

## A LUCKY FALL.

The Sonora, Cal., *Independent* says: The most singular manner of being struck with a fortune in prospecting that we ever heard of occurred above Spring gulch on Sunday last. Mr. Snow, late of San Francisco, now prospecting in this vicinity for other parties, was out on a quartz hunt with Dr. Drake, of San Francisco. They were returning home, it being stormy, when Snow (who was riding a horse along the trail) was suddenly missed by his companion. Snow's horse had slipped off the bluff, and down he went at an angle of 45°, horse, rider and rifle (which he gripped firmly in his hand), rolling over and over in the snow, until he brought up against a mass of stone standing out of the snow, its top covered with moss. He was not hurt as the cold, soft cushion had saved his bones from the hard ground beneath. Scrambling up against the rock, he noticed that it was quartz, and where the horse had accidentally kicked of the moss something glittered. His eyes "bugged" out, but he did not stop to brush them off, his hands were too busy clawing off the moss. Darkness coming on he had only time to break off a few specimens, which are filled with pure ore. One small piece, exhibited in town, was estimated to be three-quarters gold. Tons of it are apparently still awaiting its owner. Snow says the vein is about 30 feet thick, and in his impulsive generosity he gave away several shares soon after his arrival. He told us that he "would not look at \$25,000 for his interest." It is without doubt the richest mass of quartz ever discovered in this county, except the Divoli bonanza, recently opened here in Sonora. Of course, he told us to keep it out of the paper; but the caution we find to be getting monotonous. Mr. Snow is very well known in San Francisco as an actor of merit, and a gentleman well-deserving the good fortune he has "tumbled to." Some men are born rich, others have riches thrust upon them, but Mr. Snow has drifted through air and snow, right slap up against a pile of richness that would make old Rothachild's keen eyes turn green with envy.

## HOME-MADE TROUBLE.

Edward Berwick contributes the following to the *Pacific Rural Press*: Those that have no troubles are dead," so runs the old saw as set by some "old file." I suppose, by the way, that "old file" is an abbreviation of old philosopher. At least the old file who set my saw had some knowledge of human nature. But, though "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward," it is wonderful how many of our troubles are home-made. We may fairly apply that adjective to somewhere near 99%.

Even the countless woes arising from ill health, and for which we are so ready to hold Providence responsible, are, in the vast majority of cases, simply the result of our own ignorance, wilfulness or wickedness. One nurses his dyspepsia on hot cakes and fried grease; another shrivels his liver by a too constant soaking in gin; a third benumbs his brain by a ceaseless devotion to tobacco, and unspeakable aversion to cold water and fresh air. Obviously home-made troubles, all!

Another malady that sorely afflicts humanity is the disease called

## AMBITION.

Innumerable are the troubles incidental thereto. The ambition, dear reader, not to BE, but to HAVE. Not the laudable desire to be manly, tender, loving and good; but the damnable lust to have gold and more gold and yet more. An insatiable thirst that maddens and brutalizes, but never did, and never will truly ennoble one of the human race. Alas! for the countless home-made troubles arising from ambition to

have worldly wealth! Food, raiment and content know none of them.

"Joy, and temperance, and repose  
Slam the door on the doctor's nose!"

After money troubles what so common as

## FAMILY TROUBLES.

Troubles incidental to the management of children. It seems to have become fashionable of late to assume that children are born with an enormous amount of intuitive knowledge; that they need no guidance, no restraint and vastly little schooling. Education, the careful drawing out of the faculties, bodily, mental, spiritual, has become a thing too tiresome for the fast-living mothers of fast-living California.

Avarice or vanity must be nursed and the children ignored. The very few who are devoted to their offspring appear rather to wish to make something for them instead of something of them. Striving to accumulate dollars or acres, treasures that moth and rust may corrupt; an inheritance that

"Boy will anticipate,  
Lavish and dissipate."

Forgetting the primary and infinitely more important need of molding the pliant character after a worthy model. Forgetting to cherish the tender buds of love, truth and tenderness. Forgetting to implant the sterner virtues of obedience and self-denial. Forgetting that hoarded gold is by no means necessarily a blessing. Forgetting

"How widely its agencies vary,  
To curse, to ruin, do good or bless;  
As even its muted coins express,  
Now stamped with the image of good Queen Bess,  
And now of a Bloody Mary."

If parents would think more of the personal worth, and less of the pecuniary worth of their children, the world would be the better for it; parents would be the better for it; children would be the better for it; and we should hear but little of that greatest of home-made troubles: children, a curse to their parents.

