted a man overlooking some carpenters constructing a foot bridge. He wanted a cook; thinking my knowledge of the culinary science sufficient, I professed by ability to serve him. There were

twelve men in the company, who lived under a tarpauling which had formerly been the mainsail of a vessel; the tent was pitched in the bed of the river, it was open at both ends, and so small as barely to afford sleeping room, the roof being too low to admit of our standing upright. Our carpet by day and mattress at night were the river bullrushes. Our dinner service was limited, but durable; consisting of tin pans for meat, tin plates, 151 tin mugs, a tin can for molasses, a pepper pot, some knives, and a few forks. The cooking utensils were likewise few and simple: comprising a frying pan, saucepan, and coffee pot; and the fire-place was under a bank. The meals which I guaranteed to cook were as follows: coffee at five A.M.; steaks, damper and coffee at eight; ditto at twelve; ditto at five P.M. I had to hew wood for firing, and fetch it from half a mile distant, leaving my fire in the meanwhile unattended; for these duties I received five dollars a day.

After the first day's experience of my culinary skill, my twelve masters, who doubted my qualification for the office, found fault at every meal: either the steaks were too tough, or the damper was heavy; for these mechanics had a taste far too epicurean to digest beef, unless previously beaten to make it tender. I found it is a great trial to be the servant of a dozen masters, each one continually making offensive observations and often groundless complaints; and perceiving that some were resolved to grumble till I was discharged, I thought it was prudent to take the initiative, and therefore gave warning on the third day of my service as 'plain 152 cook.' As in California, leaving followed a notice to quit as promptly as the bullet from a pistol did the pulling of a trigger, I left my mob of masters without 'a good character from my last place.'

Once more my own master, I indulged myself in a stroll through the town. In the centre of it was a silent and sombre tenement, without windows or any show of goods; it was about eighty feet long by fifteen in width, made of tarred canvass, in shape similar to a gambling tent. Pushing back a canvass door, the light of two slush lamps at some distance apart, showed it to be a hospital. About thirty people, afflicted with sickness in every shape, lay closely packed on each side; the wet was dripping in from the roof, and most of them lay on straw shaken out on the earth, with only their blankets thrown over them. It was, indeed, a chamber of horrors: groans, lamentations, and ravings of delirium arose on every side. People of various countries, classes, and colour, struck down with disease, were left almost uncared for. The public eye having at length been shocked by the numbers

of sufferers who lay prostrate in the streets, and on the very thresholds of their doors, a receptacle was at last provided 153 for the Lazarus at their gates; not one where they could be comfortably attended to and cured, but where they might be removed from open view to die out of sight: a doctor attended twice a day, taking a cursory view of them, but nurses there were none.

Prompted by curiosity to view the wretched inmates, I walked down the room between the rows of the sick. Observing two of them to be motionless, I leant over; the touch of the skin told me that one was a corpse, the other was all but dead: the quickness and difficulty of breathing, and the coldness of the extremities showed that life was gradually departing. A man who lay betwixt them, suffering from a barbarous wound in the abdomen from a bowie-knife, received in a drunken affray, told me that the day before three corpses had been moved out, which had lain there three days, because the local authorities had not arranged how and whether to defray the expenses of burial.

At the further end of the room, I beheld an object which filled me with horror and dismay: taking one of the lamps to have a clearer view, I perceived my young shipmate, whom I had left at the cognac 154 store; he was seated on the straw, plucking out and busily untwisting the threads of his quilt: in an instant the sad conviction that he was deranged flashed upon me. His auburn hair hung long and uncombed over his forehead and shoulders, his countenance was wan, thin, and engrained with dirt; and his blood-shot and wandering eyes heightened his haggard appearance: he had on a coarse shirt, and a faded satin waistcoat. I never witnessed a more forlorn and melancholy spectacle than this unfortunate youth presented. Sitting down beside him, I waited till a ray of reason discovered me to him; and at lucid intervals I gathered a few particulars of his history.

After our departure, partly for want of customers, and partly to drown his regret, he had recourse to the brandy-cask; the tent was afterwards sold to pay current expences, and having nothing further convertible into dollars, hard labour was his only alternative. His partner, unwilling to be encumbered with a helpless comrade, deserted him in this extremity; stung to the quick by such selfish and unfeeling conduct, dependent only upon his own exertions for a living, and disappointed in obtaining 155 work, he underwent great privations. Despondency succeeded; mental anxiety and hardships brought on fever and ague, and, being without friends, he must have perished from

exposure and hunger, had he not been conveyed to the asylum where I found him. Lying with wet clothing on wet straw, in the depth of winter, without a fire, and daily witnessing agonies and death around him, his mind gave way.

Little food and medicine had been given him; I procured a loaf, which he ate ravenously. I stayed with him some hours, listening to and talking with him, and affording him what comfort and consolation I could; and though he was conscious of his rapid dissolution, he prayed me either to stay at Stockton, or to convey him on board the Mazeppa. When he relapsed into a state of insensibility, I hurried out of the wretched abode, found out the doctor and stated the case to him, urging the respectability of the patient's friends, and stating that a handsome recompence would be bestowed if his health were restored, and he conveyed to the ship. The calculating practitioner said, that considering his complaint, his recovery 156 could not be reckoned upon; and that he was too far Down-East to trust to the promise of a recompence.

Finding it was useless to interfere further in his behalf, and my own affairs urgently requiring attention, I saw my poor shipmate but once after; he was then totally deranged, and in other respects considerably worse. Subsequently, a letter from his quondam partner, sent to the Mazeppa, gave information of his death. Insanity, as may be supposed, is very frequent in this country; where the mind is liable to very violent shocks, caused by sudden reverses of fortune, privation, and danger.

Disappointed in obtaining sufficient work to defray my expences, and having purchased a loaf with my last dollar the preceding evening, I was wandering about hungry and wet, ruminating how to obtain a breakfast, when I was attracted by the voices of sailors in a tent, from which issued a savoury smell of lobscouse. My animal cravings irresistibly held me to the spot, and though greatly abhorring the name of 'loafer,' I thrust my head into the tent, and saw seven seamen feasting, with bowls of warm tea along-side of them. Edging my 157 way in, I asked leave to light my pipe; my miserable attire and hungry looks excited their sympathy, and one of them said, "I guess, stranger, you've been to the diggins." The Americans never fail to remind you if you are a 'Britisher;' and one of the present company, who bore the sobriquet of 'Cockney Bill,' and had hitherto been absorbed in swilling deep potations of tea, no sooner found that I was his countryman, than he

sprang up from the ground, and with a cordial grasp of the hand, asked what part I came from. He had been born and bred in the New Cut, Lambeth, and my being somewhat acquainted with that neighbourhood, gave me strong claims upon his sympathy; I was accordingly pressed to partake of their repast, and did so thankfully. Those who know not what it is to go without regular meals for a long time, cannot conceive how grateful to the hungry stomach is a plenteous supply of hot viands.

My hosts had lately been paid off from the American man-of-war, Ohio; they had purchased a tent, provisions, and a whale-boat, and arrived at Stockton two days before, with the intention of proceeding to the gold-mines; but hearing such 158 discouraging accounts of California, and witnessing the return of so many disappointed sickly people from the diggings, they deferred proceeding.

Sailors in general are the creatures of impulse, easily stimulated or depressed, and averse to harassing land expeditions; so that now the excitement was over and doubts prevailed, it required very little eloquence on my part to dissuade them from penetrating the interior; and the same promptitude which they had shown in preparing for a start, was now manifested in getting ready for their return. My young countryman Bill, who was evidently the leading man amongst them, kindly resolved to use his influence to include me in their arrangements, and fortunately he succeeded; so, having disposed of their tent, which was to be delivered up the following morning, and sold their superfluous stock of provisions, we passed the day (it being wet) wrapt up in our blankets.

It rarely happens that the solitary stranger in California falls into the company of good Samaritans; such is the prevalent distrust and unsociability, especially towards foreigners, that acquaintances are rarely contracted or greetings exchanged. The 159 backwoodmen, or overlanders from the Western States, are for the most part strongly national, and prejudiced against foreigners. In foreign countries, there is no stronger tie to bind men together than nationality and good fellowship; most of my new acquaintance were of English parentage, or otherwise connected with the old country, and therefore willingly afforded me a cordial welcome.

## CHAPTER XI.

Starting for San Francisco—Hard Rowing—Indian Rancheras—Nights in the Boat—Appearance of Francisco—A Friend and a Bed—Sickness and Riot—Improved State of Francisco—Author's Occupations—A Maniac—Agitation to keep up Wages—Brutality of a Stump-Orator—Ship Captains assaulted—Californian Justice—Tarpeian Rock of San Francisco—A Golgotha—Effects of Gold—Author works as a Mason's Labourer—Blasting a Rock and Catastrophe—Election of Lieutenant Governor—Francisco on Fire—Destruction and Danger—American Energy—Tub-Preachers.

HAVING repaired our boat and laid in a sufficient supply of provisions, unencumbered by any baggage save blankets, we started the following morning for San Francisco, in a drizzling rain and fog. There were six of us in company, and as nothing but constant hard labour would enable us to reach 161 our destination, we divided ourselves into two watches, each two hours off and on by day, and four by night. Rowing for pleasure is a very healthful and agreeable exercise, but rowing as hard as galley slaves the whole day long, with two hours interval of rest, is very fatiguing; and pulling the greater part of the night is still more harassing. Our boat was leaky and small; we had no sail to assist us, and unfortunately for us the tides flowed in from the ocean with far greater force than they ebbed out.

Winter in this country is one continual rain, and the river Joachim had risen considerably; when the snow melts on the mountains, the lowlands are inundated, forming a vast sea, covering the country to a great extent, and leaving only a few eminences visible above the flood. The Indians who dwell in the lowlands near rivers, and are dependent on fishing, when there is no convenient elevation to which they can retire, construct lofty capacious mounds, called rancheras, to which each tribe resorts, when inundated. Confined to these elevations for long periods, without food and shelter, sickness and privations thin their numbers, and 162 their only ark is frequently their grave. These rancheras are sometimes raised twenty feet above the ground, varying from two hundred to five

hundred yards in extent; they resemble small islands surrounded by a deluge, and are numerous in the lowlands between the Sierra Nevada and Francisco.

On the banks of the San Joachim is a jungle of high reeds, extending for miles inwards, situate in a morass devoid of trees or vegetation, called thule beds. Loathsome and pestilential vapours arise from the humid soil, across which it is impossible to make way, or maintain a sound footing. Tired with the continued exertions of the day, cramped with wet, cold and fatigue, having no anchor to hold on by in the stream, we ran the boat into the bank at dusk, with the intention of camping and lighting a fire. Unable to do either, biscuits, cold beef, and the uncomfortable lodgings of the boat were our only alternative; so having eaten our supper we pulled on.

During the night-watches it was impossible to lie down, so dispelling the chill with a draft of rum, and wrapping our blankets over our benumbed 163 limbs and saturated clothing, those off duty crouched up at the bow or stern of the boat, endeavouring to obtain what sleep they could in a sitting posture. My watch was from eight to twelve; and had it not been for shame, I would gladly have dropt the oars. The exercise, however, caused a circulation of the blood, essential after sitting cramped and wet; but long and dreary seemed the hours as, exhausted and almost falling back to sleep, I pulled mechanically at the oars. When relieved by the other watch, we sat curled up in the stern-sheets: the leakiness of the boat preventing us lying down to sleep at the bottom. Four hours afterwards, the unwelcome call of "Spell, oh!" roused us to exertion; and, wet and benumbed, we reluctantly resumed the oars, anxiously looking for day-break. The bushman's principal comfort is a warm dish of tea; but, unable to light a fire, we drank grog as a substitute for the more refreshing beverage.

At dusk the following evening, we saw the lights of the New York of the Pacific; when, securing our boat, we hastily landed, and partook of some refreshment. At Benicia we had another repast; 164 and the day after we entered the bay of San Francisco, to our great relief; having experienced rain and cold misty weather during the whole of our comfortless and fatiguing voyage.

On landing in Francisco, my countryman Bill invited me to a friend's tent; but, desirous to see my old ship-mates, I sallied out in quest of them. The night was intensely dark, the roads very muddy, and the appearance of the city was altered; streets having now filled up the vacant places. Wending my way through the city, I came to the environs, where was an assemblage of tents irregularly distributed; and almost dead with exhaustion, I wandered through this canvas labyrinth till long past midnight, seeking a temporary shelter. Unable to find my way among the intricate windings, occasionally upset by stumbling over a tent rope or pegs, with which my feet came in contact; at another time, bogged in the mire, or sunk in a pit-fall, I at length found the wished-for tent. It was inhabited by a cabin passenger and his wife, who, during my absence, had lost two children. Perceiving that he could not accommodate me, I obtained of him information where to find another ship-mate; but 165 his tent being at the other end of the town, I did not find it before day-break; when, creeping quietly into it, I threw myself on a box, and fell asleep.

The good-hearted owner of the tent awoke me in the morning; at first thinking me an apparition, he was rejoiced to see me in the flesh. His tent, situated near the beach, was made of canvass and sacking, patched up with quilts; in dimensions it was about twenty feet by ten; at one end was a plank partition, forming a bar counter, behind which were casks and bottles containing spirits and wines; in front were some rough benches and tables for his customers. These were mostly what is called "beach comers;" comprising expired convicts from Sydney and Tasmania, Peruvians, Chilians, Mexicans, and others, half sailors and half landmen, who picked up a living in a somewhat questionable manner: many of this amphibious class were ever ready to offer their services, and by no means scrupulous, if well remunerated.

My host, though an honourable man, bore the stigma of convictism; and much as he might dislike the company of his penal acquaintances, he 166 could not turn away business from his tent. He was the same individual in whose company I had slept the first night in California; since which unpleasant initiation he had steadily applied himself to business, and was making a good deal of money by keeping a retail grog-shop. Respecting me for past services, he cheerfully offered me shelter, which I gladly accepted. Under the rough counter were two barrels, on these were placed



two broad boards, which I made my bed. For three days I lay in a state of utter prostration, under a combined attack of fever and ague, which, affecting the body and limbs, made any movement a labour. But the effect this illness had upon the body, was nothing compared to what it had upon the mind: it produced a nervous excitement of the brain, and depression of spirits, similar to what is felt in typhoid fever. During my malady, my ship-mate was assiduous in his attention; supplying me with brandy and narcotics to drive off the dismal thoughts which oppressed me.

Day and night the tent was crowded with drunken and desperate characters, fighting, gambling, swearing; and in addition to such uproarious 167 conduct, personal adventures of the most discreditable character were narrated to each other within my hearing. In these nightly orgies, quarrelling and drawing of knives and pistols were frequent, and often ended tragically. This tumult and disorder might have been expected to prevent or retard the recovery of an invalid; but I believe it materially benefitted me: the constant excitement going on, prevented my mind preying upon the morbid thoughts which solitude might have engendered. When sufficiently recovered, I sought out my Ohio friends; and the demand for labour being brisk, in company with them I went daily in search of work.

Notwithstanding the high rate of labour, Francisco had taken giant strides in growth: lofty warehouses three stories high lined the streets, extending to the very verge of the hills, which were covered as far as the summit with tents and frame houses. At the wharfs, piers ran out at intervals, and store-houses lined the water's edge to the extent of a mile; moored alongside the wharfs also were the hulls of merchant vessels fitted up as stores and lodging-houses. The spirit of 168 improvment had effected wonders; yet such was the increase of business and the tide of emigration, that even these buildings and accommodations were inadequate to the demand. Small rooms belonging to taverns were let out for offices, and eagerly rented at from two to three hundred dollars a month, though no bigger than ship cabins.

As the city increased in extent, its buildings likewise improved in structure and appearance, and offered better accommodation: the decorations of saloons were splendid, and carried out regardless of expence. In the luxuries of the table a gourmand might revel: the choicest fruits and dishes of

other countries were to be had, preserved in tins, while wild fowl, young elks, and portions of bear were suspended invitingly over the doors of the restaurants. Silver or plated services adorned some tables, and from iced champagne downwards, the demands of guests could be satisfied. The rate of boarding varied greatly: in some houses eighty dollars was the weekly payment, in others, as cheap as twenty-five dollars; a dinner for a dozen served in good style would cost a hundred dollars: but only those who had made their piles of gold could indulge in these epicurean feasts.

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Situations under cover it was difficult to obtain: any berth protected from the weather was not to be had for a continuance. It is an old proverb "he is happy whose circumstances suit his temper, but he is still more happy who can suit his temper to his circumstances." My occupations were manifold; discharging cargoes, carrying merchants' goods, cutting roads, tent-making, vending fruit, and packing timber. Five was my usual hour of rising, and however miserable and dark the morning, I was at the various 'points' in search of occupation, eager to seek, and willing to accept employment at any description of work. Having no settled abode, I lived according to the day's luck; sleeping wherever chance directed.

"Misfortune makes men acquainted with strange bedfellows:" on one occasion I was sleeping in a tent with four others in "Pleasant Valley, when a noise aroused me, and looking up I perceived a man belonging to the next tent, who had gone mad with fever, standing over one of the sleepers pointing a loaded rifle at him; the others soon awoke, and feeling that one of us was doomed, we waited in suspense; fortunately there was a coat hanging up, at which he fired imagining it to be an individual. One of us slipped out of the tent, and the maniac darted at and seized him; the tent was on the brink of the cliff to the edge of which the two were struggling, our companion was but a child in the hands of a madman, and to save him from imminent danger we rushed to the rescue. In the scuffle I received a very disfiguring blow over the eye, but, nevertheless held fast hold of the leg of the lunatic, and when within six feet of the cliff, four of us brought him to the ground; but not until we had nearly strangled him with a halter that we got round his neck.

The winter having set in, thousands were returning sick and impoverished from the mines; the arrival of so many labourers soon affected the rate of wages, and the points were daily crowded with men unable to get work.

As this influx of labour caused a great diminution of wages, the price of provisions remaining the same; discontent and indignation prevailed amongst the lower orders, and nightly meetings took place, attended by crowds of the rabble ripe for pillage or riot; but luckily without leaders. At these 171 agitations I was sometimes present; violent speeches were made, secret leagues were formed in every quarter, and had an o'Connell arisen from amongst them, order might have been subverted and terms dictated by the mob to the store-keepers and householders; as it was, these meetings ended in furious tirades, forbidding foreigners to seek employment or people to hire them; accusing the foreigners of being the cause of a fall in wages, and holding out a deadly threat to all who dared labour under the fixed rate of payment, ten dollars a day.

