

### A TOWN WITH ONE INHABITANT.

He Takes Visitors Around and Gossips Concerning His Former Neighbors.

A Comoville, Cal., correspondent writes as follows to *The New York Sun*: For five or six years old Pete Ferguson has been the only resident of this town. He was here first and he is here last. He saw the mining camp develop, evolve, and decline. It was he who welcomed all the newcomers and bade all the outgoers good-by. There are twenty or thirty houses in the place, but only his is tenanted. The others stand about as they were left by their last occupants. Some of them are in good condition, with windows and doors in place, but others are rickety and tumble-down.

The Comoville fever was violent, and it soon faded away. Of the twenty or thirty mines here none have ever paid, and during all the time that they were worked not enough bullion was taken out of them to pay for the tobacco consumed in the place. Pete Ferguson kept a boarding-house, and it was not his business to worry over the success of the miners. They came and went, and as long as there was one in town he had an open house. When everything in the nature of mining ceased, he still tarried and entertained an occasional prospector, and when even the prospectors ceased to come this way he remained, though his "help" left him one by one until he was alone. He now manages to make his own living in some way, and exists to a large extent on his faith that there are great days in store for Comoville yet.

Walking through the deserted camp yesterday with this aged man, he entertained a party of tourists with a running comment on the history of the place and on a few of the more important events in its career. The day was a brilliant one. The sun shone bright and warm, the air was delightfully soft, and the frowning mountain peaks in the distance made a picturesque background for the rambling and dilapidated village.

"This here place," the old man said, pointing to a weather-beaten shanty, is where Tim Fuller lived. He came in with \$40,000 in cool cash and blew it up in this very room playing faro. Do you see that hole in the board? Well, that's where the bullet that killed him went. It's in there now, I guess. He didn't mind any harm, but he ran across a hard crowd one night, and, being desperate, he attempted a little shenanigan with the cards. Just as he was raking off the pot in a poker game a big Mexican pulled on him and let him have it. That was in busy times, and nobody had any time to think about it much. A long while after that I got the idea that Tim might have had a little money hidden here, and the more I thought of it the more likely it seemed. Finally I pulled up the floor, and after a thorough search I found under a flat stone a wad of bills, about \$1,000 I believe, though I've forgotten. I spent it all long ago.

Over here in this long building was where Tennessee Barker ran a gin mill and a gambling house. He was the best man that ever stood in this town. He could fight or shoot, but a gun fight is what pleased him best. He had many of them. One time the whole town pitched on him, and he got four bullets in his chest. He's up here now."

"Up where?" was asked.

"Up in the cemetery," answered the old man without a wink. Then, continuing, he said: "Just down the street here a ways is where a mighty queer thing happened. One of the first men in the town was a slim young fellow named Tomlinson. He had a little money and could play a good game, and I am sorry to say he took up with a young woman who was here at the time. One day a lady, one of the kind that you read about, came in here and found Tomlinson, and asked him to go back home with her. She was his wife, and about the slickest-looking girl I ever saw, too. She was around here for two or three days with tears in her eyes, and this young woman that had been living with Tom finally ran across her, and there was as lively a time as the camp ever had. Just then Tom came up with a bewildered look on him, and when his wife appealed to him to back her up in her statements he had the devil in him. I guess he pretended that he never saw her before. That was a great mistake on his part for the lady had a gun, and before anybody could think she had shot him and herself, too. She fell right here, and he over her. That's her blood on the board. They are both up here."

"In the next house is where Joe Cotton held the five biggest hands at poker that were ever seen on the coast. He cleaned out every man at the table, and left between two days for fear the boys would clean him out. He was a powerful sharp at cards, and old gamblers always regarded this room, with superstitious awe. Not one of them would ever play here after that, because, though it was plain enough that Joe had fixed the cards, it was thought that there was something here that was very favorable to that kind of business."

"Right over here in this back room is where Jones, Sam Dalrymple, Benton, Van Brunt, Dutton, Briggs, Chasuble, and the rest of the boys got together one night and turned cards to see who would have what money there was in the crowd and all the mines. Things had been getting pretty bad, and there did not seem to be any prospect of improvement. Somebody suggested that if one man had all the resources and all the mines he might, perhaps, make a steak, and the gambling spirit was too strong to permit the chance to go by. It was agreed that all should put up what money they had, and that they would each draw a card to see who would deal, the high card to win. Dave Chasuble got an ace, the only one that came out, and he took the cards and gave them a rattling shuffle. I've seen hundreds of dollars on the board but I never saw any man as excited as they were. There wasn't so very much money up, and nobody had much faith in the mines, but it meant exile for most of them. Dave shuffled and shuffled, the perspiration standing out on his forehead, and finally he

turned to Van Brunt, who cut them. Then Dave threw the cards around as quick as lightning. No ace came out, but three men, Chasuble himself, Briggs, and Dutton got kings. Then they had to play off. It took some time to do it, and Briggs got an ace and was the winner. The boys shook hands with him, bade him good-bye, wished him heaps of luck, and set out over the divide on foot. I have never seen any of them since. Briggs hung around here for a long time, but never accomplished any thing. One night he got drunk and fell down this here shaft, and he's down there yet. I guess, if he had got out I think I would have heard of it."