## HOMESTEAD SETTLER'S BILL.

The bill passed by the United States Senate lately for the relief of homestead settlers is a measure of great importance. It was originally introduced by Senator Booth, and his persistent efforts procured its passage both in the Public Land Committee and in the Senate. Under the existing law the right of pre-emption on public land attaches from the date of settlement, but the right of a settler under the homestead law only from the date of entry. This bill provides that the land shall be given to the first settler, whether he claims as a pre-emptor or as a homesteader. Senator Booth said on this point: "There is no reason why the right of a homestead settler should not relate back by his alleging the date of his settlement in his homestead affidavit, and the fact that a settler now before a survey, has no option, but must claim under the pre-emption law in order to cut intervening settlers or grants, is sufficient reason why it should relate back, for many settlers have already used their pre-emption right, and are now, although in possession of valuable improvements, entirely at the mercy of 'intervening pre-emptors, or railroad grants.'" The bill next provides that the first settler upon an abandoned homestead entry shall have a preference right to acquire title to it after the original entry is cancelled, and the last section substitutes for the present roundabout and dilatory method of cancelling relinquished homesteads and timber culture entries in the General Land Office, the common sense provision that such relinquishments shall be effectual as soon as they are filed in the local land office. Senator Booth, in explaining this section said: "These relinquishments are nearly always made as the result of the purchase of the improvements by some person who is looking for a homestead, and if the cancellation were immediately noted, he, by reason of his being a party in the matter, would be able to enter before anyone else; but as long as cancellations in such cases are made as at present, he has no advantage by reason of

such purchase, for in the interval it becomes widely known in the neighborhood of the Land Office that the claim to that tract has been relinquished, and all the jumpers and speculators of both localities are immediately on the alert to ascertain in advance of every one else the moment of the cancellation." This desire is no small source of corruption in the local land offices, and the reporting of cancellation, by telegraph which goes by mail, forms a considerable part of the business of some land attorneys.

THE AIR IN SEA WATER.—It is only in recent years, and through the well-equipped expeditions that have been engaged in exploring seas, that the question as to the amount and composition of the air in water has been systematically treated. Important researches of the kind were carried out by Herr Jacobsen on the *Pomerania*, in the Baltic and North sea; one result of these being that the proportion of oxygen in the air of surface water was found pretty constant between 33.64% and 34.14%. Again, Mr. Buchanan, of the *Challenger* expedition, found it to vary between 33% and 35%, the largest proportion being in the neighborhood of the South Polar circle, and the least in that of the trade-winds. A new study of the question by Herr Svendsen and Herr Tornoe, in connection with Norwegian expeditions to the sea between Norway, the Faroe islands, Iceland, Jan Mayen and Spitzbergen, has recently appeared. In some respects former methods of procuring the water and of analysis were improved on, and laboratory experiments were made as to the absorption of air by sea water. These observers got higher numbers in the surface proportion of oxygen than were obtained for the North sea; thus, south of 70° latitude the average was 34.96%; and between 70°, and 80°, 35.64%, instead of 33.93%. This corresponds, however, with what Mr. Buchanan met with in the latitude of the Antarctic circle, viz: 35%. It appeared, further, that the oxygen in the surface water was always considerably greater than as found by laboratory experiment; so that, apparently, it does not depend alone on pressure and temperature, but also on some still unknown causes.

MANILLA ROPE TESTS.—One of the most important, and perhaps most critical, operations which have to be performed in connection with torpedo service is lowering the torpedo boats from the deck of a ship ready for being sent on their deadly mission. When it is considered that some of these mischievous little crafts weigh from 8 to 10 tons, it will be seen that the ropes used in thus manipulating them are required to be of the highest quality and most trustworthy make. To this end the authorities at Portsmouth dockyard have recently cast about for a really reliable rope for the torpedo ship *Hecla*. The rope selected is best 3-strand white manilla, of two sizes, namely, 5½ inches and 6 inches circumference, respectively. The 5½-inch rope was guaranteed by the makers to lift 12 tons, and the 6-inch 14 tons. Samples of these ropes were recently tested at Portsmouth, under the superintendence of Staff-Captain Kiddle, the Master Attendant, with excellent results. The lengths tested were each 12 feet, between the gripping points, and the 5½-inch rope did not break until a tensile strain of 12½ tons was reached; whilst the 6-inch rope held out up to 16½ tons, thus giving an ample margin over the guaranteed strength. As a means of comparison, it may be interesting to mention that a 6-inch Italian fiber rope would not stand a strain of more than 13½ tons, whilst Russian hemp rope of the same size cannot be reckoned on for more than 11½ tons.

"I'm getting fat," said the tramp, when caught stealing lard.