These nocturnal assemblies had in them something appalling, being composed of between three hundred to one thousand cut-throats, armed with bowie-knives and fire-arms, often intoxicated. The stump orators and leading demagogues were usually notorious characters, celebrated not for mental superiority, but for their extreme democratic principles and physical powers. Their rostrum was any elevation or moveable convertible to their purpose; flaming brands usually lighted up the scene. The spokesman was generally able to enforce order, either by eloquence or prowess; on one occasion an orator, being interrupted in his 172 harangue, by certain remarks derogatory to his person, leaped off his tub into the midst of the crowd and seized the offender; fierce was the struggle, a ring was formed, when throwing his antagonist down, the orator jumped on him with his heavy boots! In vain were the victim's shrieks of agony, no one ventured to interpose; the demagogue's rage being satiated, he remounted the tub and continued his oration. Such brutal atrocity as stamping upon a prostrate foe, would have drawn forth the execrations and interference of the lowest rabble in England. If such sanguinary treatment followed a personal affront, what would have been the fate of an unhappy dissentient from the doctrines propounded,—especially had he been a stranger?

Both masters and men felt themselves subject to an inquisition and controul, making them fearful of entering into any contracts together, lest they should be betrayed or endangered; consequently, universal distrust prevailed, and numbers of respectable working men, who would willingly have worked for a reasonable sum, were almost destitute for want of employment, and nigh starving; being 173 deterred from engaging themselves at lower wages by a mob of malcontents, the majority of whom either could not, or would not work under the fixed rate; and when persons desirous to engage hands came down to the locality of the point, the most forward had the preference; the weakest and unobtrusive went to the wall: but at isolated quarters many procured work unobserved.

The ship-masters especially, were objects of suspicion and dislike to the mob: an arbitrary captain dared not land openly; I saw several beatings and duckings given to officers and captains of vessels. A captain of my own acquaintance returning to his vessel at dusk, having been informed against by an ill-disposed fellow, was beset by a gang close to the landing-place; I recognized him, and fortunately there were several colonists at hand, who rescued him from the hands of his assailants, and carried him bleeding to the boat. The detention of crews on board ship was another grievance, which the mob took upon themselves to redress, by rowing out and delivering the men from captivity. The desertion of vessels becoming a serious detriment to the shipping interest, the captains of several English 174 and colonial ships made a formal complaint to the authorities, appearing before the Alcalde for redress. He declined any interference in the matter, asserting that California being a free country, those entering it became free agents and were privileged to dissolve contracts formed under despotic governments; and the term “running away,” being generally applied to cases of desertion, the Alcalde ridiculed the masters, by asking them if they actually saw the men run away, dismissing the case by telling them not to misapply the term. Unsupported by the government authorities, the ship-masters could not enforce a return to duty, and were compelled to acquiesce in the exorbitant demands of mariners; obtaining a fresh crew at the nearest port.

Notwithstanding the threats held out, and the vengeance often visited on those who worked under wages, full work became difficult to obtain: nor was it safe to be forward in seeking it, suspicion following the movements of foreigners especially. There was a high cliff near the rendezvous at

Miller's Point, which I carefully avoided at night, as from this "Tarpeian rock," three poor fellows had 175 been hurled who had worked under wages, or were suspected of having done so. The beach below was used as a burying ground; those who perished from want or sickness were conveyed thither. The labour of digging a grave was quite unnecessary, the bodies being either covered at high tide with a layer of sand, or carried out to sea. The beach was a perfect golgotha, or field of skulls: bones were scattered about, and the arm, leg, or scalp of one recently deposited occasionally protruded above the surface. When digging sand for the masons, I exhumed several bodies in various places; and the effluvia from those lately interred made us quickly abandon our shovels. At one end of the town, also, was an open space allotted for burials; newly raised mounds without any inscription were numerous, while in some conspicuous places deep pits ready for fresh deposits met the eye. Some of these had a placard at one end signifying the price of the grave and where the sexton was to be found, so that those who thought their thread of life near spun out could select their final resting place: a characteristic example of the mercenary spirit of the Californians.

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A great deal of sickness prevailed during the winter, and in unfrequented spots men might be seen suffering from sickness, without a roof to cover them; while those in health pursued their occupations, intent on accumulating wealth, and too well accustomed to such shocking sights to be affected by them. Indeed so great was the general demoralization and selfishness, that though piles of gold heaped the tables around, men died of want and sickness unheeded, in the precincts of the town.

The deplorable state of things in California, reminded me of the following lines: And Lucifer laughed and shook his head; A happy thought now strikes my brain: I must give to men more sorrow and pain— Move vice, more slaughter, more strife, more blood; So I'll give them gold till it runs a flood.

Anxious to obtain certain employment during the winter months, I made a contract at a hundred dollars per month and my board, with a New Zealand colonist who was foreman of a large warehouse of stone which was being erected. My duty was to 177 carry to the masons on the

scaffold buckets of mortar and huge blocks of coral-reef two feet square; the stone had been brought from the Sandwich Islands, ready cut for building purposes. It was very arduous labour; the weight of these unwieldy masses of rock was great, moreover the minute shells which composed it cut the hands, and wore out endless gloves. We boarded and slept in the fore-castle of a vessel near at hand: this was the driest lodging I had shared since leaving the Mazeppa.

We pursued our avocations in wet and dry weather, from six in the morning till six at night; the labour was such that few staid long, for it not only blistered and excoriated the hands, but strained the sinews and muscles. Luckily for us our foreman was addicted to drink, which caused him to absent himself occasionally, when we had a few minutes respite; he was a hard taskmaster, and we were not sorry to purchase his absence by alternately inviting him to a neighbouring grog tent. Opposite to our work some rocks were being blasted to widen the thoroughfare, the miner assured us that he had so conducted his operations that the 178 disembowelled fragments would fly in a contrary direction to us; but through inadvertence, the explosion took place unawares, discharging upwards huge masses of rock, which fell around us; two of my fellow-workmen were knocked down, and I narrowly escaped: a huge piece of stone striking the ground whereon I had stood just before. The hapless projector fared worst of all, for he was precipitated several feet below his handywork.

Authority to elect a lieutenant-governor being received from the United States, two candidates appeared, in the persons of Judge Burnett, an American lawyer, and the celebrated Colonel Fremont, an officer of engineers in the United States' service, who had arduously explored California before the discovery of the gold regions. In the evening, the 'plaza' or square was illuminated with candles; in the centre, two waggons boarded over served for hustings, which were surrounded by thousands of politicians.

Backed by his friends, Judge Burnett first ascended the platform; he was a gentlemanly man of apparently an intellectual appearance. Either purposely or accidentally, the platform partly gave way, causing him momentarily to lose his footing; an accident which with ready tact he turned to advantage, exclaiming that though he had stumbled he did not fall. He delivered a very good

speech, interspersed with numerous egotistical statements intended to impress his merits upon the audience. Colonel Fremont, who addressed them afterwards, was a very spare weather-beaten man, sharp featured, with an aquiline nose and a keen eye. In his appearance he was more studiously Yankee than Burnett, though without his polished manners; he likewise uttered a panegyric upon himself, claiming a right to their suffrages from his long residence in California. Burnett, however, was finally elected.

About this period, a great fire broke out in Francisco at about five in the morning. The roar of the multitude, the clangour of bells and crash of falling timbers was truly alarming; and rushing to the scene of devastation, I found thousands assembled witnesses of the conflagration: flames were darting out of the roof and windows of the El Dorado, Denison's Exchange, Parker-house, and the noblest buildings in the city. The scene viewed at 180 a distance, seemed like an immense burning crater, illuminating the shipping and sky with the lurid reflection of the blaze. The fire spread with inconceivable rapidity; forked tongues of fire encircling the roofs, from which they seemed to lick all the covering, for the rafters presently cracked and fell with a terrific crash.

From the direction of the wind, the whole city was in danger of being burnt down; sparks flew out far and wide, and the heat of summer had made the wooden edifices as igneous as tinder. The smoke and flames blackened and almost scorched the spectators who crowded the plaza; but nobody as yet offered to assist in extinguishing the fire: enormous as was the value of property at stake, the mob would not work till the rate of compensation was decided upon. Three dollars an hour was finally agreed to; but by this time several well-disposed men had already penetrated the burning houses, with bandages over their mouths. I formed one of the party; we were occupied underneath the flaming rafters in passing out valuables, all the while involved in smoke, often literally singed, and in momentary expectation of being crushed; but we continued deliberately the removal of goods. Wines and spirits of the choicest description flowed in the kennel; champagne and Martel's brandy being liberally used as stimulants: some drinking too freely, must have perished on the down-fall of the buildings. Looking over the debris, my gratification was unbounded on discovering a heap of potatoes roasted to a nicety; this was a god-

send, far more acceptable than silver: I had not tasted baked potatoes for months and now made a hearty meal, eating till my position seemed no longer tenable, and reluctantly abandoning it.

The fire by this time had demolished two rows of houses, including gaming-houses and a row of the richest merchant stores; houses equally valuable opposite had the walls toasted and the windows melted with the heat: wet carpetting and blankets being hung from the roofs as a protection from the flames, probably saved them from ignition, for the flames shot across the road and licked the sides of the buildings. There being no other way of stopping the conflagration, gunpowder was brought from the shipping, and the houses nearest being forcibly entered, were, *nolens volens*, blown up to make a gap wide enough to arrest the flames; others had their supporters cut away near the foundation and were pulled down with pullies and ropes passed round the roofs. This prompt demolition arrested the progress of the fire, the city would otherwise have been entirely reduced to ashes.

Water was very difficult to procure; some of the merchants are said to have paid sixty dollars for a water-cart load; and several loads were used in extinguishing the flames and cooling damaged goods. When the fire was extinguished and the smoke had cleared off, only a mass of rubbish and melted metals and other substances fused together, remained of the costly mansions. The catastrophe gave a great shock to business; but the energy of the Americans is remarkable: forty-eight hours afterwards, and ere the ground had cooled, the charred mass of cinders had disappeared, contracts were made, and hundreds employed in laying the foundations of new edifices.

The estimated loss by fire was said to be one hundred and fifty thousand dollars: the buildings were the most serious items; some frame-houses being three stories high, having one hundred rooms, and paying a ground-rent of eight thousand dollars.

The quarter being notorious for its gambling-houses, many regarded the fire as a visitation of providence; opposite the scene of ruin some zealous preachers were mounted on tubs, crying 'Woe unto Sodom and Gomorrah,' and exhorting the people to turn from the errors of their ways, and erect places of worship. Nor was this calamity without its good effects, as funds for a church were



raised; many calculating men paying the subscription as they would an insurance, not to promote the salvation of souls, but in the hope of thereby saving their goods and chattels. In the centre of such an ungodly city, where savage acts of lawless violence were perpetrated with impunity, it was a bold thing to turn tub preacher, and augured sincerity and devotion in those who dared to do so; for their admonitions were scoffed at, they were ridiculed and pelted with mud, and, had they not quitted their position, they would in all probability have met with the fate of St. Stephen, at the hands of the lawless mob.

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## CHAPTER XII.

Author leaves Francisco—The Mission of Dolores—A Mormon Family—A Californian Hostelry—A Soft Plank—Primitive Habits—Scarcity of Cows—Luxury of a Tooth-brush—Pueblo San Jose—American Feeding—Author's Duties—Notions of American Women—Women in California—Mexican Gamblers—A Californian Hamlet—Idle and Dissipated Community—Sports of Children—Lassoing a Wild Bull—Californian Butchering.

DREADING another return of sickness, I ceased working for the stone-mason, and prepared to leave Francisco. It was a fine afternoon when I bid adieu to this city of sordid selfishness, heartless profligacy, violence, disease, and despair. Having purchased a supply of clothes and linen, for which I paid forty dollars, I buckled my knapsack and blankets on my back, and took the road to the Presidio of San Jose; to see if I could obtain a comfortable and quiet shelter for the winter in some remote Rancho.

I had lost the track, and the evening was drawing on, when, as I slowly plodded through the scrub in search of the main road, my meditations were disturbed by the tolling of a bell. The approach of night prompted me to seek some habitation; and, indifferent as to where it was, I turned in the direction whence the sound proceeded. On emerging from the thick scrub, I entered a plain or valley, and discerned a large mud building of monastic appearance in the distance: it was the old "Mission of Dolores." An arm of the sea bounded the valley, affording a magnificent prospect of

lofty forest-clad mountains, their summits covered with eternal snow; on each side of the mission, and at the back, rose an amphitheatre of gentle ascent, clothed with verdure, protecting it from cold winds; in front was a small hamlet of about thirty mud cottages, with large slanting red-tiled roofs; streams of fresh water flowing through paved watercourses, encircled the grounds, where were fruit trees, (once artistically disposed) and earth-built corrals for herding cattle, all now neglected.

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The mission itself was a massive structure of great extent, built in the form of a square, and though composed of mud and stones, had considerable architectural pretensions, presenting an imposing appearance. There was an air of grandeur about this relic of a past age: one wing had a decidedly ecclesiastic appearance; a fine arched portal of rich fret-work formed the entrance; massive pillars rose at the sides, in numerous niches were figures of saints, and in a belfry hung two massive bells. The centre of the building had probably been intended for the priest's residence, as a verandah shaded the front. The other wing formed a separate establishment, having been converted into a tavern; as a large painting of a Bull's head denoted.

Entering the doorway of the inn I found myself in a spacious room, eighty feet long, full of revellers; a bar was fitted up at one end. Having got the ear of the landlord, I asked if there was any work to be had, offering my services; fortunately, he happened to be in want of assistance, so taking me into the back premises, he introduced me to his family; who, not being displeased with my appearance, it was agreed that I should become an inmate of the house, giving my occasional services gratuitously in return.

This was a Yankee family of Mormons, who had come overland from the Mormon city at the Salt Lake. This enterprising sect of fanatics having been expatriated from the States, had travelled, like the people of Israel, over deserts and through the wilderness, till they had discovered a fertile country far north, beyond the pale of civilization; here, unmolested, this large community founded a city, and formed a state, where they could observe their peculiar religious customs free from persecution, and frame laws suitable to their habits and creed. Hearing of the gold regions many left for California; the family of Yates, with their sons and daughters, and son-in-law, migrated

likewise. Arrived with their teams and property at the Sacramento, gold-digging was tried, but soon relinquished. Having some capital, and being in quest of a place to invest it, the mission of Dolores seemed a profitable locality; and its reverend occupants, being sounded, offered no objection to a wing of the sacred edifice being converted into a tavern. 188 The business was to be ostensibly carried on in the Mormon's name; the chief priest becoming a partner. The Mormon was a good-natured man of middle age, a thorough calculating weather-beaten Yankee; the wife was a bustling matron, as uncouth in manners as a woman brought up in the backwoods could well be, a vigilant housewife with a wonderful constitution, full of energy and activity: from morning till late at night, her shrill voice and strange phrases resounded everywhere. She was very mercenary; and seemed wholly bent on accumulating money. The eldest and married daughter was about eighteen, an unassuming, kind-hearted, quiet girl; the youngest sister was a merry boisterous girl of fifteen; the son-in-law was about twenty-one, a pale, thin youth, wasted away with consumption, and totally unserviceable; the son was a hardy, useful, good-tempered lad of seventeen.

The facade of the centre of the mission was inhabited by the priests and some Spanish families; the back part was tenanted by some Mexican Indians, and between them was a large court-yard. From the eaves of the buildings sloped a tiled 189 verandah, making a shaded pathway round to any portion of the building. Our portion of one wing consisted of eight rooms and two cells; one of the rooms, which had probably been the refectory, was about one hundred feet long, wholly unfurnished and unused; another almost as spacious, was used as an eating room for the guests; and an immense hall, three hundred feet long, which extended over head the whole length of the building and had probably been used as a granary in olden times, now served as a dormitory. The other rooms were appropriated as a kitchen, store, and sleeping rooms for the family; but all were unfurnished, having only bare mud walls and brick floor.

My daily duties were most multifarious: I was the 'Handy Andy' of the establishment, a privileged retainer, but incessantly occupied. At eight in the morning the shrill voice of the matron roused me from my slumbers.

I slept in the deserted granary, with no bed or elevation from the floor; picking out the softest plank to stretch my blankets upon: legions of rats galloped over me, but I slept soundly notwithstanding. It may appear incredible, but I can affirm from 190 experience, that there is a vast difference in the texture of boards; a springy soft deal plank is far more easy to the bones than the hard knotty teak or mahogany. When the traveller has lately been accustomed to seek repose on the damp ground, exposed to the elements, he is too rejoiced to be under a roof to be querulous about his bed: habit makes a dry plank as easy as a down bed, the soreness of the limbs caused from lying on boards wearing off by usage. Habit had dispelled that languor and reluctance which some people feel to rouse from sleep, so that I seldom needed a second summons; and my toilet was soon completed.

When I descended the ladder into the kitchen, by the dim light of a candle, Mrs. Yates would be hunting up the culinary utensils. My first occupation was to light the fires; the mornings were bitterly cold, and during the operation, Mrs. Yates and her daughter would with perfect nonchalance approach the hearth to warm and dress themselves, utterly regardless of my presence. This lady, in her overland expeditions, had been necessarily compelled to live in a primitive manner with her companions, so that what would shock the delicacy of 191 less adventurous women, became habitual with her, she was apparently unconscious of any indecorum. Washing and combing of the hair was deferred till near breakfast time; for half dressed, the ladies would busy themselves in household work. The fires being lighted and some water boiled, brandy bitters were made expressly for the ladies and myself: Mrs. Yates being very fond of bitters, we never omitted to have a warm bowl the first thing in the morning.

“Do'nt stand so much on your gentility; which is an airy and mere borrowed thing from dead men's dust and bones, and none of yours, except you make or hold it.” This reflection often occurred to me when I felt a rising repugnance to assist in sweeping out the bar, carrying out the ‘marines,’ drawing water, hewing wood, superintending the baking, and hunting up the cows and bullocks; for in such offices I was generally employed during the morning. These duties required considerable activity; especially bringing home the cattle, for there being no fences, they strayed sometimes to a considerable distance. Cows are very 192 scarce in California; the two belonging to Yates had been

brought four thousand miles. Milk preserved in tins may be obtained, but fresh milk cannot be had at any price: the richest merchants in Francisco seldom obtain this luxury; and ours was rarely given to the guests, but used exclusively for the family.

