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GOLD NUGGETS.

There is a Curious Resemblance Between Them and Meteorites.

How do nuggets of gold originate? Sometimes a mass of the precious metal worth a thousand dollars or more is found. By what process was so much gold compacted into a lump?

An attempt was made not long ago to answer this question. An investigation in Australia cut and sliced and polished gold nuggets with the sole purpose of finding out just what is their structure. The first thing he discovered was that there is one curious point of resemblance between gold nuggets and meteorites. Both, when polished and etched with chlorine water, exhibit a crystalline structure. In the case of meteorites the lines thus exhibited on the etched surface are called Widmannstättian figures, and their presence is said to be one of the most invariable characteristics of those metallic bodies that fall from the sky to the earth.

But it is not meant to be implied that gold nuggets have fallen from the sky because they exhibit a crystalline structure recalling that of meteorites. The resemblance is apparently only superficial, and the crystals of the nuggets differ in form from those of the meteorites.

Another curious fact is that when a nugget is heated in a Bunsen flame explosions take place on its surface. Blisters are formed which continue to swell until they burst with a sharp report and bits of gold are violently scattered about. It is evident that the nuggets contain either gases or some liquid or solids which are easily converted into the gaseous form, the expansion of which produces the explosions.

—Harper's Weekly.

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Why not national highways as well as national highways?

POOR ROADS KEEP MILLIONS FROM SCHOOL.

Ignorance and Poverty Due to Unimproved Highways.

The following is an extract from a very interesting and important contribution to Farm and Fireside:

"Out of 25,000,000 children in the United States fewer than 15,000,000 go to school.

"Of those 7,000,000 children who do not go to school half of them live in the country, where bad roads—muddy roads, rutty roads, dangerous roads—not only prevent them from getting to school, but by their impoverishment of the farm prevent the existence of any good schools for them to go to!

"Many children are killed each year walking railroad tracks to school. Why? They have no roads to walk on. Many children each year have no schools to go to. Why? The roads are so bad there is no profit in farming, no money for schools, no progress, no growth, no ambition. Hundreds of thousands of children yearly have to do with a little schooling, a little part of a term at school. Why? Because father needs their help on the farm. He isn't making money enough to spare his children's time for school days, because he has to pay so much for hauling his crops to market he has no profit left for extra hired help!

"Isn't it your problem, too, Mrs. Mother? Isn't it worth your while to agitate the question? Isn't it worth your while to bring it up in church, in school, in society, in club, in neighborhood—to talk, to inquire, to agitate, to educate those who don't know and perhaps don't want to know, to understand that the expense of good roads is like the expense of a new threshing machine, plow or a pair of horses, sure to come back many fold in the course of time?"

ROADS RAISE PRICES.

One Instance of the Advantages of Better Highways.

A contrasting picture of the effect of good roads upon farm prices is painted by a daily newspaper of the grain belt in this manner:

"A good farm on a bad road. Nice house. High fertility. Seven miles from town. Owner wants to sell. Advertiser. Buyer comes. Has plenty of cash, seeking good farm, pleasantly located. Roads fierce. Conversation hinges on highway. Buyer wants good road to town. Boy in school. Likes to go in to plays, lectures, church. Couldn't offer over \$100 an acre and doesn't think he wants the farm at all. No sale.

"Same thing; similar farm, similar circumstances, except good, permanent road, good every day in the year. Owner thinking of selling. Same man with cash in hand looking for farm. Conversation hinges on price. Offers \$150. Owner can't see it. Keeps edging up \$5 at a time. Sale closed at \$200 per acre. Every body happy."

The least important phase of the whole highway agitation is the effect of good roads not only upon farm comforts and contentment, but upon farm prices. A farm which had never been priced above \$75 an acre before the construction of good roads sold within a few months after their construction for \$1250 an acre, the owner admitting the advance in value was due solely to the new highways. Such incidents are far from rare. The amount asked for road improvement is large enough at times to stagger us, but there are proofs in plenty that the returns are not long in coming and that the problem is so large as to call for an expenditure and a policy in keeping.

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—Harper's Weekly.

"DO YOU WANT A WIFE?"

A Tale of the New York Emigrant Station

By SARAH G. TREVOR

The town of Abereron, on the coast of Wales, looks out westward on the waters of the Atlantic. Here lived a young man just coming of age who, dissatisfied with the limited opportunities afforded him in a little Welsh town, purposed to emigrate to America. The Welsh language is renowned for being unpronounceable by any other nationality, and Welsh names resemble a lot of type knocked into it. Therefore I shall have to give the characters of this story English names. I shall call this young man John.

John, despite his ambition to improve his fortunes in new fields, was much attached to his beloved Wales. His neighbors loved him, and he loved them. In the house next to his home lived a family with whose younger members he had been brought up. There were two boys, one about his own age, another a few years older, and at the time this story commences a little girl—we will call her Mary—about eleven years of age.

