

ANNALS OF JIMTOWN.

PRENTICE MULFORD'S DESCRIPTION OF A MINING CAMP IN THE SIXTIES.

The Transition from Mining to Mustang. Happy "Tilted Backs" of the Bella Union—Brown's Theory of Heaven—How a Rich Vein of Character Was Developed.

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THOSE hot July and August afternoons, when the air simmered all along the heated earth, and I was trying to keep awake in my seminary on the hill, and wrestling with the mercury at 100 degs, and my sixty polyglot pupils for teaching school was among my numerous occupations in California, the grown up "boys" would be tilted back in their chairs under the portico and against the cool brick wall of the Bella Union. They did not work, but they spun yarns. How half the boys lived was a mystery—as much a mystery, I do believe, to themselves as any one else.

Some owned quartz claims, some horses, and all ran regularly for office. They belonged to the stamp of men who worked and mined in earlier times, but, come what might, they had resolved to work in that way no longer.

And when such resolve is accompanied by determination and an active, planning, inventive brain, the man gets along somehow. It is speculation that makes fortunes, and plan, calculation and forethought for speculation require leisure of body. A hard working, ten-hour-per-day digging, dolving miner works all his brains out through his fingers' ends. He has none left to speculate with.

When I was mining at Sweet's Bar there came one day to my cabin a long, lean, lank man looking for a lost cow. The cow and the man belonged near Jacksonville, twelve miles up the Tuolumne. I dined that man principally of some bread of my own making, and I had the name then of making the best bread of any one in the house, where I lived alone.

After dinner the man sat himself down on one bowlder and I on another, and I asked him if he had a good claim. That roused him to wrath. He had, it seems, just reached the last point of his disgust for hard work and mining. Said he: "Don't talk to me of a good claim; don't. It sounds like speaking of a good guillotine, or a beautiful halter, or an elegant rack you're about to be stretched on." He had gone through his probation of hard work with his hands, and had just resolved to let them rest and give his head a chance to speculate. So he did. I don't know that he ever met the cow again, but eight or nine years after I met him in the legislature of California. He sat in the biggest chair there, and was lieutenant governor of the state.

In 1860 the certain class of men of whom I speak were in a transition state. They had left off working with their hands, and they were waiting for something to turn up on which to commence working with their heads. While thus waiting they became boys and played. The climate and surroundings were eminently favorable to this languid, loafing condition of existence, no long, sharp winters forcing people to bestir themselves and provide against its severities; little style to keep up; few families to maintain; no disgrace for a man to cook his own victuals; houses dropping to pieces; little new paint anywhere to make one's eyes smart; gates dropping from their hinges; few municipal improvements, with accompanying heavy taxes, and that bright summer sun for months and months shining over all and tempting everybody to be permanently tired and seek the shade. The boys forgot their years; they dreamed away their days; they gossiped all the cool nights; they shook off dignity; they played; they built waterwheels in the ditch running by the Bella Union door; they instituted ridiculous fictions and converted them into realities; they instituted a company for the importation of smoke in pound packages into Jamestown; Muldoon was president and the "Doctor" secretary.

It was brought by a steamer up Wood's creek; the steamer was wrecked on a dam a mile below town; the company met day after day in old Nielson's saloon to consult; the smoke was finally taken to Jamestown and sold; the proceeds were stored in sacks at the express office; there was an embezzlement consequent on the settlement; the money, all in 10 cent pieces, was finally deposited in the big wooden mortar over Baker's drug store; this the "doctor" was accused of embezzling, having time after time climbed up the mortar and abstracted the funds dime after dime and spent them for whisky. Then came a lawsuit. Two mule teams freighted with lawyers for the plaintiff and defendant were coming from Stockton, and the Pound Package Smoke company met day after day in preparation for the great trial.

This fiction lasted about four months, and amused everybody except Captain James S—, an ex-sheriff of the county, who, being a little deaf, and catching from time to time words of great financial import regarding the Pound Package Smoke company as they dropped from Muldoon's and the "Doctor's" mouths, and being thereby time after time misled into a temporary belief that this fiction was a reality, and so often becoming irritated at finding himself right, and mistaken, burst out upon these two men one day with all the wrath becoming the dignity of a Vice-consul, and denounced them

profanely and otherwise for their frivolity and puerility.