I was requested to milk one of the cows, named Ginger, from her frisky temperament. With great trouble I secured the brute by the horns to the shaft of a waggon; unsuspectingly I adjusted the pail and commenced to milk her, when, bending down her head under her chest, with a kick of the hind leg, she sent me under her: a position from which I was glad to extricate myself. The eldest daughter, Martha, having witnessed the accident, came running up to see if my ribs were broken, and promised to relieve me of the office in future.

The luxury of hot rolls for breakfast, not always to be had in California, were provided by us; I had to watch the baking of them just before our morning meal. As all of us could not have clean hot water to wash, the last always found it 193 villainously dirty; I never liked using it after the ablutions of so many, and my washing first, which often happened, was not thought at all out of place: I had also a towel of my own, the others had only one among the whole family.

I invariably carried a tooth-brush with me in my wanderings; it occupied a trifling space, and was a means of comfort and cleanliness. The refined usages of civilized life are discarded and often ridiculed in a rude country; and many were the jests at my expense, which this trivial article originated: at the mission it was a perfect curiosity. Its possession may have created envy, as there was not another within many miles.

The mission being on the road to San Jose, travellers and atajos of mules often stopped for refreshment. Pueblo San Jose, now a prosperous inland township, formerly consisted mostly of adobe houses, occupied by Spaniards and Sonorians; but since the discovery of the 'placers' it has risen into importance, wooden frame buildings have been erected, and there is a considerable trade. A saw-mill, owned, I believe, by Colonel Fremont, is 194 established there; and there being an abundance of cypress, adapted for building purposes, to be had at a neighbouring forest, it is likely to be a profitable undertaking.

The Pueblo is situated in a fruitful valley, twenty miles in extent, with water carriage to San Francisco close to the town. The mission of San Jose is on one side, and the mission of Santa Clara and its quicksilver mines on the other. Large herds were formerly possessed by these ecclesiastical establishments, where the traveller then always found food and shelter without cost; but since their property has been confiscated, the mines are totally neglected, and this hospitality has ceased.

The mission valley being the best soil adapted to vegetation for miles around, there are several squatters' tents in and near it. Some of these people came occasionally to meals at our tavern; and to acquaint them with the time, we had a large bell, which it was my duty to ring at meal time. At the signal, our hungry neighbours poured in and seated themselves down together at a long table, plentifully spread with victuals; consisting 195 of beef fried and boiled, salt pork, hash, beans, rice, biscuit, and rolls: for this repast they paid four shillings each. Everything being on the table, they helped themselves, eating remarkably fast, smacking their lips, spluttering, and sometimes upsetting the dishes into their own and their neighbour's laps.

The Americans are decidedly not an epicurean, or convivial race; they do not appreciate the sociality of the table: they eat as they work, at a go-a-head pace. The meal is swallowed as a matter of business, talking is an interruption, silence prevails; each one seemingly desirous to devour the most food in the least time. Any dish, if it be substantial and convenient, will suffice; of regular courses in rotation, of sauces and mixtures, of politeness and attention to each other, they have no notion.

The guests seldom required attendance, except for handing of coffee, but I generally avoided this, to me, an unpleasant duty. After the visitors had finished their repast, which they generally did in ten minutes, I rushed to the door to receive the money on the threshold as they left; there was always a lighted 196 candle at my feet, it being the custom to light the pipes immediately after feeding. After their exit, the family and myself sat down to our meal, swallowing as rapidly what we required; after which washing commenced: the crockery being placed in a moveable copper of hot water. A fat Indian girl, who acted as scullion, had formerly done this portion of the work; but being clumsy and negligent, she had broken numerous articles; and to my great annoyance, I was appointed to

this duty. My unskilful mode of handling the dishes, and very visible disgust, however, procured me assistance; for, just as I was meditating on purposely making a smash to procure my release, Martha proposed always to relieve me of the wiping, if I did the preparatory part of immersing the crockery in hot water. The knives and forks were likewise dipped and dry rubbed, but any further cleansing with brick-dust and board was thought unnecessary.

After this, I used generally to yoke the team and drive the waggon into the scrub in search of firewood. Those who have not driven a Yankee team cannot imagine the skill, as well as labour, required in making oxen pull in the right direction. They are most stubborn animals: strike and shout to them ever so fiercely. Sweet pasturage is irresistible; whether there be any inequality of the ground or stumps likely to upset your waggon or not, thither they make a dash; driving them straight is next to impossible, and to make them start off, or turn in the direction you wish, is equally difficult. A bullock-driver must not only always be on foot, but to give effect to his words by blows, must carry a whip, the thong of which cracked and applied dexterously is sufficient to strike terror into their hearts and cut the skin off their backs. The oaths applied to them by professional drivers are awful; each bullock has his name, and I have heard veteran whips declare, that these stubborn beasts move better for curses and epithets than for the lashes applied to them.

After felling sufficient wood, if the bar customers were plentiful, I assisted the landlord by preparing the mint-juleps, gin-sling, brandy-bitters, and other hot beverages, comprehended in the term "drinks." It is the American custom to place plain spirits, brandy, rum, &c., in decanters on the table, for people to help themselves at discretion; no measures are used, the due quantity being left to individual consumers; and it is not often this privilege was abused.

I was gratified to find that my master formed a good opinion of me, as I had access to the cash-box, in which to deposit the money received, and liberty to take what liquors I required. In this country, people for mutual accommodation, are obliged to give and receive credit on the strength of character; nor is their confidence so often misplaced as it might be expected. The punishment attending a breach of faith is very severe; and theft or swindling would entail upon the offender the loss of reputation at least, and probably some other lasting memorial of his knavery.

Dinner was usually the same as breakfast, but the washing up somewhat on a larger scale: most of my work, however, was over by three; and as neither my spirits and health were over good, I generally took a siesta for an hour or so. 'Tea' always came on at half-past five; the food being the same as at other meals. Then, the day's work being concluded, and sufficient wood cut for the morning, I lighted 199 a pipe, and squatted down by the fire till my services were required; while the old lady, whose heart and soul seemed bent on the acquisition of fresh dollars, prepared bread for the morrow, or bustled about other things.

The daughters, who regarded me as a superior being, sent for their edification, with artless curiosity heard my description of European habits. The American women whom I met with are stanch advocates of republican institutions, but have very strange notions of other countries, especially of monarchies: of kings and queens, lords and ladies, they have no rational conception: hardly imagining them of earthly mould; while the people they consider to be serfs in the darkest state of ignorance, their lives and property placed at the will of haughty, all-powerful nobles. Notwithstanding the unfavourable impressions instilled into them by their prejudiced countrymen, however, the frivolities, luxuries, and polished manners of the English are to the females a constant source of curiosity, and raise Englishmen high in their estimation. These two girls had been brought up in the back-woods in a state of rustic simplicity and vulgarity, the nearest approach 200 to civilization being the Mormon city of the Saltlake; and my description of London and many usages of polite society astonished them so much, that an expression of incredulity was sometimes visible in their countenances; though they were not so rude as to give utterance to the feeling to me. Our social chat was often interrupted by the intrusion of male visitors; women in California being so scarce, that to obtain a glimpse or chat with them, men did not hesitate to enter, uninvited, the kitchen precincts; where, with cool effrontery, they would endeavour to prolong their visits: and such is the fascination of women, that in the absence of beauty even ugliness will charm, and receive tribute of flatteries sufficient to gratify the most insatiate vanity.

The mission women were coarse and uneducated, and had not even good looks to recommend them: in England I very much question if their attractions would have been sufficient to have made them



labourer's wives; but in California, where they had no competitors, they were highly appreciated: they knew their value too; but the notice they attracted, and the extravagant attentions paid them, 201 must have made them almost doubt their identity. "Praise undeserved is satire in disguise" thought I, when, after a flattering panegyric upon the beauty and graces of Martha, she blew her nose with her fingers, unconscious of any impropriety.

We had a gambling table in the bar-room, conducted by professional bankers; and old Yates, wishing his youngest son to be skillful at cards, allowed him a certain sum daily to turn the opportunity to advantage. One evening, a Mexican playing at this table, had lost successively his dollars, pistols, poncho, and finally his horse: he was, however, too sharp for the banker; as no sooner was the card turned up, upon which he had forfeited his steed, than he upset the table, and, his horse being lassoed outside, whilst they were busied picking up the scattered dollars, he had mounted, and wrapping a serape around him, with a loud derisive laugh, galloped away at a speed which defied pursuit. The most unpleasant of my duties was looking after the noisy customers: drinking and singing was seldom concluded till two o'clock in the morning, and at intervals during the 202 latter part of the night I had to conduct the drunken and quarrelsome outside; a rather difficult and very disagreeable office.

The hamlet in front of the mission building consisted of four rows of mud cottages, about thirty in number, connected together; they were very dilapidated huts of mud or bricks, which had been built originally for the Mission-Indians, and had only a ground floor, with two rooms each: a mixed race of native Californians, Mexicans, and Indians, now inhabited them. A hammock of grass usually hung from the roof of each; a stock of provisions calculated to last a considerable period was piled in one corner—for they had no shops to go to, and their wants were few; a horse or mule would be lying down in another, and numerous veteran game-cocks, spirit bottles, and packs of cards would be dispersed about in every direction. The chimney and fire-places were different to those common elsewhere; in the thick mud wall a hole was made in a slanting direction, large at the bottom where the fire was, and narrowing towards the top; and the rude plan answered well.

How they got a living it is difficult to say: 203 their original mode of obtaining a livelihood had been destroyed by changes in the state of the country, and provisions were too dear for them to procure without money or work; yet this improvident and idle set managed to exist without labour, and had seemingly little anxiety as to the present or future. Drinking, cock-fighting, playing at cards, basking in the sun, and galloping about on their horses, were their favourite occupations: they had been accustomed to lead the lives of caballeros (gentlemen), and continued to do so; but whether they sustained this character long is very doubtful.

Fandangos frequently took place of a night; the more respectable families giving open house dances to each other in turn: this was mostly owing to the presence of women. Californian and Mexican families only associated together; the Indians formed the indigent part of the community, living under their patronage, and subservient to them. I frequently resorted to these fandangos of an evening, to hear the lively airs and see the picturesque groups; the fiddle and guitar were the principal instruments played, usually by amateur performers. The men 204 directed frowning glances under their slouched hats at any familiarity of strangers, and the state of the country rendered the strictest vigilance necessary, as the knife stuck in their girdle would have been soon blood-stained had their suspicions or jealousy been roused. The women were mostly good-looking, and evidently under the severest restraint; the juanitas, or young damsels, seldom venturing from their houses, unless to attend matins and vespers, when their heads were closely enveloped in the mantilla.

Cock-fights were mostly of every-day occurrence; dollars to a great amount were often lost at this cruel sport: the men caressed the victors, and chopped off the heads of the vanquished. Card-playing, however, was the prevailing vice; scattered packs lay strewed about in every direction, and the children early imbibed the habit. I have often watched little urchins from five to seven years old, who had collected the soiled cast-away cards, sitting under a verandah, playing as intently as veteran gamblers; smooth pebbles serving to stake when they had no money. Throwing the knife and lariat, or lasso, which the men do with much 205 precision from early practice, was also a favourite pastime with children; the knife-handle resting on the palm of the hand and the blade on

the wrist, I have seen youngsters hit the most difficult objects, throwing it with force sufficient to penetrate an inch-deal. Others, with a lariat, could throw the noose over man, bullock, or horse, running at speed; frequently two would mount a horse to try which was the most dexterous at the sport; and sometimes, to avoid the noose, they would hang by the stirrup almost under the horse's belly, or lie flat on its back. They possessed perfect command over the animals, and performed feats which would have eclipsed Astley's equestrians. In throwing the lasso, it is immaterial whether the rider or horse be noosed, and they would frequently throw it round one leg of the animal.

Being in want of a bullock at the mission, a Spaniard was requested to bring in a wild one, and wishing to see the sport, I mounted in company with him. We took with us a tame bull, a powerful animal trained for the express purpose of assisting in the capture of others. The Spaniard was mounted on a splendid old hunter used to 206 the sport, and at the saddle-peak was attached a brass knob, of great service in lassoing.

After riding about three hours through scrub, we came to a herd of cattle, from which one was selected; I was requested to remain in ambush with the tame bull, and come forward when required. The Spaniard rode towards the herd at a brisk canter, and was no sooner near them than what is termed a "stampede" commenced; with a snorting chorus the herd vanished, rooting up the ground and crashing the branches in their impetuous course. The Spaniard, cleverly separating his victim from the rest, threw the lasso at the infuriated beast, which at the same time rushed at the horseman; who adroitly avoided the onset. After manoeuvring for some minutes, narrowly escaping being gored, he at last threw the lariat over both horns of the bullock; which, mad with rage, charged furiously, and then with a violent jerk darted away. At last, the bull being somewhat blown, I was summoned to the field, with a superfluous caution to keep out of range of the animal; another lasso had by this time been thrown over his horns, the end of which I was instructed 207 to pick up and fasten to the horns of the tame bull. As the wild beast and the equestrian were perpetually darting off in various directions, I could not, without considerable jeopardy, perform this piece of service. On my dismounting, the maddened animal made a most furious charge at me; fortunately the cord was sound, or I should have been tossed like a foot-ball. The Spaniard, perceiving that I could not safely carry out his directions, dexterously lassoed the leg of the beast, and brought it to the

ground; when, taking advantage of his prostration, I quickly fastened the end of the cord round the horns of the tame bull. To bring the captive home was both tedious and dangerous; he was led between the tame bull and the equestrian, who had warily to keep out of range of the furious charges he repeatedly made. At last, by a circuitous route, we reached Dolores; and killing him being immediately necessary, he was thrown a second time to the ground, and the trained bullock and the wild one were closely tied together. To bring the victim's head to the ground, the tame bull, who knew his duty, was made to pull the lasso tight; and after a trial of brute strength, the head 208 of the wild bull was lowered to the earth, and struck with a cleaver. Wild animals having a greater tenacity of life than domestic ones, it required several violent blows to render the beast insensible.

The Californian practice of skinning and quartering beasts, which is peculiar to the country, was then carried into effect. The beast being stretched upon his back, the skin is divided longitudinally, and stripped off; the joints are roughly cut from the body, and the back-bone, instead of being cleft in half, is left untouched, as is the head also. This rude method would not be followed where beef was scarce, as pounds of prime meat of course adhere to the spine, the joints are necessarily disfigured, and the head and offal wasted. The putrifying carcase would breed a pestilence there, as elsewhere: but the wolves, who are the licensed scavengers of the country, carry off the impurities in the night.

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### **CHAPTER XIII.**

Missions of California—Influence of the Missionaries on the Indians—Wealth and Power of the Missions—Their Spoliation by the Mexican Government—Decadence of the Missions—A Religious Festival—Paintings and Valuables of the Mission Chapel—The Confessional—An Indian Priest—Agitation among the Squatters—Noisy Meeting—A Bonfire—Christmas-day in California—Author's Duties and Position.

THE origin of the missions of California seems to have arisen in the adventurous spirit of the sixteenth century. After the discovery of the riches of Mexico, the Jesuits ever prone to spiritual

aggrandizement, planned an expedition assuming a double purpose; the christianizing of the country, and the discovery of its mineral resources. The bold scheme of holding permanent and secure possession of an 210 uncivilized and uncultivated country, in the hope of future trade and international intercourse, required in its infancy, consummate skill and indomitable perseverance; and, under any other than mission principles, its colonization must have been onerous and costly to the mother country. Backed by the intellect, power, and wealth of the society of Jesus, well selected and organized bodies of ecclesiastics, under the appellation of missions, migrated to California to evangelize the Heathen world; and settled at San Francisco, San Diego, and Monterey. These missions were established on monastic principles, the leaders exercising secular as well as spiritual power; a combination of missionaries of different qualifications, being absolutely necessary for mutual co-operation, and also more efficient than isolated efforts. Each body was under the surveillance of a superior, who maintained the strictest discipline; subjecting the brotherhood to restrictions and regulations which formed the basis and bulwarks of the system, by preserving unanimity and subordination in action, and order in conduct and affairs.

The erection of a mission-house was necessarily 211 the first consideration; the missionaries comprised men of science and ingenuity, adapted for any exigency, and the extensive and substantial edifices existing at the present time, testify the perseverance and ability of their founders. The great consideration with these religious establishments was to make them self-supporting, by calling into exercise the undeveloped resources of the country; to conciliate the Indians was the primary object, requiring assiduity and patience. To change the habits of the wild savages was a difficult task; children were more tractable, being easily allured, and converts were soon made of them; but with adults, coercion was used. It was not unusual for boats filled with armed men, under the command of priests, to set out in quest of Indians, whom they brought in bondage to the missions, for the purpose of conversion; once under controul, it became a comparatively easy task to mould the ignorant Indian to their purposes.

The Mission-Indian and the untutored savage are very dissimilar; religious education and European culture depriving the former of that haughty independent spirit, and also of that indomitable 212

energy, which animates the latter to exertion for subsistence. The Indians were merely fiefs of the soil, regarding the missionaries with awe and affection.

The property of each mission consisted usually of eighty thousand acres of the finest land of the surrounding country; over this extensive territory the superior held undivided sway. The cattle tended on the various mission estates, at one time was estimated at five hundred thousand head. Some of these establishments trained and supported as many as eight hundred Indians, employing them in agriculture, tending cattle, and mechanical pursuits. Docile and dexterous, carpentry, husbandry, tanning, wool-combing, building and other useful pursuits, were easily taught them. The priests being clever and scientific men, soon surrounded themselves with the comforts and luxuries of civilized life; their food principally consisted of maize, vegetables, rice and meat. In their spacious buildings, rooms were allotted to special purposes; the sexes were separated, and all the inmates were occupied during the day, according to their abilities, for the benefit of the common weal. The supervision of so large a community 213 required discipline, and religious observances were strictly attended to: correction was sometimes administered, and gloomy cells are usually to be found at the missions; but superstitious terrors had doubtless more influence over the Indians than personal chastisement. The short hours of labour suited the indolence of the Indians, who found their daily wants well supplied, and were provided during the winter with provisions from granaries, the produce of their farm; and being awed into submission, they became excellent servants.

