

Joaquin Miller at Fair.

When the primitive, tiny caravels of Columbus first touched the shores of the new world, and the foolhardy adventurers who have braved endless leagues of untried seas bore ashore the crucifix and standards of Spain, the simple natives, naked but unblushing, gathered at the water's edge and chirped in chorus, "We're discovered."

It must have been with some such feeling that Cincinnatus Heine Miller made the discovery when he reached Europe after an early and obscure life spent in Oregon, that he had sprung into the limelight and had all at once become a real poet. He was all at once discovered, although the primitive Oregonians of the early days were never appreciative of his early efforts along poetic lines, and the early residents of Eugene, were the future "Poet of the Sierras" lived, were inclined to make sport of the poetical effusions of Mr. Miller. The same lines which were to make him famous both in Europe and America were given publication in the Oregon State Journal, published in Eugene for the past half-century by Harrison R. Kincaid, ex-Secretary of State of Oregon. The late Elisha Applegate, who was prominent in Oregon politics, once went into the Journal office and asked Mr. Kincaid why he persisted in printing such crazy stuff from Miller's pen. Mr. Kincaid justified himself by remarking that all poetry was more or less crazy.

Eugene was the scene of Joaquin Miller's boyhood days, his parents owning one of the best farms near the mouth of the Mohawk, eight or ten miles across the Willamette from Eugene. Joaquin attended school at the old Eugene Academy, and among his classmates were J. M. Thompson, J. D. Matlock, and H. R. Kincaid. All except Thompson are still living.

Mr. Kincaid has said that Miller was embittered against Oregon when he left Eugene, and evidently thought his efforts had not been properly appreciated. As a result, when he reached Europe, he gave out the impression that he was from California. He is said to have always been as peculiar as he is now. In early life he persisted in wearing buckskin moccasins, Indian style.

Miller married in Eugene, and old settlers still point out an old-time dwelling with gable windows that is said to have been the first home of Miller and his bride, Minnie Myrtle Miller. Shortly after their marriage the two moved to Eastern Oregon, making the journey over the mountains from Eugene to Canyon City on horseback, carrying a new-born baby on the horn of the saddle. The wife had considerable literary talent, and some of her poems were printed in the early Oregon papers. Some of the old friends of the couple have expressed the opinion that the separation of the two was caused to some extent by literary jealousy. Minnie Myrtle Miller returned to the home of her childhood in Coos County, where she died a number of years ago after marrying again. One of the daughters, Maud Miller, achieved considerable prominence on the stage.

Joaquin Miller is at the Exposition, is one of the best living, moving exhibits on the grounds. His whiskers are as long and wavy as ever, his frontier boots are the same pattern, at least; the long, black coat of the frontier Judge and the broad-brimmed black hat that goes with it are there. The saucy mustaches curl as audaciously as ever, and one could be sure that this was the erratic "Poet of the Sierras," as he loves to be called. When told he hadn't changed a bit, his reply was characteristic. "I don't know why I should," said he. "Some day, of course, I shall fall—fall like a tree alone in the forest, full length. I am part of 500 years old, and I see no need of changing a smile."

"Would he be sketched?"
Well, I should say he would. Rather more than less. Would he tell the sad, sad story of his meteoric career? He would.

He admitted the early Oregon environment. Why not? Yes, he always believed that there was no need for what feeling there had been between Oregon and California, and was glad to notice that it was so no more, and as for being called the "Poet of the Sierras," why Oregon had as much of the Sierra range, he said, as has California. "The best part of the Sierras lie in Oregon and Washington," said he, "and I would give gold if people would learn to pronounce the word rightly," whereupon he gave his musical tongue a twist and brought forth a Spanish sound that was not half bad.

"Yes, I sat at the feet of Judge George H. Williams and learned some law here," mused the gray, bewiskered poet, "and later went to Eastern Oregon, where I was a Judge. I administered law with one lawbook and a pair of sixshooters, or rather I should say I administered justice, not always law. From my court there was no appeal allowed to be taken. I met a brother the other day in Eugene, and will later join another here who lives in Eastern Oregon."

"I hope to come back here when my work is done. I can rest better here I did my best work here, first. Of those early efforts, some have lived, among them being, 'Is It Worth While to Jostle a Brother?' and the book of verses, 'Joaquin, et al.' The papers hammered that book, and then and there I took up the name of Joaquin."