Another specimen thinker and speculator of that era was Carroll. He, too, had forever thrown aside pick and shovel, and when I met him he was a confirmed "tilted-back" under the Bella Union portico. Carroll was the theorist of Jamestown. He broached new ones daily; he talked them to everybody in Jamestown, and after making clean work of that hamlet would go up to Sonora and talk there, and lastly published them in the Union Democrat. Said Carroll one Monday morning to the Presbyterian divine: "Mr. H—, I heard your sermon yesterday on 'Heaven.' You argue, I think, that heaven is really a place. It think it ought to be a place too. I've been thinking about it all night. I'm satisfied not only that it is a place, but I've got at the locality, or at least have approximated to it. I've reasoned this out on purely scientific data, and here they are. We have an atmosphere, and they say it is from thirty-three to forty-five miles high. Angels only live in heaven, and angels have wings. If angels have wings, it's proof that they must have an atmosphere to fly in. Now, the only atmosphere we are sure of is that around the earth. Therefore, putting all these facts and conclusions together, I've proved to myself that heaven must be from thirty-three to forty-five miles from the ground we stand on."

On commencing my pedagogical career, I rented a room of Carroll. He owned at that time a quantity of real estate in Jamestown, some of which, including the premises I occupied, was falling rapidly and literally on his hands. The house I lived in was propped up several feet from the ground. The neighbors' chickens fed under this house from the crumbs swept through the cracks in the floor. There was an easy house to sweep clean. Rumor said that during my landlord's occupancy of these rooms many chickens had strangely disappeared, and that pistol shots had been heard from the interior of the house. The floor cracks did show powder marks, and there was an unaccountable quantity of feathers blowing about the yard. In a conversation with my landlord he admitted that his boomerang could beat a six shooter in fetching a chicken.

Then he showed me his boomerang, which was of accidental construction, being the only remaining leg and round of an oaken armchair. Properly shield, he said, it would kill a chicken at twenty yards. French Joe kept the grocery next to Keefe's saloon, and it was in "Jimtown" a current report that Carroll and Joe had once invited the Catholic priest, Father A—, from Sonora, to dinner; that the backbone of this dinner was a duck; that at or about this time Mrs. Hale, five doors down the street, had missed one of her flock of ducks; that on the morning of the dinner in question a strong savor of parboiled duck permeated all that part of Jamestown lying between Joe's and Mrs. Hale's; that Mrs. Hale smelt it, that, putting two and two—cause and effect and her own suspicions—together, she armed herself with her bun-tormentor fork and, going from her back yard to the little outdoor kitchen in Joe's back yard, found a pot over a fire and her presumed duck parboiling in it; and that, transfixing this duck on her tormentor, she bore it home, and the priest got no duck for dinner.

Carroll's mortal aversion was the hog. His favorite occupation for ten days in the early spring was garlanding, and his front fence was filly secured against hogs, for Carroll, though a man of much speculative enterprise, was not one whose hands always seconded the work of his head. There was not a completed thing on his premises, including a well which he had dug to the depth of twelve feet and which he had then abandoned forever. The hogs would break through his fence and root up his roses, and the well caving in about the edges became a yawning gulf in his garden, and during the rainy season it partly filled up with water, and a hog fell in one night and, to Carroll's joy, was drowned.

Men did their best in the dead of a rainy night to get the poor animal out, but a hog is not a being possessed of any capacity for seconding or furthering human attempts at his own rescue. So he drowned, and was found the morning after a grand New Year's ball at the Bella Union hall hanging by Joyce's clothesline over the middle of the street between the Bella Union and the Magnolia. The next night they put him secretly in the cart of a fish peddler who had come up with salmon from the lower San Joaquin, and this man unwittingly hauled the hog out of town.

Carroll unfortunately allowed his mind to wander and stray overmuch in the maze of theological mysteries and its (to him) apparent contradictions. He instituted a private and personal quarrel between himself and his Creator, and for years he obtruded his quarrel into all manner of places and assemblages. He arrived at last at that point where many do under similar circumstances—a belief in total annihilation after death—and this serving to make him more miserable than ever his only relief was to convert others to the same opinion and make them as wretched as himself. Occasionally he succeeded. He came to me one day and on his face was the grin of a fiend. "I've got Cummings," said he. "Cummings thought this morning he was a good Methodist, but I've been laboring with him for weeks. I've convinced him of the falsity of it all. I knocked his last plank of faith from under him today. He hasn't now a straw to cling to, and he's as miserable as I am."