After a time, when whalers and shipping frequented the coast, the brotherhoods being in a prosperous condition, and yearly increasing in wealth, carried on a profitable trade with foreign vessels: indeed they almost monopolized the trade of the country.

In 1830 the government of Mexico, envious of the lucrative trade and extensive possessions of the missions, became jealous of their influence and wealth; and to lessen the temporal power of the missionaries, an edict was passed dividing the church property into parishes, or pueblos, dispossessing the padres of secular authority, installing in 214 a commercial capacity “Administradors,” accountable to the Mexican government for two-thirds of the mission revenue;

reserving only one-third for the support of the mission. The padres now possessing only spiritual power, gradually lost their influence.

Mexico becoming weakened by political dissensions, as its power declined, gradually withdrew its support from the Californians; and being without a sufficient military force, the country fell a prey to disorder, and was traversed by bands of robbers. The alcaldes and governors, alike indolent and impotent, retired to their dismantled garrisons, forts, and Presidios, leaving large districts unprotected; and the missions, which had hitherto exercised considerable power over the country, was despoiled by bands of marauders: the farms were left untilled, the cattle were driven off, and the Indians, neglected by their pastors and deprived of their support, returned to the habits of their forefathers, and took to the chase for a livelihood; but cured of their savage habits and superstitions. The benefit which the mild rule of the missionaries conferred upon the country and its population, cannot be disputed; and the seeds of their good work will not be lost upon 215 those who have sought the haunts of their benighted brethren, the gentiles of the wilderness.

One evening, shortly after my arrival at the mission, a religious festival was held, announced by the tolling of bells; the chapel was illuminated outwardly and inwardly, the roof, ceiling, and every available portion of the building contributing its share of light. The chapel of Dolores is one of the richest in Upper California, the aisle is about eighty feet in length, by thirty in width; it has a tessellated pavement, and the walls are adorned with quaint paintings of the old Spanish masters: the subjects are chiefly scriptural, and to those unacquainted with ecclesiastical lore, they are too mystical to be understood. Some of the saints and miracles are elaborately delineated in the mediæval manner; the infernal regions, and the baptism of Indians are the most favourite subjects: the latter being sometimes so rudely portrayed that the affinity of complexion and form of Indians and Europeans would excite a smile in a white connoisseur. Images are very numerous; on tables covered with silver cloth are arranged the most grotesque puppets, dressed in gorgeous attire; gold chains and precious stones adorning the most venerated objects. Considering the prevailing love of lucre, the rich jewels and attire must have excited the cupidity, more than the veneration, of the worshippers. Yet, notwithstanding the valuables collected together and exposed to view, so much does religious awe prevail that the chapel is usually without a guard, being left to the

protection of its patron saints: sacrilege never occurs; for were it to happen, the offender could not escape the stilettoes raised against him on every side.

At the entrance of the chapel were two confession boxes; the priests, completely enclosed, received at one side, through a sheet of tin drilled with holes, the confession of the penitents. This tin, when raised, served as an aperture for the receipt of alms, or transgression-money, in expiation of their offences. During my visits I saw two women at the confessional; one, though veiled, yet revealed a youthful and handsome countenance; and from the length of their discourse, and her animation, I could suspect that the priest's responses related to somewhat else than the forgiveness of sins previously committed: especially as he dismissed a 217 venerable duenna, who was with him upon another occasion, in a far more abrupt manner.

When I was at the mission only three priests remained in possession, administering church rites; one was a sharp Jesuistical Spaniard, the partner of the Mormon; another an old Mexican; the third an Indian. The zeal and grave deportment of the latter well qualified him for his office; but it was ludicrous to see him pacing gravely up and down in the sun, his long dark hair and hideous cast of features surmounted with a glazed hat, his gaunt form shrouded in a gown (scarcely so black as his skin) which he gathered around him in a manner peculiar to the priesthood. During my stay at the mission, a great agitation occurred amongst the squatters in the vicinity of the mission, numerous people had taken possession of fertile but unoccupied land, in right of their being American citizens; many of them had served in the Mexican campaign, others possessed Mexican grants of recent date, while some claimed a title to occupation on most frivolous pretexts.

The government at Francisco becoming partially 218 consolidated, declared all land titles null and void, unless subjected to and ratified by the existing legislature; an edict which, if carried into effect, would have dispossessed almost all the previous occupiers. Threatened with an ejection, the squatters called a meeting; the old granary above the tavern was selected as the most desirable rendezvous, it being three hundred feet long, and therefore capable of holding a great concourse of people.



About seven o'clock, crowds of rough-looking fellows, in slouched hats, curious coats, ponchos, and strange boots, began to assemble from all quarters: a motley collection. Smoking was universal, and as they stamped up and down in their heavy boots, with violent gesticulations and fierce exclamations, they soon raised a cloud of smoke and dust sufficient to suffocate and blind one not accustomed to such an atmosphere; the clamour, too, was deafening. The principal leaders having arrived, the chair was taken, the president being flanked by his secretary and colleagues; and when silence was partially obtained, a speech, inculcating resistance to the authority of the Alcalde, was delivered. It being a free debate, some ludicrous and violent orations were made by individuals not so respectable as English chartists; some government emissaries being present, and interrupting the proceedings, a violent opposition arose amongst the demagogues; but, notwithstanding the violence of the discussion, an appeal to Congress was resolved upon, and a petition received numerous signatures. This was the signal for uproar; the table and the president were both upset, the document lost, and a scuffle ensued in which friends and foes were intermingled; at last the lights were extinguished, and darkness dissolved the assembly.

This evening being memorable in Californian annals, according to custom a monstrous pile of wood for a bon-fire had been collected by the publican and others, opposite the mission; the ignition was proposed to take place about eleven o'clock. I was to fire the pile, and having to carry a lighted candle about thirty paces, without a lanthorn, the wind blowing heavily at the time, after several unsuccessful attempts, I substituted a flower pot for a lanthorn, and succeeded in setting light to the pile, though the wood was very damp. The inhabitants of the mission and the 220 intoxicated tavern folks gathered round the bon-fire, shouting, dancing and carousing.

Christmas-day is not celebrated abroad as it is in England; at the mission we had rather more guests than ordinary to dinner, but nothing was said with reference to the day, and I missed the old fashioned ceremonies. I had described to my Mormon friends, the customary festivities of the English at this season, which somewhat surprised them; and to approximate to English custom, a joint of roast meat, and the nearest possible approach to a plum pudding were to be prepared exclusively for ourselves. Two turkeys belonging to the priests, rare birds in that part

of the country, had often attracted my attention in the court-yard of the mission; one of them that morning opportunely dropping an egg close to me, the temptation was too much for human nature; I picked it up, and presented it with another which I also found, to my mistress, informing her of the circumstances. She had very confused notions of meum and teum, and gladly received and appropriated these very acceptable ingredients for the pudding; which they certainly made very palatable.

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Having become habituated to the various work that fell to my lot, and being always ready and active, I had now become a most useful personage at all times, and was treated respectfully and even confidentially, acquiring considerable influence in council. My strength also was considerably renovated by regular diet, and freedom from anxiety; though I was occasionally subject to a depression of spirits and weakness in the limbs peculiar to the country.

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#### **CHAPTER XIV.**

Horrible Discovery—Indifference to Murder—Court of Justice at Francisco—Post-Office there—Visit to the Mazeppa—A Sick Crew—Invited to take a Voyage—A dangerous Rencontre—An Expedition against Pirates—Seizures of Colonial Vessels—British Property—Jonathan Outwitted.

OUR cattle frequently strayed to a considerable distance; one morning, when out in search of them, I espied what I took to be a drunken or sleeping man, lying down by a shrub near the wayside; glancing towards him I perceived that the ground bore marks of a scuffle and the shrub was broken; the man also lay in a most uncomfortable posture. Suspecting that a deed of violence had 223 been committed, curiosity urged me to a closer inspection, and walking up to the spot I perceived a man of middle stature, dressed in the garb of a sailor, lying on his face perfectly motionless, his clothes torn and bloody. I turned him over and found my worst suspicions verified: his face was awfully distorted, and where not covered with blood, of a pallid hue, tinged with black; his right eye had been blinded by an unsuccessful attempt to gouge him; clotted masses of blood hung to his torn garments; he was quite cold and his limbs had the rigidity of death. A bowie-knife had pierced his

body in at least ten different places, leaving frightful incisions: the struggle had evidently been fierce and protracted. To ascertain if robbery had been the inducement for the crime, I searched his pockets; all they contained were a few small silver pieces and a paper, showing that he was an Irishman belonging to a vessel.

Not wishing to be found rifling the pockets of a murdered man, I turned the body over as I found it, and returned to the mission, thinking it advisable to acquaint the inmates; which I did. The Mormon publican, with true Yankee nonchalance, 224 seemed not in the least surprised, but in the most friendly manner advised me not to say anything about it, and never to concern myself about matters not belonging to me; as interference often made folks victims to their good intentions. The intelligence, however, soon spread through the mission, and it was acknowledged that a deliberate murder had been committed; but such was the prevailing indifference about these matters, that the deed would have passed unnoticed, had there not been at the mission, an official connected with the authorities at Francisco; who, desirous to atone for his want of capacity by a show of zeal, sent information to the Alcalde. On the following day one connected with the court brought me a summons to attend before the Alcalde, but directing me to bury the body on my way; accordingly, accompanied by another, whose evidence was required, I repaired to the spot, and we deposited the remains of the murdered man a few inches below the surface of the ground, under the shrub where he met with his untimely death.

Repairing to the court of Francisco, where the Alcalde and officers of justice held their sittings, I 225 was astonished at the unmagisterial and undignified appearance of the officials who held the scales of justice in a populous city. The apartment was of considerable dimensions, the lower part within reach was greasy and dirty; along one side of the room were rows of wooden bunks, while strewed about the chamber were saddle-bags, boots, horserugs, and bridles. At one end were several of the new Californian police, who, according to American custom, wore plain clothes; at the other sat the Alcalde, at a deal table, surrounded by a troop of fellows widely different from the occupants of an English bench of justice. The Alcalde was a sharp-featured, keen-looking man, a thorough 'down-easter,' dressed in an old blue coat with brass buttons, and a scratch wig; the other members of the tribunal were dressed in the most negligent costume, with rugged hair, and

unshorn countenances, and most had mud boots. Judge Lynch and his followers came to my mind: on beholding this motley crew, lounging about in their chairs, joking, and chewing tobacco. When their boisterous mirth had subsided, I walked up to the bench; the Alcalde, dislodging his quid from one side to the other of 226 his mouth, fixed his sharp ferret eyes on me with a cunning leer, and in a nasal accent exclaimed “I guess you're a Britisher?” This interrogatory, intended to be a withering sarcasm, I calmly answered in the affirmative. Questions were then put to me respecting the nature of the wounds, and when I stated they had been inflicted with a bowie-knife, the rigour of the examination abated. Had there been the slightest grounds, I believe they would not have scrupled to have implicated me in the murder; as it was, I got no credit for my information and evidence, and was warned, on leaving the court, how I mixed up myself in such transactions. Determining never more to interfere or notice anything not concerning myself, I departed, greatly disgusted with Californian justice; but glad to escape from the presence of its administrators.

After leaving the court I went to the post-office, to inquire for letters; fortunately, when I arrived, only about a hundred people were there, waiting for letters. I took my stand behind the last one; and when all had been served, it came to my turn. The letters were arranged alphabetically, and on 227 the packet which began with the first letter of my name being referred to, only one bore that of Shaw. Taking the precious epistle to a retired spot, I opened it, but was grievously disappointed to find it written to a name-sake, of Brooklyn, New York, and the father of a family. The letter was very long, and I saw at a glance the wife had commenced it, the children writing in succession; feeling that I had no right to read a letter not intended for me, I sealed and returned it; well assured that this affectionate missive would gladden the heart of the father who was separated from his wife and family, should it reach his hands.

The post-office is a wooden building sixty feet long, by twenty feet in width, held at a rental of seven thousand dollars yearly. It is very inefficiently conducted; and the slow process of delivery is a sad check to business. On the arrival of foreign mails several hundreds of people may be seen patiently waiting, ranged in a row a quarter of a mile long; several hours frequently elapse ere the last of the crowd arrives at his destination—the delivery box. These dilatory proceedings have induced piemen, coffee-venders, and others to erect 228 stalls on the spot, to supply applicants with

refreshments; well assured that they must be hungry and exhausted with waiting: coffee and cakes might be had at the moderate price of a dollar.

Wending my way through the streets with the intention of making some purchases preparatory for the winter, I met a ship-mate who picked up a living by boating. He informed me that the supercargo of the *Mazeppa* had made inquiries for me; and anxious to know what he wished to communicate, I went on board the vessel. Not a soul was to be seen on deck, the rigging of the ship had a neglected and dismantled appearance, very different from the smart, trim condition she was in before arriving. Walking for'ard and opening the galley door I perceived two Malays, looking ill and miserable, endeavouring to warm themselves. One had been made a cabin servant, for want of better attendance; the other had deserted, but at his earnest request was permitted to return to the ship in broken health. Walking aft, I opened the door of the mate's cabin and found him in bed, just recovering from severe illness. He almost thought me an apparition; and I looked equally hard at his 229 altered appearance. We had been intimate friends, and were mutually rejoiced to see each other again. Going down below I found the captain and supercargo, also in bed, both seriously ill. Hearing of my situation, they both advised me to leave with them, offering me a free cabin passage to Sydney or the Sandwich Isles. Owing to the exorbitant price of labour, they had been compelled to discharge the cargo themselves. Some of the freight, consisting of assortments of musical instruments, ladies' apparel, and other useless commodities, had not paid expences. As no return cargo could be obtained, she was returning in ballast of sand and rum: this inferior spirit, which would not pay custom-house duty, being bought cheaper than the vessel could obtain stone ballast. Having no able seamen or second mate, the whole duty devolved on the first mate. I stayed on board that night, reflecting upon the tempting offer made me: they all seemed to rely on my leaving California, and assisting them to depart from its inhospitable shores; and my health being very precarious, I agreed to accept their friendly invitation and leave with them; intending to recruit my health at the Sandwich 230 Isles, and return to the gold mines the following spring.

On returning to the mission, I acquainted my Mormon friends of my sudden intention to leave them; they urgently persuaded me to remain, but my mind was made up, and we parted with mutual

regrets and good wishes. The following day I bid adieu to my acquaintances in San Francisco, being compelled to have a parting glass with each one before I started.

As the Mazeppa was lying off shore, I hailed her from the top of a mound facing the vessel, to send off a boat for me; but hoarse with calling, and also fatigued, seeing no one moving on board I sat down, keeping a look out for any one appearing on deck. The evening was gradually drawing in, and while waiting I perceived three men wrapped in serapes, having the look of Mexicans, descend the height above and enter the scrub behind me, casting a sneaking glance at me as they passed. Aware of my isolated position and the notoriety of the neighbourhood for violence, not liking the appearance of the fellows, I followed them with my eye, watching to see if they emerged from the bushes; as they did not, the thought struck me that they lay in ambush. I had my knapsack with me, from which they might have conjectured that it contained gold-dust, with which I was about to embark; impressed with the idea that I should be attacked, as it was momentarily getting darker, I knew that my only chance of escape was to gain the height above, and fight my way through the chaparral to the nearest tent. Drawing my knife from my belt, I cut a stout stick, and throwing my traps on my back, left the dangerous neighbourhood of the cliff, and hastened up the eminence. At this moment the three men, who were only five yards in the rear, rushed forward to intercept me; one taking a wider range so as to get a-head. There was a dangerous narrow path at the skirt of the cliff, which they had reckoned upon my taking; but wishing to have open ground before me I struck inwards.

The two fellows in my rear, being unincumbered, gained fast upon me, the other a-head had reached the brow of the hill overlooking the valley; my pursuers had almost circumvented me, and I was just thinking of dropping my traps to make a stand, and had even turned round to meet them, raising my stick in defence, when the one in front called out to his comrades; they turned tail instantly, and speedily fled, he following them circuitously to avoid me. I made towards him, and arriving at a spot commanding a view, I perceived two men entering the valley, whom on meeting I acquainted with what had occurred; they told me that several men had been latterly waylaid in the

valley after dusk. Having pistols they proceeded on; I, congratulating myself on my escape, sought out the tent of my friends, with whom I spent the evening, turning in with them after supper.

About ten we were awoke by the intrusion of several armed sailors, shipmates of my Ohio friends, whom they wished to join them in an attack on the boats and habitations of a nest of thieves on the opposite side of the harbour: fellows ostensibly fishermen or boatmen, but who went out at night stealing boats, cordage, and other articles to be found on the beach, and were suspected of having secreted two whale-boats, which had been latterly missed. My friend Bill cheerfully responded to the call; he being acquainted with most of the men in 233 the expedition; and he pressed me to accompany them, offering to have me put on board the Mazeppa on their return. Though doubting both the success and legality of this attack, I could not decline the hazardous invitation without an imputation of cowardice, and did not wish to refuse my aid to my excited comrades; moreover, adventurous expeditions were always gratifying to my roving propensity: danger is the salt of our pleasures.

There were two boats manned by eighteen of us; our destination was seventeen miles off, and there was just enough moon-light to concert our plan of attack, when we landed noiselessly on the beach. Three jolly-boats, belonging to different ships, were hauled up on the beach near two tents; on making a cautious survey, we found hid in the rushes one of the missing whale boats, and a gig; these we carefully launched, making them fast with a tow-rope to our own; the nets which lay to dry on the beach we cut to pieces, while some, more hardy still, were smashing a jolly-boat, when the sleeping pirates were aroused and rushed toward us. A scuffle ensued, but only two shots were fired, both of them missing; the conflict was chiefly carried on with 234 heavy missiles. Our party, however, proved too strong, and we put the rascals to flight; those who lay prostrate crying out for quarter. Entering the tents, we began the work of demolition in earnest; one tent only was set fire to, the other being too wet to burn; and after emptying a flask of spirits which we found, a retreat was ordered, and we took to our boats; the vengeance of most being satiated. Bill, true to his promise, put me safe on board the Mazeppa; and with sadness I parted from one who had proved himself so stanch a friend under adverse circumstances. I watched the boats out of sight, and then, as all

were asleep on board, I entered a vacant cabin, and wrapping myself up in my rug, followed their example.