"Perhaps I was not appreciated here in the early days. One is not appreciated until after he is dead. It is asking too much to be appreciated both while alive and after death. I believe I am yet to do my best work. I have something now that I believe to be poetry, real poetry."

Although the poet was on earth, his eyes were on the sky. "Do you know," said he, "I know all these clouds. I have seen them all, every one," and he is a close observer, for he has been around the world twice, and has seen many countries and peoples. He froze his toes in the Klondike, and twinkled them in the warm waters of the Mediterranean; He paused beside the cottage of Bobby Burns and stood beside the pyramids in silent contemplation of the centuries; he has seen the sunset die upon the Alps and watched the midnight sun in Norway.

Joaquin thrives best in a mystic atmosphere. Stand him alone in some striking pose, with his long hair flying in the wind, and the man is at his best. Cast over him the glamour of the "days of old, the days of gold, the days of '49," and the man looms big. He likes to allude to himself as being alone in consoling, an odd character, and if you will make him happy, tell him he reminds you of the patriarchal Moses.

Watching the light go out on the Golden Gate from his home on the heights back of Oakland, Joaquin wrote: "We are hushed with wonder and all apart,
We stand in silence till heaving heart
Fills full of heaven, and then the knees
Go down in worship, on the golden sands,

With faces seaward and with folded hands,
We gaze on the beautiful Balboa seas."

Joaquin himself is in the sunset. Hoar is his beard, and at his temple he flies the white flag of truce to the passing decades. He is old and alone truly, for his age is passed. Yet a little while and the miners' boots will be seen no more this side Elysium. C. H. W.

Must Meet Soon.

Since the harvest of the fall grain is on in eastern Oregon and Idaho it will soon behoove the state portage board to hold a meeting and decide upon a schedule of freight rates to be in effect upon the road effecting the various points along the line from Lewiston, Idaho, to Portland. Hitherto it has been unnecessary to establish a schedule, because no freight was moving or likely to move for several weeks, but now the time is approaching when the grain will begin to move and the board will find it en-

Incumbent to take action in the matter.

It is questionable if a meeting will be held until Governor Chamberlain returns from the east, which will not be until the 23d of this month. The O. R. & N. Company's tariff rate now in effect between Lewiston and Portland is 19 1/2 cents per 100 pounds, practically \$4 per ton. It has been figured that, if the portage road should establish a rate of \$3 per ton upon freight between these two points there would be a considerable amount of profit in it and would still be a much more reasonable rate for the farmers and shippers of grain. On the other hand there is a likelihood of the O. R. & N. Company readjusting its present schedule to compete with the portage road and a further cut by the latter, it is thought, might operate to precipitate a rate war between the competing lines for the business. The two members of the board here, Secretary of State Dunbar and State Treasurer Moore, are undecided as to when the rate schedule meeting will be held, but quite probably the latter part of this month. If the \$3 per ton rate is established, a proportionate rate will be arranged for the other stations along the route.

Great Wool Corner.

La Crosse, Wis., July 15.—The wool market of the Northwest is practically cornered by S. Y. Hyde and associates of the La Crosse Wool company. Two million pounds are stored here and a vast quantity elsewhere. They have bought every pound in Wisconsin and have options on nearly the entire supply in the Northwest.

Independent and reliable—The Oregonian.
A recognized authority—The Weekly Oregonian.

Elliott Root's Earnings at the Bar.

When Mr. Root left the office of Secretary of War he left it with the reputation of having been one of the greatest cabinet officers of a decade. His retirement was due to the necessity which he felt of repairing his finances.

The success with which he has met in the practice of his profession since his retirement from official life is said to have exceeded even his most sanguine expectations. In less than a year and a half he is generally credited among the members of his profession with having made several hundred thousand dollars. He had retainers for the next five years probably in excess of those which have ever heretofore been paid to any lawyer in New York city. Since the death of James C. Carter, Mr. Root has been recognized by the members of his profession as the leader of the American bar.

Twenty teachers are employed in the Roseburg public schools.

Terrific Race With Death

"Death was fast approaching," writes Ralph F. Fernandez, of Tampa, Fla., describing his fearful race with death, "as a result of liver trouble and heart disease, which had robbed me of sleep and of all interest in life. I had tried many different doctors and several medicines, but got no benefit, until I began to use Electric Bitters. So wonderful was their effect, that in three days I felt like a new man, and today I am cured of all my troubles." Guaranteed at Slocum Drug Co.'s drug store; price 50c.

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