"But with Mullins," he remarked afterward, "I've slipped up on him. I wrought three weeks with Mullins; took him through the Bible, step by step—uncovered him steadily as we went along—got him down to the last leaf in the last chapter of the last book of Revelations, and there, fool like, I let up on him to go home to supper. And do you know when I tackled him next morning, to close out Mullins' faith in the religion of his fathers, I found Mullins in my absence had got scared. He'd galloped in belief way back to Genesis, and now I've got all that job to do over again."



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Call and see us and get prices at Oregon City office or on Robert L. Taft at Portland office, No. 50, Stark street, Portland.

There was a great deal of life in those little rambling camps in Tuolumne county like Jamestown. They might not have the population of a single block in New York city, but there was a far greater average of mental activity, quickness and intelligence to the man, at least so far as getting the spice out of life was concerned. The social life of a great city may be much more monotonous through that solitude imposed by great numbers living together. Everybody at these camps knew us, and we knew everybody, and were pretty sure of meeting everybody we knew. In the town one is not sure of meeting an acquaintance socially, save by appointment. There are few loafing or lounging resorts; people meet in a hurry and part in a hurry. Here in New York I cross night and morning on a ferry with 500 people, and of these 400 do not speak or know each other. Four hundred of these people will sit and stare at each other for half an hour, and all the time wish they could talk with some one. And many of these people are so meeting, so crossing, so staring and so longing to talk year in and year out. There is no doctor's shop where the impromptu symposium meets daily in the back room, as ours did at Doc Lampron's, in Montezuma, or Baker's, in Jamestown, or Dr. Walker's, in Sonora. There's no reception at the camp grocery as there used to be at "Bill Brown's" in Montezuma. There's no lawyer's office, where he feels privileged to drop in as we did at Judge Preston's, in Jamestown, or Judge Quint's, in Sonora. There's no printing office and editorial room all in one on the ground floor where into the "Camp Senate" lawyer, judge, doctor, merchant and other citizen may daily repair in the summer's twilight, tilted back in the old hicked armchairs on the front portico, and discuss the situation as we used to with A. N. Francisco, of The Union Democrat, in Sonora, and as I presume the relics of antiquity and '49 do at that same office today.

These are a few of the features which made "camp" attractive. These furnished the social anticipations which lightened our footsteps over those miles of mountain, gulch and flat. Miles are nothing, distance is nothing, houses a mile apart and "camps" five miles apart are nothing when people you know and like live in those camps and houses at the end of those miles. An evening at the Bella Union saloon in "Jimtown" was a circus. Because men of individuality, character and originality met there. They had something to say. Many of them had little to do, and perhaps for that very reason their minds the quicker took note of so many of those little peculiarities of human nature which, when told, or hinted, or suggested, prove the sauce piquant to conversation. When Brown, the lawyer, was studying French and read his Telemachus aloud by his open window in such a stentorian voice as to be heard over a third of the "camp," and with never a Frenchman at hand to correct his pronunciation, which he manufactured to suit himself as he went along, it was a part of the Bella Union circus to hear "Yank" imitate him. When Old Broche, the long, thin, bald-headed French baker, who would never learn one word of English, put on his swallow-tailed Sunday coat, which he had brought over from La Belle France, and lifted up those coat tails when he tripped over the mud puddles as a lady would her skirts, it was a part of the Bella Union circus to see "Scotty" mimic him. When John S—, the Virginian, im-