All of these places around here are familiar to me. Here's where the little Widow Sexton used to keep a boarding-house, and in this room she was married to an ordinary sort of a chap who is now worth ten millions. Here's some of her crockery yet—I've half a mind to send it to her—and there in the backyard is the wash tub that she has slaved it over many a day. This place is where Bill Heffner kept a gin-mill. He was big, but no good. A little fellow did him up over in Virginia City. That tree is where the boys lynched Costello, a horse-thief, and that shanty down there is where the preacher used to have church. It only holds a dozen, and he used to get the boys in there in relays. He is in the ground up the hill. He caught cold, and died of the fever, though the boys took mighty good care of him. They used to call him Bibbe Billie, and when he was raving on his death-bed said something about the New Jerusalem being paved with gold. Sol Dubois, who was sitting up with him with two or three others, called him a liar, and wanted to fight. It took all the men round there to drag Sol out, but they got him out. You bet they did."

Old Pete says he is going to stay here as long as he lives, and that he would not feel at home anywhere else. He has a pig, a few hens, a dog, and a cat, and he takes almost as much pleasure in the companionship of the phantoms which he conjures up, as he would in the society of living and moving beings.

### Sudden Deaths on the Stage.

The fact that McCullough broke down on the stage recalls some other incidents of similar character. Nearly a century ago John Palmer, who had won a reputation in some of his roles, fell dead while playing before a Liverpool audience. Peg Woffington, while playing *Rosalind*, was paralyzed, and never recovered. She had just uttered the words "I'd kiss as many of you as pleased me," when her voice was hushed, and was never again heard in public. The once famous comedian, Foote, was also paralyzed in his own comedy, *The Devil on Two Sticks*, and never recovered. Another case was that of Moody, who held respectable rank on the British stage and whose last appearance was in *Claudio in Measure for Measure*. Just as he exclaimed, "Aye, but to die and go we know not where," he sank to the ground and was borne off the stage a corpse. James Bland, who also had a respectable position in the profession, expired in the Strand Theater. Edmund Keen affords another very impressive instance. While playing *Othello* in London, just as he exclaimed, "O, then farewell," he fell into the arms of his son (who took the role of Iago), and he had just strength enough to say, "Speak to them, Charles—I am dying." He was borne off and revived for a while, but death soon closed his checked career.

Hanley, the comedian, became speechless on the stage after uttering the words of *Lancelot Gobbo*: "I have an exposition of sleep come over me," and he never spoke again. Cummings, who occasionally appeared in tragedy, fell dead on the stage while performing the role of Dumont in *Jane Shore*, just as he uttered the following words:

Be witness of me, ye celestial hosts  
Such merriment and such paragon as myself;  
According to thee and begs of Heaven to show  
Thee.

May such befall me at my latest hour.

Barrett, who was so clever in old men's parts, died after playing *Polonius*, and was carried home a corpse. Mrs. Glover was struck by paralysis on the occasion of her farewell benefit, and died three days afterward. Miss Linley, the once popular vocalist, expired at a concert while singing "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth." A very remarkable occurrence took place at the Holiday Street theater, Baltimore, in 1874. John Ferris, while playing a leading role in *Lady Studey's Secret*, was borne off the stage in a helpless condition and died before morning. These facts show the exhaustive nature of the dramatic profession, and many of those scenes which awaken applause are performed amid agony and under the very shadow of death.—*Cincinnati Enquirer*.

### Shoalwater Oysters.

Oystermen at Shoalwater bay, Washington territory, find by experiment that the native oysters of that vicinity can be grown to a large size by planting them where they will not be too thick and by paying careful attention to the beds. The natural flavor of Shoalwater bay oysters is fine, but hitherto they have been much smaller than the imported eastern oysters.

### Solid Cream.

A quart of milk was recently taken from several fine-bred cows on exhibition at Portland, Oregon, to test the richness of each. The milk was placed in glass jars and allowed to rise. That from one of the cows showed more than three-eighths pure cream. The jar was filled to a depth of nine inches, of which four were solid cream.

### He Had the Fish.

As showing how little excited he was, a Jersey paper states that one of these fishermen rescued on Sunday, after having been thrown into the Hudson river by the upsetting of their craft, inquired of a chum, as he was being pulled into the rescuing party's boat: "Have you got that string of fish, Dan?" Dan had the fish.