In the morning a council was held; the supercargo being better, it was resolved to get ready for sea, and men being procured, the sails were bent, the decks cleared, and hatches battened down. The captain being but little better, the supercargo roused himself to exertion, and went ashore to the authorities to pay the port dues, purchase provisions, and procure the necessary documents of clearance. Several colonial vessels had been seized on pretended 235 charges of smuggling; ours also came under suspicion; and had it not been for the tact of the supercargo, the *Mazeppa* might have been detained. At last, not without demur and difficulty, the documents were procured.

A short time previous, the *Joseph Albino*, an *Adelaide* vessel, had been seized upon the most frivolous pretext; the captain, who spoke his mind too freely, was reprimanded by the *Alcalde* and other authorities for what they termed contumaciousness, and ordered him into *durance vile* for the night. Indignant at this treatment, he came on board to us, proposing that the officer in charge should be seized, the cable slipped, and the vessel ran out in the night; but his project, though well-conceived, did not find sufficient encouragement. Two line-of-battle ships were anchored in the middle stream, and on the darkest night it would have been difficult to have escaped the vigilance of the watch; few men would like to encounter the fire of a ship's broadside, and, if taken, run the risk of being hanged; the ex-captain, therefore, renounced the plan, contenting himself with writing a protest to both governments, and returned a passenger in our 236 vessel. The legality of this sentence being disputed at San Francisco, the only alternative for redress was to make a written appeal to the court at Washington, supported by Her Majesty's representatives resident there; but whilst this dilatory process proceeded, the vessel was held in charge, entailing costs.

Owing to the iniquitous law of excise, numerous seizures of British property had constantly been made; the informer and the customs dividing the spoil: the informers, however unsupported their assertions, being believed, in preference to the ship owner. Confiscations, also, occurred on the most trivial pretexts; vessels having on board ale packed in less than twelve dozen cases, were



seized; and any goods sent ashore without a permit from the customs, was liable to incur forfeiture of the ship.

The navigation of the inland rivers was absolutely forbidden to English vessels; several small craft not hoisting the stars and stripes, which had sailed up the Sacramento and San Joaquin, were captured by the authorities. This gave rise to a diverting incident, much to the chagrin of the 237 government. An Aberdeen clipper, the Laurel, having a cargo of commodities suitable to the diggings, ventured up the river Sacramento, notwithstanding the prohibition, and discharging her freight with speed, got under weigh ere she could be seized. Upon turning a bend of the river, having ascertained that she would be intercepted, she changed her rig from a brig into a schooner; a different coat of paint and another name (the Mary, of Boston) were quickly substituted, and a few hours afterwards, the U.S. war schooner, which had left Francisco expressly to capture the the brig Laurel, hailed the Boston schooner and enquired if she had seen the brig in their passage; they replied she was at the last bend of the river, and passed on unsuspected. The baffled war schooner returned to Francisco, to the great mortification of 'cute Jonathan: meantime the Laurel had cleared out homeward-bound.

Having taken on board a supply of water, for which we paid three dollars a cask, we weighed anchor and stood to sea. The captain of the Albino previously came on board in a boat rowed by two men dressed in sailor's garb, who had 238 formerly been the first publicans in Sydney; their sole source of dependence now was on their wherry. They accompanied us to the entrance of the harbour, and bid us tell their tale aright to their Sydney friends.

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## **CHAPTER XV.**

Author leaves California in the Mazeppa—Brutality of a Malay—Death of the Tingul—Owyhee in Sight—Hurricane—Entering Honolulu—The Town and Harbour—Climate of Sandwich Islands—Island of Woahoo—Influx of Californian Gold-seekers—Scarcity and Rise of Prices—Missionaries—Government—Army and Police—French Aggression—The Kanakas, or Natives—Habits,

Costume, Dwellings, Food and Drinks—Bad Effects of European Habits—Hawaiian Women—Equestrian Belles—Theatre of Honolulu—American and Native Ladies—King Kamehameha at the Play—American Influence—American Whalers—Sydney Vessels—Life ashore and on board the *Mazeppa*.

HAVING shipped a crew of six men at the rate of sixty dollars a month, paid to them on the capstanhead previous to sailing, we stood out to sea. There were six of us in the cabin; all of us without exception I believe glad to see the coast of California recede from view. As for myself, having been latterly fortune's foot-ball, struggling for an existence amongst strangers, and never truly comfortable, I could justly appreciate the comforts of a snug cabin and an excellent mess table. The monotony and confinement which many feel on ship-board, was to me luxurious repose, and as I laid down upon a mattress for the first time for many months, and heard the dashing of the waves, and the wind and rain, without being exposed to them, I could not help congratulating myself on the amelioration of my condition: the past appeared as a fleeting dream; one of those trials in life intended to chasten our desires and cause us to reflect upon the condition of others less fortunate.

Relieved from a servile condition by the purely benevolent disposition of the officers of the *Mazeppa*, as I could not otherwise testify my deep sense of the obligation conferred on me, I gladly offered my services to the ship. Having some little knowledge of nautical matters, I was of some assistance to the chief officer in the absence of a second mate, taking charge of the stores, and other duties.

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The fore-castle, formerly inhabited by the Malay crew, being too dark and contracted for the American seamen, they occupied the adjoining space, which had been used as the fore-steerage. After leaving Francisco, we had heavy gales of wind, the Malay *Tingul* gradually grew worse, and there being no medical man on board, the medicinebook was our only resource; which, our knowledge of pharmacy being very limited, we consulted in vain for medicine suitable for his complaint: his malady seemed to be a breaking up of the constitution, produced from Californian

hardships, and beyond human aid. For three days the unfortunate sufferer kept up an incessant moaning, much to the discomfort of his neighbours. His only remaining countryman, Ali, who served as cabin servant, totally neglected the sick man, even omitting to provide him sustenance; when reproached for his inhumanity, Ali said “that if Mahomet chose to take him, nobody could, or ought, to prevent it.” Ali resolutely declared that the desertion of sick people was his creed, but he probably had another reason for upholding fatalism; for, after the desertion of the Malay crew, who left their boxes 242 and clothing behind them, he had come in for their effects, and packed away the most valuable portion in two of the strongest chests. Had the Tingul lived, he would very naturally have disputed the right of Ali to the property; therefore, it was not surprising that Ali did not regret the approaching death of one likely to claim an equal division of the spoils.

In company with the mate I visited the Tingul; one evening we perceived that a decided change had taken place; he breathed with difficulty, and feeling that his hour was at hand he faintly said in his language, that he had been “a very great sinner,” and begged forgiveness of Allah: nor were his thanks to us omitted. His feet becoming cold as dissolution approached, wishing to omit no likely restorative, Ali was ordered, much to his annoyance, to fill some bottles with hot water to warm the patient; the villain even demurred to obey, so the kind-hearted mate, speechless with disgust at such hard-heartedness, cutting a colt from a piece of whale-line, gave the scoundrel four dozen lashes, thrashing him into the galley, where he deputed me to see him prepare the water bottles, handing 243 me a rattan to use at discretion. Our efforts, however, were useless: the death-rattle was heard and the Tingul was no more. Knowing from the nature of his disease that decomposition would speedily take place, we sewed up the corpse in the seaman's winding sheet, putting coals at the feet for want of shot; the night was intensely dark and stormy, and as we were bearing the corpse to the gang-way the ship rolled heavily, we stumbled over a rope and fell with our burden in the leascuppers: it was midnight, and the necessity of committing the body of a human being to the deep, amid the roaring of the storm, without a prayer or funeral obsequies—though the deceased was a Mussulman—impressed us all. For a month after the Malay's death, the superstitious Ali could not be prevailed upon to go down into the forecabin, for he believed the ghost of the departed would haunt the place during that period.

After a pleasant three weeks' passage, we sighted the lofty mountain of Moonah Roa in the Island of Owyhee; not having partaken of fresh meat and vegetables for a considerable period, we were glad 244 to near a land where we could obtain these necessaries at a moderate cost.

We were steering about noon between two islands to make the Port of Honolulu, when a hurricane came on: an hour previous the weather had been fine and the water as smooth as a mill pond, when suddenly the sun became obscured and the waves rose tumultuously on every side; the clouds assumed a portentous aspect, and at intervals sharp gusts of winds swept by us. To let go the halyards and run out of channel was first thought of; but our old captain wisely resolved to keep under the lee of the land where he might lay to. No sooner had we stowed sails than a hurricane came on, consisting of a succession of heavy squalls from opposite quarters; the rigging straining and creaking, and the gusts bellowing like thunder. In about three hours the tempest subsided, but had we been exposed upon a lee shore we might have been wrecked.

The island we wished to go to was Woahoo, the principal of the group and the seat of government; at day-break, the following morning we found 245 ourselves about ten miles off Honolulu, the port of the island. There were four vessels hove to, waiting to go in, and they seemed desirous for us to take the lead, as our vessel drew the least water, and would be the most manageable amongst the rocks and breakers of this iron-bound coast. Our commander had forty years sea experience; he had navigated vessels on the coast of India, the China seas and other dangerous ports, and few had a keener eye than him in detecting shoals and broken water. The present was an excellent opportunity for showing his seamanship, and though unacquainted with the port, without waiting for a pilot, he ordered all sail to be made, and led the van, the others following cautiously in our wake. Soon after crossing the bar, a cable was thrown over the side, and about fifty natives, who ran out to us upon a long reef, catching hold of the hawser and pulling lustily at it, towed us in a good berth: dropping one anchor wide on the bow and the other under the ship's foot, we were prepared for the North East gales, and the swell which occasionally enters the bay.

Honolulu is prettily situated at the foot of some 246 lofty mountains covered with verdure; to the left of the town is a fine valley well cultivated, up which a good view may be had; commanding

the centre of the harbour is an elevated fort, constructed of coral reef, abutting into the water, and bristling with numerous cannon: the Hawaiian flag (which is composed of the British union, with blue, red and white stripes repeated), waved over the fort. To the right of the fort is the fashionable and best built locality; a green sward skirting the beach is dotted over with tasteful marine residences of the natives, while lofty cocoa-nut and plantain trees shed their cooling shade around, giving the place a most sylvan appearance. At the back, encompassed by gardens containing the most beautiful tropical shrubs, are the European villas: elegant houses, the architecture of many of which would do credit to an English watering-place. In their vicinity is the king's palace, which scarcely gives one the idea of its being the abode of the sovereign. Churches and chapels are very numerous; some of them as imposing and spacious as similar edifices in England. They were built at comparatively little expense, the missionaries 247 procuring a state edict for the natives to work compulsory until their completion: it was arduous work, blocks of coral reef having to be cut from the solid rock and transported to the site.

The business locality is in the centre of the town: the streets are laid down very systematically, and many handsome and well furnished shops have been latterly established. Hotels are numerous, some of them are fine buildings, constructed upon a most extensive scale, with large bowling alleys and billiard rooms; affording the luxury, style and attendance required by the wealthy. Facing the central wharf is the native market, where fruit, vegetables, eggs and poultry, can be obtained. To suit the requirements of the age, a handsomer market-place of stone was being built, with colonnades and stalls, similar to Covent Garden: the new market, from its elegance of design, will be a great ornament to the town. The Custom-house, a spacious stone building, is near the fort; the strictest regulations respecting imports and exports are observed, and the duties imposed upon vessels seemed a general source of complaint. There is a numerous staff of custom-house officers, all either 248 English or American; I became acquainted with several, and found them well educated and gentlemanly: they are so vigilant that it would be difficult to defraud the revenue without detection.

The harbour of Honolulu is the favourite resort of South Sea whalers, and the Hudson's Bay Company's ships; there were about forty vessels, chiefly American, lying there. Commodious

wharfs have lately been built, admitting ships of seven hundred tons to re-fit alongside them. Whilst we were in port, a large merchantman abreast of one of these wharfs, for want of proper tackling, careened over, crushing several men who were working in the hold; by the aid of cranes and pullies she was righted, though considerable damage was done to her cargo.

The island of Woahoo is mostly well-cultivated; and, considering the little opportunity the Kanakas have had to become acquainted with scientific farming, they show considerable skill and perseverance in their mode of agriculture. The soil of Woahoo being of an arid, thirsty nature, it is absolutely requisite to procure a constant supply of water for its irrigation, and where land fit for 249 cultivation lies considerably above the level of rivers or currents, aqueducts are constructed, or other ingenious methods adopted to convey water to the soil: the taro, which is their principal food, requires the most humid soil.

Since the discovery of the gold regions, the importance of Honolulu as an intermediate port, has been fully recognized. Vessels from China, the Eastern Archipelago, and the British Colonies, usually touch here, as it is conveniently on their route; while American vessels rounding the Horn, carried west by the trade winds, to make a good offing for the port of Francisco, steer for the Sandwich Islands. Vessels returning westward, homeward-bound, revisit this group, and those bound for the Horn find it advantageous to the pocket and conducive to health to resort to this tropical group of islands, where they can procure provisions at a moderate cost, and renovate their health.

The Sandwich Islands have been styled by Californians the Madeira of the Pacific: the mild air and warm sun of these isles is indeed truly grateful to the invalid. Working laboriously at mid-day, exposed to a tropical sun, would not be 250 agreeable to an European constitution; even in the hottest season however, the sea breezes are cooling, but early in the morning and evening are the favourite times for recreation. A walk in the environs, amid the shady groves and picturesque villas, reminds one very forcibly of India and its bungalows; the houses being built in a similar style to those in eastern climates, with verandahs and Venetian blinds: the rooms are particularly large and airy.

A large portion of the white population now consists of Californians, transitory visitors: coasters come in almost daily, bringing passengers from Francisco, and taking back a cargo of vegetables and stock; and as washing in Francisco costs eight dollars a dozen, it is common for a cargo of linen to be sent almost by every coaster to China or Woahoo, to be washed.

Crowds of sick and enfeebled men, who have amassed a few pounds of gold-dust at the sacrifice of their constitutions, leave Francisco in the last stage of debility; numbers perish during the passage, but hundreds of these visitants are to be met with in Honolulu, pale, emaciated, and worn out: indeed you would imagine the town a large hospital, were it not for the reckless levity and dissipation of the gold-seekers. The vices of the gold-region having depraved their characters, drunkenness and gambling are rife, while their immorality and licentiousness, rendered more dangerous by the power of gold, are rapidly contaminating the native population. This influx of profligate strangers, who have nothing but pleasure and luxurious indulgence in view, causes a great circulation of money, and the tradesmen of Honolulu are benefitted by the profuse expenditure; shops filled with expensive commodities are seen in every direction, newly erected villas and taverns are immediately tenanted, while horses, carriages and other indications of wealth crowd the promenade.

But though beneficial to the trading community and landowners, the invalids from California have proved seriously detrimental to the interests of the original inhabitants. The increase of home consumption, and the exportations to the gold regions, being greatly disproportionate to the yearly produce, caused a scarcity of provisions, which with the quantity of gold suddenly thrown into circulation, made a great rise in prices. The Californians could easily afford any additional expense, but the poorer inhabitants of the country, being dependent upon their own exertions, those living upon limited incomes, found the necessaries of life rising in price, without a proportionate rise in wages of labour and the value of property.

The ministers of Woahoo, mostly merchants and large landed proprietors, were eager to export the products of the country untaxed to the best market; capitalists, and agents for mercantile houses at Francisco, established themselves at Honolulu, buying up produce for exportation; so that the

poorer classes of residents who could formerly live in abundance upon their means, now found themselves unable to purchase the food and comforts which they had previously enjoyed. The missionaries and others of limited income, on which they had hitherto lived in opulence, also found themselves in less affluent circumstances, and unable to live in their accustomed style. The markets were no longer filled with vegetables, fruits and delicacies accessible to the means of the poorest; as the vendors, sure of a demand, asked exorbitant prices, relying on the shipping, hotels and foreigners for 253 customers. Houses rent and tavern charges rose to almost a Californian scale; advancing from three dollars a week to twenty, for board and lodging.

The missionaries were formerly the most influential men in the islands, and lived in comfort and affluence; most of them are American Sectarians over-zealous and half-educated. Had they confined themselves to the conversion and civilization of the natives, without interfering in politics, their labours would have been more beneficial and acceptable to the population: but many of them have made themselves notorious by neglecting their spiritual duties for temporal affairs; persuading the king to issue unpopular edicts, such as driving the natives to religious worship, compelling them to build churches, and undertake other works unremunerated, to the neglect of their household duties and respective callings. Their ascendancy in council is consequently now very unimportant; the natives, whom they formally held in thralldom, have, from their association with Europeans, become daily more estranged from their religious pastors. Captain Belcher confirms this statement in the following passage from his travels. 254 “To preserve their declining power they assiduously and artfully laboured to exclude commerce from the island, forbidding the culture of cotton, sugar and coffee, destroying several plantations, and declaring cultivation impious, where so many indigenous plants existed; and proposing heavy port dues, knowing that intercourse and trade must eradicate abuses, and eventually diminish their hold upon the king, to ingratiate themselves with whom, in his exalted position they permitted to commit sins and degradations without remonstrance on their part; and now, in their present fallen condition, they, doubtless, regret the sycophancy used to so little purpose.”

The government of the Sandwich Islands is a limited and hereditary monarchy, under the joint protection of England, France and America. The present sovereign is Kamehameha III., who is



the father of a numerous family, possessing a palace and yearly income of about fifteen hundred pounds for personal expences, on which he is able to live and enjoy the “*otium cum dignitate*,” A ministry consisting of a premier, secretary of state, minister of foreign affairs, and other dignitaries, compose 255 the state council. Most of them being highly intelligent men, English or American, they administer the affairs of the Islands judiciously, and with becoming dignity; all measures of importance are deferentially submitted to the sanction of the king, but his majesty, being of a naturally indolent disposition, and inferior mental capacity to his councillors, seldom offers any opposition to their views. The other branches of government are established upon European principles: the judicial, postal, customs and police departments being well organized and managed by discreet functionaries. The army is greatly reduced, it having been found an unnecessary appendage to royalty and rather an expensive toy; I was not present at any field-day, but the few troops I saw, clothed in showy but diverse habiliments, had rather an undisciplined appearance: half of them were officers. The police is a most effective, and now a very requisite force; they wear a blue uniform, with a gold band to the cap, and are armed with a formidible brass knobbed staff: they were incessantly on the alert to prevent breaches of the peace and apprehend drunken brawlers, issuing from the numerous 256 grog shops; for notwithstanding the high duty on spirits they are accessible to most, and inebriety is frequent.