presively and loudly swore that a Jack-rabbit he had killed that day leaped twenty-five feet in the air on being shot, and would then look around the room as if he longed to find somebody who dared dispute his assertion, while his elder brother, always at his elbow in supporting distance, also glared into the eyes of the company, as though he also longed to fight the somebody who should dare discredit "Brother John's" "whopper," it was a part of the circus to see the "boys" wink at each other when they had a chance. When one heard and saw so many of every other man's peculiarities, oddities and mannerisms, save his own, set off and illustrated while the man was absent, and knew also that his own, under like circumstances, had been or would be brought out on exhibition, it made him feel that it was somewhat dangerous to feel safe on the slim and slippery ice of self satisfaction and self conceit. People in great cities haven't so much time to make their own fun and amusement as did the residents of so many of those lazy, lounging, tumbling down, ramshackle "camps" of the era of 1863 or thereabouts. People in the city have more of their fun manufactured for them at the theaters of high and low degree. Yet it was wonderful how in "camp" they managed to dig so many choice bits and specimens out of the vein of varied human nature which lay so near them. Whenever I visited "Jimtown" my old friend Dixon would take me into his private corner to tell me "the last" concerning a character who was working hard on an unabridged copy of Webster's Dictionary in the endeavor to make amends for a woeful lack of grammatical knowledge, the result of a neglected education. "He's running now on two words," Dixon would say, "and these are 'perseverance' and 'assiduity.' We hear them forty times a day, for he lugs them in at every possible opportunity, and, indeed, at times when there is no opportunity. He came to business the other morning a little unwell, and alluded to his stomach as being 'in a chaotic state.' And, sir, he can spell the word 'particularly' with six i's. How he does it I can't tell, but he can." PUEBSTER MULFORD.

He Loved Her. A Mrs. Wainwright fell overboard in Jupiter inlet, Fla., and was eaten by a shark. For three years her husband has done nothing but hunt Jupiter inlet sharks, and up to date has landed about 800 of them and is still fishing.—Detroit Free Press.

Immersed in Molten Metal and Not Burned. But few men have ever fallen into a pot of molten metal and escaped with a few trifling burns, yet John Adams, of Tacoma, did it the other night. He is an employe of the Ryan smelter, working on the night shift, and it is only through great presence of mind that he was not burned to death. By some mistake he lost his balance and started to fall headlong into an immense pot of molten metal. As he fell he caught the rim of the pot, and although he was immersed almost to his armpits he drew himself out, and with an almost superhuman effort threw himself into an adjoining pot filled with cold water. Some of his fellow workmen saw him cast himself into the second pot, and rushing to his assistance rescued him. His hands were badly burned, but otherwise he had hardly a scab on him. The secret of his escape was that he had on heavy woollen underwear and outer clothing, and before it had been burned through Adams was in the pot of cold water.—Tacoma Globe.

Teacher's Wanted. To collect applications for membership in the North American Mutual Benefit Association, of Chicago, Ill. Address J. W. Thomas, dentist, District Agent, at Medalla, Oregon.

Notice of Final Settlement. Notice is hereby given that I have filed my final report in the county court of Clackamas county, Oregon, as administrator of the estate of Joseph Florence, deceased. And the court has appointed Tuesday, June 2nd, 1901 as a day and time for hearing such report and for the settlement of said estate. A. MATTHEW, Administrator of the estate of Joseph Florence, deceased. May 1st, 1901. 5-1-01

Grist Mill For Sale. The mill at New Era will be sold at a bargain. Has the best location of any mill in the county, being on both the Willamette and railroad, having a large grain growing district to draw from. Fine water power. Sixteen acres of good, tillable land go with the mill property. Good terms will be given and an experienced miller with a small capital will find this a paying investment. Call on or address E. C. Kadiork, New Era, Oregon. 5-6-01

Assignee's Notice. In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for Clackamas county. In the matter of the assignment of J. B. Green, John Green and C. A. Rault, partners under the firm name of Green, Bros & Co, insolvent, debtors. The notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been elected assignee of the estate of the above named insolvent debtors, and has duly qualified as such. All persons having claims against said insolvents are hereby notified to present the same properly verified to the undersigned at his office at the Oregon City Woolen Mills, Oregon City, Oregon, within three (3) months from the date of this notice. M. A. STRACOR, Assignee. Dated May 11, 1901. 5-11-01

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION. LAND OFFICE AT OREGON CITY, ORE., May 15, 1901. Notice is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim and that said proof will be made before the Register and Receiver of the U. S. Land Office at Oregon City, Oregon, on July 10, 1901, viz: Homestead Entry No. 560, for the s/w 1/4 of sec 14, Twp 2 S., R. 2 E. He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Daniel Albert, William Butler, Adin Butler, William Strawn, all of Adams, P. O., Clackamas county, Oregon. J. T. APPERSON, Register. 5-29-01

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