### Pension All Soldiers.

The time is fast arriving, it has not already arrived, when it is the duty of the government to pension every soldier who served in the war, and who survives. The laws as they now stand make it very hard for the most deserving survivors to obtain pensions. The affidavits of officers cannot be readily obtained, even if the officers are alive, and in many cases all the officers who knew circumstances of a wound or injury are dead, or have removed to some remote place. In many cases an injury that was so trifling twenty years ago that a soldier's tent-mate did not know of it, has become a burden that is almost unbearable, and the soldier should have a pension, but unless he can prove that doctors prescribe for him, and that company officers were familiar with the circumstances, the soldier fails to get a pension. Many officers are to day racking their brains to try and remember some incident in the career of a soldier whose name is almost forgotten, that they may make an affidavit without lying, that will benefit the poor man in his application for relief. If an officer is conscientious, and does not wish to swear to something that he cannot recall to save his life, injustice is liable to be done to a brave soldier, and the soldier is liable to think his old officer is mean, not to try and help him. This condition of things places thousands of officers in very unenviable positions. They want to do the fair thing by old comrades, but they do not want to swear to a lie, by claiming to remember things that they never heard of until they received letters of inquiry from comrades that had been almost forgotten. Either soldiers that are deserving of pensions must fail to receive them, or officers must become star liars. Now, to do justice all around, and give late officers a chance to hold up their heads and look their old soldiers in the face without trying to remember something that occurred twenty years ago, that they never heard of, the government should decide to do justice to all the men who served it in time of need. There are bills before congress that cover the ground, and they must become laws. The *Sun* will work as best it may, in print and by personal effort of its editor, for the passage of such bills, until the law is on the statute book, which permits all old soldiers to go up to the paymasters and receive their regular salary as long as they live. The government can stand it without hardship, and it is due the soldiers. With such a law a soldier need not feel that he is a criminal, attempting to introduce his hand into the treasury in the dark. As it is now, the first move a soldier makes for a pension, he is spotted, and looked upon by the government officials as a confidence man. They try to prove that he is not as bad off as he asserts, neighbors who may not like him, can be found to swear that he is the healthiest man in town, he is laughed at because he has just discovered, after twenty years of active life, that he was disabled years ago and didn't know it, and if he finally succeeds in getting a few dollars a month he is liable to be pointed at as one who has come it on the government by false swearing. With such a feeling as sometimes exists about a soldier's drawing a pension, where he lives, many had almost rather starve than to receive it. If a man is all knocked to pieces, and so crippled that all can see, there is not much kicking about his receiving a pension, but if he looks as well as ordinary citizens, though his liver may be cut in two, his bowels tied up in a double bow knot, his lungs half gone, and nothing about him whole, except his gall, there will be a feeling in the community that his drawing a pension is a piece of favoritism, brought about by fraud, and that he is so much ahead of Uncle Sam. Give the boys all a pension, freely; make them feel as though they deserved every cent of it, and not try to enslave them out of it when they get it, and every citizen with a soul will feel happier, and the boys will feel more like training up their children to be ready to jump into a uniform and grab a gun in case of an alarm in the future. From this out *The Sun* will favor a general pension law that will make the old soldiers feel as though the Lord was on their side.—*Pack's Sun*.

### Mariners on the Great Lakes.

Boys, ye who want to run away and don a pair of flowing trousers and become free and easy sailors, pirates or captain, give ear. This ideal picture of the wheelman is all mist. I didn't notice in the pilot-house a single novel or a lazy back-chair. But I did notice that if a wheelman was wanted, the mate did not scruple to rouse him out of his bunk, even at 1 o'clock in the morning, no matter if it was very cold on the outside; and I also noticed that the man said nothing about "Yes, sir, I'll be there in a minute," or "wait till I finish this nap." He came right out, and taking his partner's place, held it for six weary hours amid a silence that would chill one. So my boy, when you pack up your possessions in a red handkerchief and steal out of the back window of a dark night to run away to the lakes to become rich and famous, like "Billie, the Boy Whaler or the King of the Quarter Deck," don't try wheeling.

Cabin boy? The lake steamers carry no cabin boys; the cook is the best they can afford in this line. But then there are the sailors, the men with pretty blue blouses, with anchors at the shoulders, they who wear jaunty hats over one ear, "lay out on the yard-arm," who sleep in hammocks, and who sing:

I am a jolly far, am I,  
As free as an ocean bird.

There are these men, surely? No, my son; on the great lakes these noble men are scarce than mountains in the Sahara desert. There may be a few sailors of this stamp on the stage, but that's the only place you'll find 'em. The lakes are sadly deficient. Those who correspond nearest to sailors on a steamship are the deck-hands, who are a sorry lot. All the deck-hands I ever saw looked pretty much alike—an old pair of trousers, one suspender, an old hat and a shirt. And as for work—I hate to say so—but the captain or mate never seemed quite contented unless he had these ideal fel-

lows sticking their hand in tar-buckets or paint-pots, or raking them scrape down masts, tar down rigging or such like inviting tasks. The deck-hands of the lakes are coal-heavers and cargo-handlers, and are, as a rule, driven to work and watched like children, who seldom keep a place over one trip, and who have been known to come aboard a steamer, eat a couple of hearty meals and then run away.