In 1849, the subject of spirit duty, and other supposed grievances of French subjects, gave rise to a serious misunderstanding between the French admiral and the Hawaiian government. Relying upon the justice of their cause, and the interposition of the English and American governments, the Hawaiian ministers refused to accede to the admiral's propositions, but offered to submit the question to the arbitration of foreign powers; this process being too tedious, and instant redress being refused, the French consul retired on board the fleet, and a force was sent ashore which entered the fort unopposed, and spiked the cannon: the king's yacht was also seized, and carried off by the squadron as an indemnification.

The term Kanaka is applied to the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands; the Kanakas are for the most part a fine race of men, with well formed limbs, and in many instances, regular and prepossessing features; the colour of their skin is a deep olive. Civilization has effected a great improvement in

their disposition; those brought up in 257 Christian schools early imbibe religious principles, and many are good scholars, being able to read and write fluently in the native and European languages. There are numerous publications in the Hawaiian tongue, and the native translation of the Bible may be seen in the poorest hut.

The Kanaka citizens conform to European habits and costume; excellent mechanics and trustworthy servants are to be found among them. The chiefs dress like respectable Europeans, and from their decorous behaviour and discourse, you would not imagine them to be the descendants of the savages described so vividly by Cook. The natives adhere to their original form of habitation, which many foreigners prefer as more suitable to the climate. Their huts vary in size according to the station of the owner; they are usually of an oblong shape, and made of a frame-work of bamboo canes, and the high pitched roofs being thatched with grass and plantain leaves, the eaves slanting to within a short distance of the ground, they have a very picturesque appearance. These huts are waterproof in winter, and always cool in the summer; the interior is carpetted with mats of coloured grass; 258 polished bamboo, closely laid and skilfully interwoven, make a most elegant ceiling. Sometimes the walls are decorated with 'tapa,' a species of native cloth made by the hand; serving as tapestry. At night, screens of mats are used for partitions; beds and linen are rather unfrequent; the pillows are the most extraordinary articles of furniture, resembling a smooth wooden roller raised on brackets three inches from the ground, the neck or head resting on the roller: the pillow at first feels somewhat strange, but it is conducive to repose, and cool for the head. While the rich foreigner lies restless on a feather bed and downy pillow, of a sultry night the native throws himself down upon the cool matting, and on his wooden pillow enjoys refreshingsleep. I slept several nights very comfortably upon mats and the wooden pillow, with a single blanket or a serape thrown over me.

The working people were receiving about three shillings a day. A European could not subsist on this pay, as the rate of boarding on the most economical principles averaged twenty-five and thirty shillings a week; but the native can live 259 upon food which nothing but long usage could reconcile a white man to: it is termed 'poe,' and is made from the 'taro,' an indigenous root somewhat of the yam species. The taro, after being cleaned, is scraped till it becomes a glutinous

mixture resembling a thick paste; it is then partially baked, and esteemed most palatable when acid from fermentation. Poe is usually eaten from a gourd, which is passed round to each person in succession, who dips into it his or her fore finger, and twisting it round, brings it out covered with the glutinous substance, which is sucked off, and the finger again inserted: they prefer this to using a spoon. The quantity of poe a native will eat at a sitting is marvellous, and the gorging capabilities of the chiefs are still more surprising. The taro when boiled is a very good substitute for a potatoe; but the poe I never could relish: its resemblance to starch or paste may have been the reason of my repugnance; it is, however, the national dish, the staple food of the Kanakas, and is supposed to be very nutritious.

'Ai paa' is another dish very common among them; it is a preparation of baked taro roots 260 pounded into a substance like damper: this food, when dry, will keep for a long time unimpaired, and it is carried with them on sea and land expeditions. The Kanakas are very partial to fish, preferring it to animal food; many subsist almost entirely on muscles, shell-fish, crabs, and seaweed, which they collect in calabashes from the reefs which stretch across the harbour: at low tide hundreds of both sexes may be seen wading in the water to collect what has washed up for their daily food. The fè or cuttle-fish is a luxury usually reserved for chiefs, who have reservoirs inland where fish is brought them from the sea. Formerly, pigs, fowls, vegetables, and fruits were plentiful, and the daily food of the natives; what are not exported are now almost exclusively monopolized for the tables of the rich: the poorest natives use the sorrel ulva, and other common herbs.

Drinking has become the prevailing vice; but owing to the prohibition of spirits for native use, and the price of it (like that of most other commodities) being beyond their means, the Kanakas illicitly distil a spirit which they call 'kava,' from the root of the 'Ti' shrub, which has saccharine 261 properties; this liquor not only produces intoxication, but after a period brings on the nervous debility of opium eaters. Drinking, and other vitiating habits, introduced by the Californians, have produced many European diseases which are decimating the native population; indolence and effeminacy are likewise growing upon them: the active exercises which their ancestors were accustomed to, are now discarded.

Cutaneous eruptions are very prevalent; probably attributable to a change of diet, and to a neglect of those constant bodily ablutions they used formerly to indulge in.

Notwithstanding the missionary teaching and preaching, the immorality of the Kanakas is a notorious trait in their character: vice is too universal for any to throw a stone at their neighbour; revelry and licentiousness are indulged, therefore, without the slightest condemnation or fear of censure; and a love of dollars now predominates over every other consideration. Promiscuous intercourse of the sexes has naturally produced a yearly decrease in the population. It is asserted that the Hawaiian women do not appreciate the maternal functions, and are averse to the trouble of bringing up their infants; how far this charge is correct I am not prepared to say, but the paucity of off-spring and the inattention of women to young children are evident to all.

The Hawaiian women surpass in beauty and symmetry of form, the inhabitants of the other Polynesian islands: their complexion is lighter than the men's, from less exposure; their features are in general regular, their countenances having rather a licentious expression, while even teeth, large eyes, and a profusion of black hair, perfumed and ornamented with wreaths of flowers, give them an attractive appearance. Half-castes are numerous, and resemble the Castilian race, or rather what would be termed in England 'brunettes.' Inter-marriage of white men with the Kanaka women is not unfrequent, and the European fathers give to their olive children a liberal education. Considerable jealousy exists at balls and public entertainments, between the Anglo-Saxon ladies and the half-caste damsels: the preference in many instances shown the latter, may perhaps be attributed to their superior vivacity; the coldness and reserve of European women veiling their superior qualities.

Unsuccessful attempts have been made to exclude the daughters of Hawaia from society; but coteries composed exclusively of white ladies were not much resorted to by the male sex. Amongst the élite of society, however, certain distinctions are rigorously observed, and the Woahoo aristocracy is probably as select (comparatively speaking) as that in older countries; but amongst the trading community, and in mixed company, I believe the distinctions of caste are not observed.

The Hawaiian belles are very partial to equestrian exercises; of an evening it is a novel and attractive sight to see them mounted on fiery steeds, galloping along the promenades, sitting astride (side saddles not being in vogue), wearing riding-habits, with perhaps a blue body and red skirts, and instead of hat or bonnets, a wreath of roses round their heads, their long raven locks tastefully arranged and hanging loose over the shoulders, giving them a theatrical appearance.

Honolulu has a very pretty theatre, conducted by amateur performers under the especial patronage of government; it is divided into a pit, boxes and dress circle, the price of admission about the same as in English theatres. I was there on one occasion when the king and his minister were present; the pit was mostly filled with English emigrants and American sailors, belonging to vessels in port, and the Kanaka working class; the boxes were chiefly occupied by the officers of vessels, the trading community, and government officers; the *beau monde* being visible in the dress circle.

The ladies were principally American and Hawaiian, the latter presenting a striking contrast in dress and manner, as well as in colour, to their paler sisters; the American ladies were studiously neat and demure, the Hawaiian women being gorgeously attired, and full of animation: garlands and wreaths of flowers decorated their flowing tresses, which were strongly perfumed with the essence of sweet herbs; most wore dresses and scarfs of China silks ornamented with trinkets, and carried fans of brilliant feathers in their hands. The theatre, though well-ventilated, was oppressively hot; and the native, canaille, who were among the spectators in the pit, distressed the olfactory nerves of the audience in the boxes exceedingly; the cooling action of the ladies' fans in the dress circle wafting the effluvia arising from the pit towards us at the back of them.

The play was Richard III., and though Shakespeare's rules for good acting were not observed, thunders of applause greeted the performers. I really pitied Richard, whose exertions were enough to have melted a jockey down to any required weight; he was incessantly applying a handkerchief to absorb the perspiration that poured from him. During the performance king Kamehameha maintained a sober gravity, seeming very attentive to the play; only exhibiting surprise when some

Sydney emigrants whistled cat-calls, pelted orange-peel, and created other disturbances common to the gallery audiences of an English theatre.

American influence is very strong in Honolulu, most of the shops are kept by Americans and Chinese. Three newspapers are established, and during my sojourn politics raged very high; some advocating that the Sandwich Islands should be admitted into the Union, and styled the state of Hawaia. This annexation mania could not have been very gratifying to the king; but if the influx of foreigners from California proceeds as it has done, American influence must nullify the regal prerogative, and may ultimately overthrow the Hawaiian monarchy.

Numbers of whalers visit this port to refit, and the Kanakas being tolerable sailors, many have been pressed on board these ships, and owing to ill-treatment, deserted at foreign ports. To arrest the rapid depopulation of the islands, a law was passed forbidding the shipment of natives without the consent of government: the present law enjoins that the captain of the vessel should guarantee, at the expiration of a stated time, to convey or send back the natives to the islands whence he shipped them. Whaling vessels being notorious for harsh discipline, able seamen in European ports can seldom be persuaded to sign articles on board them, and consequently the worst of characters are usually to be found in this service. I have heard whaling officers say that they seldom expected to take a full compliment of seamen, but usually took with them numerous hands little acquainted with the sea, who were shipped on board by crimps; and that these 267 green-horns, once again on shore, rarely desired to take another trip.

American citizens certainly enjoy very great privileges; liberty and equality to the fullest extent, ashore. At sea, however, it is otherwise: on board ship, republican principles and the rights of man are totally disregarded; the most iron-handed despotism and tyrannical usage being sometimes exercised over them by their fellow-countrymen, for which they have little redress: flogging is a frequent practice on board American whalers. The scale of rations may be better than in English ships, but an English merchantman with its dog-biscuits is, I should think preferable to a Yankee whaler with its scars and stripes.

A mutiny occurred on board one of them whilst we were in port; the mates, great strapping fellows, assisted by the cook and carpenter, cleared the decks of the mutineers with huge handspikes. One of the crew was a most incorrigible rascal; he attempted to set the ship on fire; and we found out when we were at sea, that we had shipped the identical fellow as a seaman.

The crew we had shipped at Francisco were 268 what is termed runners; that is to say, men who receive a certain sum for their services to a stated port; as they were paid on the capstan-head they were very independent, only working when it was absolutely necessary, such as making and taking in sail; so that on dropping anchor, we were not sorry to see these gentlemen walk over the side. In most ports there are certain men called lumberers, who work in gangs, discharging and taking in cargos; for this purpose we engaged eight Kanakas.

Our little vessel, the Mazeppa, was noted for her hospitality and good living; and as numerous colonial vessels were in Honolulu, their officers, knowing the Mazeppa's, either personally or by report, often visited us. The Victoria, a large Sydney vessel, had upwards of two hundred passengers bound for the gold regions; many of whom expected to find gold-dust oozing out of the pockets of those who had been to California. The Cheerful, another Sydney vessel, anchored on our beam, had a most disorderly set of passengers; at night, when all else was still, I could hear the voices of drunken men and women quarrelling for hours. The Cheerful's were noted in the harbour: 'there 269 goes a Cheerful,' was the usual observation when any of them appeared.

During my stay at Honolulu the weather was beautifully fine, seldom too hot, and never too cold; during the day putting the vessel in order would occupy our attention, but in the cool of the evening, if we had not company on board, we would take a stroll ashore, and visit the taverns, bowling-rooms and billiard tables; or perambulate the streets and shady groves by moonlight, watching the dancing, which is a favorite pastime with the Kanakas; then with a supply of eggs, fruit, and other delicacies from the market, we would return on board.

The superstitious Malay, Ali, who was always left guardian of the ship in our absence, rejoiced at our return; under his expert hands, supper was speedily prepared, and then we made merry with

punch. Thus we passed our time, basking in the sunshine of the tropics, and drying the Californian wet out of our bones. The Mazeppa's supercargo and mate kept up the ship's credit for conviviality: few men could do the honours of the table better than they did; and as the swinging tray was never without its complement of full bottles, visitors were numerous at all hours.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

In search of a Cat—Native bound for England—Navigators' Islands—Native Canoes—Island of Sera—Gigantic Savages—The Samoans—Tattooing—A German Settler and his Establishment—An Eden in the Pacific—Perilous practical Jokes—Chiefs at Table—Warfare among the Samoans—Harbour of Apea—Wreck of the Sabine—Exertions of Mr. Prichard and the Samoans—Heroic Conduct of a Girl—Children saved by the Chiefs—A Suspicious Craft—Mutineers Detected and Imprisoned—Their Escape and Re-capture.

HAVING put the ship in good order, painted her hull, set up the rigging, and procured abundance of water and provisions, including pigs, fowls, potatoes, taro, yams, &c. we sought out a crew. Diving into the low grog-shops, we had no difficulty in finding men; but good seamen with satisfactory credentials were not so easily obtained. 271 The ship being overrun with rats, I was deputed to obtain a cat, and in my perambulations picked up a beautiful white one, which I secreted in my coat lining. I was walking off with my captive, when the son of the collector of the customs accosted me a few paces from the house; puss being uncomfortably lodged, began to mew, spit and scratch furiously; this (once a common phrase,) literally let the cat out of the bag, for to my great vexation, he expressed a curiosity to see the prisoner. I unhesitatingly produced the cat, which would have soon produced itself, as it had torn a hole in my coat; and he was astonished to behold his father's favourite cat: of course I made restitution, but was considerably chagrined. The mate was more fortunate, for he pocketed two cats out of the market, and conveyed them safely on board.

Having got a crew, we tripped the anchor, and stood out to sea. Just before these green islands were out of sight, I walked forward to the galley, and observed a dark head and brown arm disappear



down the fore-castle-hatch; judging that there was a native stowed away on board, and knowing the aversion sailors have to any intrusion in their 272 quarters, I quietly mentioned my suspicions to the mate; but as we were some distance at sea, and not wishing to be at the trouble of returning to the land, we deferred for the present making an investigation. The following morning, to the surprise of the captain and supercargo, a good-looking Kanaka lad was visible forward, cleaning the cabin dishes; the culprit was instantly summoned aft, to give an account of himself; he could speak English tolerably, and denied that he had any accomplices, but declared he had secreted himself purely from a desire to see England. As he was an active cleanly lad, we installed him in the office of steward's boy, under Ali. His name, 'Hameha,' was tattooed on his arm, but we christened him 'Jacky;' he made an excellent servant, and often afforded us amusement.

Favoured with a fine breeze, we crossed the line, and steered for the Navigators' Islands; fish were very numerous, and the winds were steady, so that the ship required little working, save occasionally trimming sails when the wind shifted a point or so. It is very pleasant sailing in the tropics, with a steady trade wind cooling the atmosphere: during 273 the day awnings were spread, as a protection from the sun; at night the moon was so light, that reading was almost practicable on deck. Good living, pleasant companions, and entertaining books, made the trip anything but monotonous. We had been anxiously on the look out during the day for land, when the welcome sound of 'land ho!' brought us all on deck; straining our eyes in the direction pointed out, we beheld the first of the Navigator group. As it was getting dusk, and our charts were not very recent, we proposed to reach it by morning under easy sail.

About day-break next morning we found ourselves about five miles off the island of Sera; and some canoes out fishing, coming towards us, we hove to, with the intention of ascertaining where was the port or roadstead of the island. The native boats are scooped out of the trunk of the 'mimosa' tree, a hard white wood; some of them were thirty feet long, others much smaller; their breadth of beam being necessarily disproportionate to their length, some not more than sixteen inches, and the widest not exceeding thirty inches. To compensate for this deficiency, and balance the boat when under a 274 press of sail, they had two short poles, or outriggers, running out from the side, connected together by a log placed longitudinally. The prow of the boats projected to a sharp point

so as to cut the water; and the bows were decorated with coral ornaments or boars' tusks. Each had a sail of an oblong shape, made of matting, and attached to a pole amidships. These long narrow canoes sailed amazingly fast; when swayed violently, and going at full speed, the natives, with the agility of monkeys, would slip out upon the outriggers, and bearing their weight on the log, maintain the boat's equilibrium.

A ship was evidently a novel sight to them; for they sailed rapidly round us, then lowered the sail, and paddle in hand surveyed us with wonder at a respectful distance. No signs could induce the natives to approach: loud shouts of 'Samoa' were all we could elicit from them. Jacky, the Kanaka, seemed to excite their wonder; he, though rather frightened at their savage appearance, regarded them very disdainfully. It was proposed that he should be our interpreter, and he spoke to them in 275 his language; but their guttural speech was in a tongue unknown to him.

The fishing craft increasing in numbers rapidly, we made sail to explore the coast, and find its harbour. About four in the afternoon we descried a sail, which proved to be a Yankee whaler; from its captain we learnt that the island had only the roadstead he was then abreast of, but the adjacent island of Upolo had two. As we urgently required wood, we dropped anchor in the roadstead.

The natives here were not so timid as the former, and were evidently more accustomed to shipping; for they crowded on board, handing out of their narrow canoes neat platted baskets of vegetables and fruits, strewing the deck with yams, taro, pine-apples, guava, bananas and bread fruit. Money was not current; worn-out clothing and manufactured goods were the principal articles of barter for these products.

These natives were the finest race of beings I ever beheld, and I believe acknowledged to be the most gigantic specimens of humanity; both men and women were completely naked, save a narrow belt of rushes or matting which encircled the waist. 276 The generality were upwards of six feet high, their naked brawny limbs being muscular in proportion; and as if in ridicule of the insignificance of European stature, several coolly walked up to me and rested their folded arms on

my head: doubtless considering it a very capital joke at my expense, for the bystanders laughed very heartily.

The Samoans (which appellation extends to the natives of the whole group of Navigators), are many shades darker than the Hawaiians; the colour of their skin resembles bronze, and their bodies are profusely covered with hair; their features are tolerably regular, but that wide distension of the nostrils, to which all savage races have a tendency, is very remarkable among them. This peculiarity probably may have been increased by their mode of salutation, viz. the rubbing of noses. The young men, or dandies among them, are not bad looking; they wear their hair in imitation of the females, and had they been clothed, I have seen some sufficiently feminine in aspect to be taken for comely young women. They have professional friseurs among them, and seem to pride themselves on their hair, which is cut short, and brushed back from the forehead. Warriors very often daub the hair with a white paint made from the ashes of the bread fruit tree, or lime, which makes it frizzly and of a sandy brown colour; this seems to be the most approved style; others have their hair party-coloured, of red, blue, black, and leaden hues: the snow-white hair of the old men gives them a very patriarchal appearance.

Tattooing being contrary to the missionary doctrines, is chiefly practised by the untractable war tribes. The instrument used for puncturing the skin is a small piece of tortoiseshell jagged like the blade of a saw, the teeth of which are dipped into a calabash containing the coloured fluid required. The inoculating process inflicts considerable pain, and often causes inflammation after the operation: the marks are indelible.

In New Zealand the face is tattooed in spiral lines; the South Sea Islanders invariably have straight lines crossing each other at right angles; but fish, birds, or quadrupeds are sometimes fashionable. I saw several who had accurately tattooed on the thighs and loins a representation of knee-breeches; others had clever patterns of checked shirts indelibly marked in the skin, with vermilion and indigo. A few, who were the lucky possessors of fragments of cast-off clothing, proudly displayed their acquisitions, much to the envy of their fellows: men with nothing but an old shirt, others with dilapidated pantaloons or drawers strutted about with great complacency. The women are more

diminutive than the men, but they have very good figures; their features, though well-defined, have nothing in their expression to recommend them; their hair is scented with fragrant herbs, and undergoes the same process as the men's, being brushed straight back, without parting, and gathered in a knot behind. The lips of the married women are sometimes slightly tinged with paint; the single girls have rings tattooed on their fingers. Both men and women commonly wear a girdle round the loins, made of tapa matting or rushes: which are sometimes neatly worked.

Launching our jolly-boat, we proceeded ashore in quest of fire wood. The coast, however, was adverse to landing, the shore being abrupt and unsheltered; the force of the Atlantic waves beat against the rock, producing breakers fifteen feet high, destructive to boats. Following in the wake 279 of the canoes, we at last came to a narrow entrance, where a landing could be effected. Waves in general recede twice, before the final roller comes which produces the breaker; the natives who had preceded us, paddled rapidly in over the rollers, and immediately the waves had receded, leaped out on the beach, then quickly raising the canoe on their shoulders, bore it out of the reach of the approaching wave. With a heavy jolly-boat this celerity was hardly practicable; so when the boat grounded we leaped out, and the natives rushed into the water immediately to assist us; but ere we could drag our boat up, a heavy surf completely drowned us, and swamped the boat, which we hung on by. The natives, who are almost amphibious, care little for water, and laughed at our drenched clothing.

Whilst the wood was being cut, I visited the native village: the huts were very similar to the Kanaka dwellings, though not so tastefully fitted up. They were prettily dispersed amongst the foliage, and completely shaded from the sun, by lofty cocoa-nut, palm, and other tropical trees. Orchards of spontaneous growth, public 280 property, rendered the labour of cultivation almost unnecessary.

Going up to a hut more substantial than the rest, I was astonished to find it tenanted by a white man; he was a German, who had deserted from his ship three years previously, and becoming acquainted with the Samoan tongue, he had taken unto himself two wives, chief's daughters, the noblest by birth and the prettiest damsels in the island. His abode was commodiously fitted up, divided into three compartments, adorned with beautiful mats, and supplied with chairs and tables, a good stock

of well-thumbed books, maps, two fowling-pieces, with a plentiful supply of ammunition, clothing, spirits, tobacco, and other luxuries. Naturally fond of retirement, and become habituated to this mode of life, he lived in indolent ease, respected by the natives, who were always ready to obey his requests.

Leading such a sequestered life, a European companion would have filled his cup of felicity; and in a long conversation we had together, he made me the most tempting overtures to remain on the island; offering me a hut similar to his own, 281 the fairest daughters for wives, abundance of food without labour, free use of his effects, and endless shooting and fishing. But, though the island was, to all appearance, a garden of Eden, I considered myself unsuited to lead such a primitive state of existence, and remain within circumscribed limits for any period: nor was I sufficiently disgusted with the civilized world and its vanities, to renouuce them, even for a terrestrial paradise, whence I might not be able to depart at will.

Returning to the vessel, the boat took another trip; leaving the captain, myself, and a few others, on board. The deck was crowded with about thirty of the Samoans, and the captain, being elated, indulged in several injudicious freaks with the natives, such as rapping their toes, and hitting them with a rope's end. Being a remarkably sedate race, they did not exactly relish these pleasantries; and when he upset their fruit-baskets, one of the islanders retaliated, hitting the skipper a sharp rap with the rope he had so liberally used; this the old gentleman conceived to be no joke, for he stormed very furiously at the offender. Knowing the ferocity of this race, and remembering 282 the fate of the crew of Le Bourgainville and others, who had been massacred, I was rather alarmed at the state of affairs; my apprehensions were increased when, during the angry contention, I saw the fiery eyes of the savages glance at the murderous clubs in their canoes, knowing that a spark might kindle into a blaze, I was greatly relieved to see the boat with the supercargo and crew, put off towards the ship, accompanied by the two principal chiefs of the island, who dined with us at the cabin table. They were attired in loose cotton raiment, and one had a species of girdle embroidered with coloured feathers neatly sewed in rows. They conducted themselves with considerable gravity and propriety, the knives and forks seeming their greatest inconvenience; the ceremony of drinking wine, which they did with each of us, affected the heads of men accustomed only to the mountain

springs. They were very fine men, taller than most of the other Samoans, over whom they seemed to possess unlimited power; for they presented to the ship the fruits and vegetables which the natives had brought on private speculation.

Hearing from the captain of the whaler that at 283 Apea (the harbour of the adjacent island of Upolo) a Sydney vessel had been wrecked a week previously on the breakers, we proceeded to that port, to pick up the ship's company and passengers. Favoured with a light wind we threaded our way between these ever-green islands, beset with rocks and breakers. Some tribes of the group were at war together, and in our passage we met a large fleet of war-canoes, filled with warriors, about to attack an adjacent island. The canoes were eighty feet long, and crowded with natives armed with clubs and spears; they glided by very swiftly, impelled onwards by twenty oars, the buzzing noise of their war-song being audible at a great distance.

The battles are not so sanguinary as might be expected. Their favourite mode of warfare is to enter stealthily by night the enemy's territory and mutilate or destroy the bark of every bread-fruit or cocoa-nut tree they see; thus injured, the trees will not bear fruit for five years. As the natives mostly subsist upon their produce, an incursion of this kind involves the whole district in want.

The following morning we sighted Upolo. The only safe port of these islands is Apea, where a 284 shoal for a considerable distance forms a barrier outside, lessening the force of the ocean swell; the entrance being narrow, it requires precaution to avoid the rocks and breakers on each side of the channel. The harbour is small and in the shape of a horseshoe; inside the rocks the water is deep and perfectly smooth. A grove reaching to the waters' edge, encircles the shipping, protecting them from the violence of the wind.

With considerable caution we sailed slowly through the entrance, while the winds and waves were raging outside; and completely sheltered, we dropt anchor within a quarter of a mile of the shore. On our right was the wreck of the Sabine, a Sydney vessel bound for California, which had entered the port for water and provisions, and, owing to negligent steering, had struck on the breakers, when about half-way through the entrance. She had about thirty passengers on board,

several of them women; on her striking, the violence of the waves beating over her caused her to leak, and expecting that she would fall to pieces hourly, the unfortunate passengers collected their most valuable effects to carry with them ashore. 285 But the boats were smashed, and everything was dislodged, rolling about the decks every time she was swayed to and fro by the sea. In this extremity they looked toward the shore for assistance.

Their imminent peril had been observed by Mr. Pritchard, the British consul; who, hastening with the natives down to the beach charged the Samoans to render them every aid. This was by no means easy to effect; the vessel being environed by rocks and swamped with water, which rose in columns and burst upon the ship, no boat could approach her without being stove in. The Samoans, however, not to be deterred, put off boldly in their canoes, and when they arrived within fifty feet of the wreck, confiding in their aquatic powers, they swam to it through the broken water; in this manner about fifty sturdy natives gained the deck of the vessel. She was now rapidly filling; the passengers were anxious to save their effects, but this being impossible, they attached their money to their bodies before consigning themselves to the waves, and bid adieu to the rest of their worldly property: many who had embarked their all, the 286 fruits of many years of toil, were beggared by this disaster.

The women forgot their respective stations in the common calamity, and comforted each other. Some depressed with fear were unwilling to leave the ship; when a young girl of seventeen, a cabin passenger, to stimulate the others, set the example: her sister being afraid to accompany her she boldly leaped into the foaming surge alone. The natives instantly darted in after her, and bore the spirited young heroine safely to shore; the others shortly followed, also aided by the Samoans. There were some young children on board, which were rescued by the two chiefs, who held their infant charges with one hand out of the water, whilst with the other they swam ashore. As most of the passengers landed penniless and destitute of clothing, Mr. Pritchard billeted them on the natives; inviting some of the cabin passengers to his own house.

The other vessel in the port was a small schooner, “the Pilot, of Adelaide,” which had put in for water, on her route to California. During the early part of her stay she was visited by Mr. Pritchard;

who, from certain suspicious 287 circumstances, imagined she had not been duly chartered; the Sabine came in soon after, and the Sydney people being questioned, denied any knowledge of “the Pilot;” but said that she resembled a coaster, “the Captain Cook.” Confirmed in his suspicions, Mr. Pritchard collected some trustworthy men, and boarded her. The soi-disant captain was first interrogated and requested to show his papers, but being unable to produce satisfactory credentials, he and the others were instantly seized; a search was then made, and amongst other documents, papers were found signifying her to be “the Captain Cook.” The pretended captain and crew being charged with piracy, one of them, the cook, confessed that, according to a pre-arranged plot, during a trip from Hobart Town to Portland Bay, some of the passengers and crew took possession of the vessel, landing the captain and the dissentients ashore on the coast; the mutineers then altered her paint, and named her the ‘Pilot of Adelaide.’ Being in want of provisions for so long a voyage, they had been compelled to put in at the Navigators' Islands; whence, had it not been for disputes among themselves, causing delay, they would have 288 departed earlier. The mutineers, being seized, were taken ashore, but for want of a more secure place of confinement, were lodged in a hut made of strong bamboo posts, and guarded continually by a native sentinel outside. From their previous submissive behaviour, and the difficulty of escaping from the island, vigilance was relaxed; and on the third night of their imprisonment, these men, knowing the penalty they had incurred, escaped from custody; procuring a keg of water and some biscuits, they seized a whale-boat on the beach, and took the desperate course of venturing to sea in an open boat. Encountering heavy weather, they were compelled to land on a neighbouring island; and Mr. Prichard, receiving secret information of their detention, proceeded thither with a force, and re-captured them.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

Apea—Amphibious Savages—Native Ciceroni—Peace and War Factions—Native Hut and Family—Habitations of White Residents—Village of the War Faction—State and Habits of the Natives—Timber Trees—Tortoise-shell and Coral—Carousal of wrecked Passengers—Native admiration of a Pugilist—Mr. Pritchard the Consul—Divine Service at a Zinc Chapel—Missionary's Farewell—Mr. Pritchard's provision for the wrecked Passengers—Deserted Damsels—Steerage Passengers—



Harbour of Port Jackson—Sydney—Author's Condition and Prospects—Metamorphosis of Black Cook—Seeking Work—Sydney Theatre and Aristocracy—Jewish Liberality—Curiosity about the Gold Regions—Conclusion.

ON our arrival at Apea, swarms of natives came on board; both men and women were similar to those of Sera, but more accustomed to Europeans; fruit was abundant, which they offered in exchange 290 for calico, or discarded wearing apparel; for money was not current among them. Both sexes were excellent swimmers, playing about in the water quite at their ease, as if they were amphibious; their favourite pastime being to ascend the rigging and plunge from a height into the water; which the women also did fearlessly. Two mothers with infants at their breast, ascended the shrouds, and clambering out to the end of the top-sail-yard, precipitated themselves head-foremost into the sea with their babies in their arms; the plunge from such a height was tremendous, and as they disappeared the water foamed and eddyed around, but in a few seconds they rose unconcernedly a few feet beyond, as if enjoying a bath.

It is customary for the natives of this group to offer themselves as cicerones to fresh arrivals, and on entering port you are dunned by individuals offering their services; each stranger being supposed to require what they term a "Friend," whose duties are to show you the most interesting features of the place, provide you with food, accommodate you in his hut, and be always ready to escort you on foot, or in his canoe. They are very useful fellows, ever 291 attentive to your wishes, and zealously performing whatever you request, night or day: nor are they exorbitant in their expectations, being well satisfied if you give them some used-up apparel on your departure. Perceiving the necessity for such an auxiliary, I selected as my mentor a middle-aged man, a civilized native, tattooed in imitation of knee breeches, and who was apparently a leading character amongst them. His canoe was only six feet long, and eighteen inches in width, and on descending the ship's side, I stepped (as I thought, carefully) into this frail back, but happening to lean too much on one side to speak to a shipmate, it lost its equilibrium and turned over, upsetting me into the water. I kept myself afloat until my native Friend righted the canoe, when, jumping dexterously into it he essayed to get me in likewise; but this was a rather difficult achievement, these canoes requiring the most equal balancing to maintain their equilibrium. Whilst I endeavoured to get in one side, the native

leant his whole force on the other side; but no sooner did I succeed in scrambling in, than it again upset: at last safely seated at the bottom of the canoe, I was glad to be paddled ashore amidst the laughter of the Mazeppas. On the canoe touching the beach I leaped out into the surf, when my companion, Hiluni, quickly picked up his boat, put it on his shoulders and carried it hastily out of the reach of the rollers.

The Samoans of Apea are divided amongst themselves. At the western end of the island dwell the religious portion, obedient to the missionary doctrines, more moral, more tractable, and less warlike, than their heathen brethren. In the central part, where Mr. Pritchard resides, it is neutral ground. On the eastern side, live the war faction, their precincts being denoted by high stockades. These Philistines delight in war, and are averse to the missionary doctrines; they have occasionally assailed the religious community of the western side, and are far more belligerent than their converted brethren.

Wending my way through a cool grove of cocoanut and palm trees I came to the hut of Hiluni. It was very spacious, made of bamboo, thatched with grass, the roof slanting to within three feet of the ground; the dwelling was completely sheltered by an impenetrable foliage of lofty trees, and fruits of various descriptions hung from the branches around. The place combined the fertility of a garden with the luxuriant negligence of a wilderness.

The interior of the hut was no less pleasing: the floor was composed of dry grass two inches thick, covered with elegant mats. The various articles of household use were made of tamanu and other polished fancy woods well adapted for furniture; and tapa cloth decorated the walls and roof. Seated on the mats were three young women, clothed in loose white apparel, reading religious works printed in the native tongue. Another was making a species of cloth, called maro, from the fibres of trees or plants interwoven. Baskets of fruit were piled in one corner; in another was a bark fire, which emitted a most fragrant perfume. I was duly introduced to the wife and sisters of my host, and whilst Hiluni prepared a repast, the women shampooed me: which, in tropical countries, is a most cooling and refreshing operation during the heat of the day.

The Samoans cook vegetables in a manner similar to the Australian natives; steaming the potatoes as well as any European cook. We had a small pig 294 for dinner, cooked in the Samoan fashion; its entrails being taken out, it was stuffed with herbs and bound up with plantain leaves, then placed on a heap of hot stones and covered over, which dressed the flesh to perfection: yam and roasted bread-fruit were also served up in cocoa-nut shells. After our repast smoking commenced, of which the women are fond; lighting a pipe and taking a puff, they inhaled the smoke, emitting it through their nostrils, and then passed the pipe to their next neighbour.

The principal missionaries of this group of islands are Mr. Pritchard, formerly the British consul of Tahiti, and the adviser of Queen Pomare, and Mr. Williams, the American consul, son of the lamented missionary who was murdered at the island of Mallicolo.

At Apea there are about five European houses inhabited by white people. Mr. Pritchard's house is a very commodious villa, prettily situated on rising ground facing the harbour; a small river crossed by a foot bridge skirts his premises. He is the only one on the island who keeps a *store*, where the natives can traffic for manufactured goods: the demand is but trifling, his business is quite 295 unostentatiously carried on; for the shop is only open occasionally.

Close to his house is a small chapel, to which the natives resort to hear the Gospel: it is constructed entirely of zinc brought from England. Wherever shipping resorts there is generally to be found a house for the sale of spirits; and, though without a regular shop, Apea has its groggery—a small white-washed mud cottage, which, but for four suspicious-looking kegs, would not be taken for a house of public resort. The landlord was a South American, of middle age; his wife a pretty pensive, half-caste girl of fifteen, with an infant. They were both attired partly in European costume, and seemed intelligent and conscious of their superiority over the native Samoans.

In the evening, I and a shipmate visited the 'war party.' Passing through a thick uninhabited scrub, we came to high pallisadoes of bamboo, which formed a stockade ten feet high, serving as a boundary line; and entering a narrow railed pass, easy to be defended by a few against a large numerical force, we beheld the native village. The huts were scattered about under the shade of a

grove of 296 lofty cocoa-nut trees, which extended for a considerable distance; and along the beach were some very extensive buildings, opposite to which were the war canoes drawn up from the beach.