But there are the mates? Correct, there are. Mates are men who have sailed years and years, and who, for being steady and principled, have been rewarded with a place of importance, to be sure, but one having in it all the tedious work of a deck-hand—and the responsibility of a captain. A mate, beside standing watch, has the immediate supervision of this mean, tedious work aforesaid, and in many cases its performance also.

But, after all, it is the captain of the lake vessel who fares the hardest. He must be up, day or night, conning through the rivers and wherever there is the least difficult navigation. He has sometimes to be up fifty hours on a watch. He has to see out every piece of bad weather if it lasts a day or a week. This is part of his responsibility. Then, perhaps, he has twenty old lives on his hands, a \$250,000 steamship and a valuable 2,000-ton-cargo. Or if he has a tow he may have the care of a hundred lives and a million-odd dollars of property. Besides, he must keep track of the internal workings of his ship, and if any one has a tendency to shirk duty he must know it. So occasionally he will need lend a helping hand in painting and scrubbing, especially if his men are awkward or clumsy or need directions. On all steamers captains, no matter what their age or dignity, are called the "old man" or the "skipper."

So, my boy, any time you get dissatisfied with three meals a day and a home that compels you to split the kindling every night, pack up that little red handkerchief and start for the lakes; but don't blame me if you return in a month or so with a telescoped spine, hands like lemons and a burning desire to attack a wood pile two hours every morning by way of amusement.—*Louisville Courier-Journal*.

### Do Detectives Detect.

"Detectives?" said the proprietor of a well-known New York detective agency the other day. "They're a crooked lot. Put a thief to catch a thief, you know; and the practice is more common, I fancy, than most people suspect." The proprietor leaned back in his chair and smiled for a moment before replying to the inquiring shrug. "There are honest men in the business," he said, "but they are the exception—perhaps one in a hundred; but the detective work in this city is as a rule a grand system of blackmail. Not one case in a thousand is worked up honestly. The average detective looks upon each case as something to be worked for all it is worth in dollars and cents, and in dollars and cents only. They go upon the theory that they will never get another job from that customer, and consequently work him for every penny there is in the case. And the theory is correct, for few men employ the same detective twice. One dose is usually enough."

"How is this fraud carried on?" was asked.

"Generally by working both sides. A man is jealous of his wife and hires a 'shadow.' The detective goes to the woman and says: 'Your husband wants a divorce and has hired me to watch you. He pays me \$100. For \$200 I will make such reports as you wish.' The 'deal' generally ends in the wife hiring the detective to watch her husband. He thus gets both 'on the string,' makes such reports as will best serve his own purpose; and enjoys a fat salary for months. The same theory holds good where a man becomes suspicious of his partner, a merchant of his clerks, or a railroad company of its conductors and other employees. The almost invariable rule of the detective as soon as a case is given him is to see if the other side cannot be worked also."

"Another abuse of the system is the way business is worked up. They go to a husband and tell him that his wife is untrue, and to a business man and make damaging statements about his clerks. On the other hand actual crime is concealed where the guilty one is not such a fool as to report a rasal so long as the later pays handsomely. Innocent, or comparatively innocent men are bled in the same way. I mean those who get themselves into a scrape which, without being very wrong in itself, would seriously compromise them if made public. A man, if he has money, will willingly pay a thousand dollars rather than have his name connected with such a scandal."—*New York World*.

### Russian Early Marriages.

It is nothing new in Russia to see a band of convicts in their coarse gray uniform, with a large orange-colored cross covering the back, trudge wearily along on their way to Siberia. But these miserable caravans are formed of men, only female convicts being generally conveyed by rail or steamer. Some eighty-four of these latter left Odessa the other day by the steamer *Costrome* for the island of Sakhalin, on the coast of Eastern Siberia. According to the *Novoe Vremya*, thirty-six of the women were transported for murder or attempted murder of their husbands, twenty-two of the thirty-six being under the age of twenty. One bride of sixteen had killed her husband within the first week after marriage, another of sweet seventeen lived with him for six months before she did the deed; and a third, of eighteen, was convicted for killing her husband during the night by blows with a heavy hammer. Which facts demonstrate that, however beneficial early marriage may be in other countries, in Russia, at least, no woman should be allowed to marry before she is twenty.—*Pull Mail Budget*.

### Corns on the Head.

Corns are not confined to the feet. A chiropodist says that he has removed corns from several of the crowned heads of Europe.

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