The moon shed a clear light over the whole scene. The natives were distributed mostly in groups, some eating, some singing, others dancing around the fires, which blazed in every direction, and the buzzing of the population reminded one of a mighty hive. These natives had not long since been guilty of cannibal practices, and were notorious for their attacks upon boat crews; but the heathen practices customary with them are forbidden on the other side. As a substitute for spirits they imbibe very freely a liquid called *cava*; the supposed mode of preparing which is very repulsive to European notions of delicacy; the leaves of the cava tree when gathered, undergo a process of chewing or mastication from the women, and the juice thus extracted is squirted into calabashes, to which cocoa-nut milk is added; when fermentation ensues it is considered in a fit state to drink.

Walking into the village we soon attracted notice, 297 and were surrounded by several natives: to find one-self at midnight encompassed by savages, jabbering a strange language and almost limbing one out of sheer curiosity, is not a very agreeable position; but, though some scowled and had the savage stamped upon their countenances, the majority seemed well disposed people. We strolled through the village, entered several huts and joined the dances, making ourselves quite at home.

These dwellings were of an oblong shape, about thirty feet long and twelve wide; the roofs about twelve feet high, thatched with grass or the leaves of the bread-fruit or palm tree externally, and lined with bamboo internally, are supported by three parallel rows of posts; the inner height from the pitch of the roof is about ten feet, and the eaves slant to within three feet of the ground. The floor is covered with grass spread over with mats, and is as soft as a mattress to lie upon. Some of these huts were well lighted up; the substitute for oil lamps being the kernels of an indigenous nut, strung together on a slender piece of bamboo, which penetrating the centre, served for a wick: these 298 nuts must have contained a quantity of oil, for they burned very steadily, and were very luminous.

Leprosy and elephantiasis were very frequent; and the native knowledge of pharmacy being very slight, this endemical disease prevails unchecked to a fearful extent. Some other deformities, also, which are thrust upon the notice, were most revolting to behold; and notwithstanding constant ablutions and cleanly habits, cutaneous eruptions and ophthalmia are common.

The children are very precocious, swimming at two years old, and climbing trees with the agility of monkeys for cocoa nuts. At the birth of a child, it is the national custom to plant a plantain; which tree adding a bark ring on its trunk every year, the age of the child is easily and indubitably determined by the number of rings on the tree.

The usual food of the natives is fish, pork, yam, tara, and potatoes; fruits are very plentiful—the guava, pine-apple, bread-fruit, banana, cocconut and other varieties grow uncultivated: the cocconut is the Samoan's favourite nourishment. The European may chop the nut with an axe or knife till he is tired before he gets at the fruit, but 299 the native, placing the nut between his toes and fingers, fixes his teeth firmly into the husky substance which clings to the nut, and by the force of his jaw peels off the exterior covering.

The only land bird that I noticed was a species of pigeon.

The timber of the Polynesian group is not large; though the trees attain to a great height, and are very numerous, forest-trees with massive trunks and spreading branches are wanting. The wood is mostly tough and diversely grained; the tamanu, ebony, nutmeg and other fancy woods, are well adapted for furniture. Axe-handles, clubs, and spears are made from these woods; these weapons are beautifully carved and polished, the handle being ornamented with sennet of the cocoa-nut fibre: some clubs which resemble the darkest mahogany, are as hard as iron and extremely heavy. The spears are sometimes ten feet long, and are jagged at the end with flints or teeth, forming a barbed point that causes most frightful wounds. The wood of the cocoa-nut tree seems to be preferred for these weapons; although not hard when first felled, after it has been buried for a time in a 300 particular kind of clay it becomes as durable as *lignum vitæ*.

Tortoise-shell and rock-coral are very abundant, and can be obtained for a trifle. A very lucrative trade might, I think, be carried on in these articles. In most of the huts may be seen quantities of the unpolished shell and coral, valued very little more than we do oyster shells. The vessels which touch here are mostly whalers; but Sydney vessels come occasionally and load a cargo of cocoa-nut oil and arrow-root: the former sells for thirty pounds a ton in Sydney.

On the mission side, the crew and passengers of the Sabine had been quartered; receiving an invitation to spend the evening with a select party, in company with a mate of the Mazeppa I went to their habitation. It was one of a small cluster of huts in a thick grove, and the noise of revelry intimated to us which it was we sought; stooping under the eaves and pushing aside some matting we found a goodly company assembled.

The hut was about fifty feet long, the roof fifteen feet high; seated in a circle, cross-legged on some mats, were seven men and five women. In the centre were a dozen bottles and a huge soup tureen of punch, and in a corner of the room blazed a fire upon which was a kettle of water; above their heads hung four *bouilli* tins filled with oil, serving for lamps, each having a large wick. The hut was in a perfect glare of light, and the lamp-smoke and smell of liquors were enough to take away one's breath upon entering. The hut was divided by a matted partition, where the Samoan family resided; they had in vain remonstrated upon this noisy occupation of their dwelling, and being unable to sleep were spectators of the proceedings.

The party consisted of Paddy S—the Sydney champion, a mate of a Yankee whaler, an editor of a sporting paper, and four other flash men; all citizens of Sydney. One of the women had her husband with her; the other four had husbands in California, to which place their conjugal love had induced them to go in search of them. One named Stokes was the wife of a mariner; who, by a singular coincidence, we had shipped at Francisco for the run to Honolulu, where he left us to return to California: had he accompanied us to Sydney, as he thought of doing, he would have had the unexpected felicity of meeting his adventurous spouse.

Most of the Sabines were rather a loose set; many of them had left comfortable situations and broken up their establishments; others were too abandoned to do well anywhere. Mr. Pritchard the consul had billeted them in pairs, at the expense of the government, upon the best huts. The sudden visitation of so many hungry whites, who consumed the best pigs and the fat of the land, was rather obnoxious to the natives; for the remuneration received by the Samoans, was inadequate to the cost and trouble given them. Paddy S———was the only one they respected, and this more for his pugilistic prowess than any other qualities: he had pitted his skill and strength against their mightiest men of valour, and was victorious each time. Powerful as was the Samoan brute strength, it was not a match for the trained strength of S———, especially in long encounters; nor does the vegetable diet of savages give them the stamina and powers of endurance which a constitution strengthened by animal food possesses. So great was their admiration of Paddy S——— 303 that he might have been elected chief had he been so disposed.

The wrecked passengers, vexed at being arrested in their El Dorado expedition, and tired of a life of indolence on the island, with chagrin found themselves necessitated to return to Sydney, to work and toil ere they could accumulate sufficient to start again. Being British subjects the consul was obliged to defray the passage expenses to Sydney of those who had no money; the arrival of the *Mazeppa* and the *Captain Cook*, offering a fitting opportunity, he sent some of them with the prisoners in the *Captain Cook*, and the others as steerage passengers in the *Mazeppa*.

During our stay at these islands I visited Mr. Pritchard, who lives in a very comfortable style. His wife, celebrated in Tahitian annals, is a fine matronly lady and greatly respected. Mr. Pritchard has a rather dignified appearance, he is much sunburnt and is grey with years; his usual costume is a straw hat, naval blue coat, and brass buttons. He has held the office of consul for many years in the Pacific Islands, has amassed money by trade, and is said to possess perseverance and resolution in 304 his missionary labours, though attentive to the loaves and fishes, as well as to the spiritual wants of his hearers. Although Her Majesty's representative, he does not consider it *infra dig*, to keep a retail store, as aforesaid, at the back of his premises. In company with the surpercargo, I went on one or two occasions to procure various articles required for the ship, such as hosiery,

groceries, beef and pork: in short, the consul could supply us with anything, from “a needle to an anchor.” He seemed well adapted for business, and disposed of his commodities in a tradesman-like manner, weighing out soap and other things in a pair of scales with the utmost accuracy; then buckling a steel round his waist, knife in hand, he expatiated on the qualities and the prime parts of the pork. Besides occasionally retailing shop goods, he supplies ships with cocoa-nuts, oil, and other natural products; which from his missionary influence he is enabled to procure at a trifling cost, and sell at large profits. Apart from his business, you could hardly identify, in the grave magisterial functionary, the bustling accommodating store-keeper.

On Sunday I attended church, the small zinc 305 edifice before-mentioned: its dimensions are about thirty feet long by twenty in width. The congregation, consisting mostly of Samoans, with the passengers of the Sabine, were seated on forms. Mr. Pritchard officiated, dressed in a blue coat, brass buttons, and tweed trousers; after reading the church service, he preached an extempore sermon; his text being appropriately taken from that chapter in the Acts of the Apostles, referring to the shipwreck of St. Paul on the island of Melita, or Malta. His sermon and delivery were very good; though neither his dress or manner were exactly clerical. The chapel was very full, and the solar rays striking down upon the zinc made the metal actually hot; so that the inside temperature was that of an oven, and the congregation were streaming with perspiration.

Procuring a supply of water, taking in some casks of cocoa-nut oil for cargo, and building bunks for the accommodation of steerage passengers, we made ready for sea. We had twenty-five steerage passengers of the Sabine, and five in the cabin. Among the latter was a missionary with his wife: he had resided on the island for fifteen years and 306 was sincerely beloved by his disciples, and it might be truly said of him, that

“His preaching much, but more his practice wrought,

“A living sermon of the truths he taught;

“For this by rules severe his life he squared,



“That all might see the doctrines which they heard.”

Before weighing anchor, the vessel was crowded with boats, containing natives of both sexes, who had come to bid adieu to their pastor; the principal natives delivered to him an address, expressing their gratitude for his ministry and sorrow at his departure. Ascending the sky-light, he addressed to them some words of good counsel; saying that he believed he had built his church upon a rock, and not upon sand, and hoping that the good seed he had sown might not be cast away. As he spoke in the Samoan language we could not understand his discourse save by interpretation; but it powerfully affected the natives, for the majority wept like children.

Before our departure, Mr. Pritchard, who contracted to supply us with provisions and live stock, was all activity in shipping the hogs and vegetables, and supplying the wants of the passengers of the 307 Sabine. He had cut some bars of soap into small pieces, and had a packet of shirts, trousers, tin pots, knives, &c.; all which articles were laid out on a table at the stern. Having an account book before him with a list of names, he caused the individuals to come before him one by one, and doled out the articles to each, receiving their signatures for their receipt. Two shirts each he considered a great extravagance, and he exhorted them to be most careful of the soap; if there were three in a family he deemed one tin pot between them amply sufficient, and if two men happened to be comrades the same rule applied to them. Each piece of soap he wrapped carefully up in paper, arguing stoutly and hearing the applicant's reasons ere he gave away a piece an ounce heavier than another; and before giving away a knife and fork, he strictly questioned them if they had a pocket knife, requiring the testimony of others in corroboration. This sparing distribution of needful and inexpensive articles appeared very droll to us; but the consul did not seem to consider it any way derogatory: he could not have been actuated by motives of personal economy, as the costs were charged to government. The ship's 308 victualling accounts were disposed of in a much more summary manner. The last that clung to the vessel were the native ciceroni, seeking remuneration for their services; and several Samoan damsels. Some of the Sabines, during their stay, had evidently made an impression upon the too susceptible hearts of the daughters of Apea;

for many a tear dropped from the deep fringed eyelashes of these dusky Neriads as they bid a final adieu to their swains, and stepped into the frail canoes of their sires.

Sheeting home the topsails, Mr. Pritchard took his leave, having previously distributed from his capacious pockets some religious tracts; which, I fear, were not very likely to be read by their recipients. Favoured with a fine breeze, we shot out of harbour; and the Navigator Isles were soon lost to view.

Many of our passengers pulled long faces when they found themselves bound for Port Jackson, instead of San Francisco; some having given their creditors the slip, or in other ways damaged their reputation, their anticipations must have been anything but pleasing of the reception that awaited them.

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Sailors make little allowance for female scruples on the score of delicacy; of this fact the steerage of the Mazeppa was an illustration: the passengers, five of whom were women, being packed together in two tiers of 'bunks,' both sexes occupying one compartment. Though the Sydney women are early taught to 'rough it,' their position was far from agreeable in this respect.

Fine winds favoured us till we reached the Feejees, where we had baffling winds. We there buried a child which died of dysentery.

It was with sincere pleasure that one morning at day-break we sighted Sydney Heads: two bluff points at the entrance of Port Jackson. This harbour is esteemed one of the most commodious in the world: it is very circuitous, having several small bays, and the soundings are deep; in many instances there being sufficient water for wharfing abreast of the shore. The country on each side, leading to the city, is well laid out with elegant parks and pleasure grounds; and at each bend of the river appeared some picturesque villa, numbers of which are dotted over the landscape. Passing the botanical gardens and the governor's residence, we beheld 310 spread out before us the capital of

New South Wales. Mooring our little vessel alongside a wharf in Darling Harbour, the sailors and passengers went ashore, to have a jollification on the termination of the voyage.

There are certain memorable epochs in our existence, which serve as landmarks of our pilgrimage; when we call a halt to review our past career, and deliberate as to the future. In these sober moments, when, chastened by suffering and experience, we look back upon our past life, noting frailties of conduct, errors of judgment, and delusions of hope, and finding the dreams of youth unrealized, we are able to form a truer estimate of things. Of experience I had bought much and dearly; but I had not learned any craft or trade, or acquired new means of earning a livelihood; nor had I amassed wealth. My golden dreams were dissipated, and the waking realities of life pressed urgently on my attention. The state of my finances was not encouraging; for only a few stray dollars were left. In vain I turned out the pockets of my dilapidated Californian garments; not a grain of dust rewarded my scrutiny. My 311 migratory course had rendered it doubtful whether remittances from home would be awaiting me. So packing up my traps, I stepped ashore, and pulling my hat over my brows, took the bye streets leading to the post-office. On my way I met the black cook of the Mazeppa, dressed in a most elaborate black suit, with frilled shirt, a black hat, and polished leather boots, his face being as black and polished as his feet. He recognized me, and insisted on my partaking of a bottle of port wine with him. The African cook, metamorphosed into a coloured-gentleman, was rapidly spending the pay of months, assuming a position which he could not long sustain: he was just now at the top of fortune's wheel, while I was at the bottom.

At Sydney, during the wool season, several hundreds of men are employed on the wharfs, in pressing the wool and stowing it on board vessels; but at this time, most of the wool had been shipped, consequently many labourers were thrown out of employment. However, I went round the various wharfs, and at length succeeded in obtaining work.

Returning to the Mazeppa in the evening, my friend the mate, who had been surprised at my abrupt departure, was astonished to hear of my object in going ashore. He had that day received a handsome pecuniary acknowledgment for his faithful services, from the supercargo, and invited me

to accompany him ashore. On entering my cabin, I was surprised to find a dress suit ready laid out for me; and, putting it on, I joined my friend on deck.

We were presently driven off in a cab to the theatre. The house, which is about the size of the Lyceum, and elegantly fitted up, was full, and the wealth and beauty of Sydney were assembled in the boxes; but the air of a London audience was wanting. In the colonies there is not that exclusiveness customary in good English society; many are indebted to lucky speculations for elevation in social position, consequently there are many in the ranks of the Sydney aristocracy who possess no other attribute but that of wealth to recommend them to notice; and who, like most parvenus, are totally deficient in true gentility and refinement.

The following day, Ali the Malay received his discharge; since his hard-heartedness to his 313 unfortunate countryman the Tingul, he had lost favour: nor did his ill-gotten property prosper him, for before leaving Sydney I saw him reduced to solicit charity.

Anxious to procure permanent employment, I was indefatigable in my enquiries for a situation; applying to people in various lines of business, but without success, as I had no special qualifications for any particular occupation. In my wanderings I met several of the 'Sabine' passengers; some of them who had been brought up in mercantile houses, found it difficult to obtain situations, though natives of Sydney, and possessing the highest references for capacity and respectability. The posts they had vacated were filled up, and the numbers of educated men being greater than the demand for them, shepherding in the interior, or manual labour on the wharfs, were the only alternatives. Heartily wishing I had been brought up to some handicraft, even if it had been tinkering, for want of better occupation I took to wharfing.

Returning to the Mazeppa one evening, I was passing an 'old clothes shop' when a touter laid hold of me by the coat buttons; on looking at him 314 I recognised him to be one of the tribe of Levi, a young Sabine whom we had brought back with us. In answer to his enquiries, I briefly explained my position; when, taking me through the shop, he introduced me to two of his relatives, who were smoking a mild havanna and drinking diluted gin in the shop parlour. The sitting room had that

dark funereal appearance common to most Hebrew establishments: screens of coats, waistcoats and inexpressibles hung up invitingly to view in the shop, effectually excluding the light from the back room. Being invited to stay the evening I did so, and a slip-shod wench brought in tea; spirits were afterwards introduced, and imbibed very freely by the Jews, who became uncommonly jovial. On leaving, a brown paper parcel was put into my hand, containing an article labelled 'Gent's neat.'

As the Mazeppa was discharging cargo, the captain and supercargo, who had always been friendly disposed toward me, being acquainted with my unsuccessful search for employment, were kind enough to invite me to take up my quarters on board, in the interim. To compensate their liberality as far as I could, I usually assisted in taking notes of cargo 315 and other matters during the forenoon. We had several tons of Californian sand in ballast, and when discharging this, it was amusing to see both workmen and spectators anxiously looking to see if it contained any grains of gold. The gold mania at Sydney was then at its height; and, being the only one on board who had been up to the gold regions, I was much in request. During chief part of the day I held regular levees, and was dunned on all sides with questions of the most diverse nature. Fathers, brothers, wives and mothers, all came to obtain information of me respecting the El Dorado, asking me if I had seen their absent relatives. The wives seemed to labour under the greatest apprehensions: whether fearful of becoming widows, without receiving authentic information of the fact or doubtful of their husbands' safety or constancy, is not for me to determine. That I should have brought away no samples of the gold, seemed to them most inexplicable; and many imagined me to be a miser with secreted hoards. The fact of my having returned worse than I went, both in health and pocket, was not then credible; but by this time, my statements must have been confirmed by 316 those of too many adventurers, for the Sydney folks to doubt or wonder any longer.

My further adventures before leaving Sydney possessing no peculiar interest, it will suffice to say that I sailed for Old England round Cape Horn, and arrived at home just when I had attained what are termed "years of discretion:" somewhat poorer, but I trust, wiser than when I left; glad to return to my family and friends, and again to enjoy the comforts of civilized life.

THE END