John spent some time trying to make up his mind to go to America and more time raising the money to take him there. Then he went about bidding his neighbors goodbye, and by the time he had finished it seemed to him that it would be impossible for him to go after all. But he was a stout-hearted young fellow and, having made up his mind, would not turn back. Little



"YOU MAY THINK ME BOLD," HE SAID. Mary was the last one to whom he bade adieu, and when he kissed her goodby he said:

"When I have made my fortune in America I will send you something nice for a gift."

The child, seeing the sadness in his eye, clung to him, winding her arms around his neck, both to let him go.

"Aren't you ever coming back?" she asked.

"I'm afraid not—at any rate, not till I've made myself independent."

The parting over, John went up to Liverpool, where he took steerage passage for New York. In due time he landed and went to work at his trade.

Eight years passed, during which there were great changes among the friends John had left in the little town of Abereron. Little Mary's father and mother had died and left her in poverty. She was now nineteen years old and willing to work, but what could she do in a little seacoast town in an old country where no improvement was going on? She remembered the departure of John for America. It had been quite an important event in the quiet place and had made an impression on the child's mind. America had then been so far distant that she fancied John would be a year or more in getting there. She knew now that the fastest steamer crossed the ocean in four days. The idea of going to America, where women found opportunities for all kinds of work, got into her head, and after many days' debate with herself and seeking information from her neighbors she determined to undertake the trip—that is, if she could get the necessary funds.

Among other things, she learned that papers would not be admitted into the United States; that every emigrant would be required to prove that he or she would not become a burden on the government. This seemed to Mary to be the most important barrier in her way. The most money she could hope to control was the amount requisite to pay her fare across the ocean; when she reached her destination she must rely upon getting work at once. This she learned would not satisfy the emigration authorities.

John had from time to time written to those in his native town stating that he was doing well and was becoming satisfied in his new home. He had not forgotten them and if any of them ever desired coming to America as he had come he would be glad to assist them on their arrival. So Mary wrote him to ask if there was

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any way by which she might procure admission into the United States without having any visible means of support.

For some reason unknown to her Mary received no reply to this letter. Whether John had moved from where he had last written or whether his letter in answer to hers had miscarried she did not know. She had raised the money to take her, and a friend of hers, whom we will call Charlotte, was about to start for New York. She persuaded Mary to go with her, trusting to luck for some way of overcoming the immigration restrictions. Mary, fearing that if she remained in Wales the money she had for her passage would dwindle and she could get no more, decided to take the chances.

When the two friends reached New York and were transferred with other immigrants to Ellis Island Mary found that what she feared was true. Not having any means with which to support herself and no one to guarantee that she would not be a burden on the country, she was told that she would be sent back to England.

"I am strong and ready to work," she said to the matron in charge of the women immigrants, "and I am sure I shall find work to do."

"I am sorry for you," replied the matron, "but your case does not come within the law."

"Is there no way by which it can be brought within the law?" asked Charlotte.

"The only way is for some one to marry her."

"I was cold comfort, for there was but one man in America Mary knew, and she had failed ever to reach him by mail. Among a hundred million people she was not likely to find him and if she did certainly would not propose marriage to him.

Mary was given a reasonable time to find a way to prove that she would be self-supporting, and her friend Charlotte waited for the tender to take the former to the ship in which she was to return.

"If you only had time," said Charlotte, "I am sure you could find a husband. I wish I were a man. I would marry you myself. I'm going to ask the man who comes along if he won't marry you."

A young German passed, and Charlotte asked him in the Welsh language if he wouldn't help a poor girl to get into the country by marrying her.

"Nicht verstein," replied the man.

A man appeared who looked into the face of every one he passed as if seeking some one to marry. He called to him: "A oes cisiau gwraig arnoch chwiri? (Do you want a wife?)"

The man in the same language replied, "I'm looking for a Welsh girl from Abereron."

"We are from Abereron."

"When John left Wales he was twenty years old and was now twenty-eight. He had not changed so much but that Mary could recognize him in the stranger, and she did.

"I know you," she said. "You are John. I am Mary. But I have grown since you saw me."

John took her in his arms.

"You may think me bold," he said, "but your friend asked me if I wanted a wife. I do."

Mary blushed and gently disengaged herself.

"Why did you not answer my letter?" she asked.

"Because I went west to do some work and did not return till a week ago. I have been to every steamer on which you would have been likely to come since then. I have been too busy to come to try this week till now. I sent a man in my place, but he is a stupid fellow and failed to find you. Only half an hour ago I learned from the matron that you were here and went to her for telling the truth. She answered me now. And now the question before us is, How am I to get you through? I have looked into several ways, but it seems to me that your friend has suggested the simplest way."

He looked admiringly on the fresh young girl with cheeks of pink and white, and she dropped her eyes. Charlotte snatched away to a different part of the dock.

"Often when lonely in my new home," said John, "and when dreaming of my old one in Wales I have thought of the little girl who put her arms around my neck and kissed me when I came away. And every year I have remembered that she had grown a year older. Then I began to think that when you became a woman I would go back to Wales and if you would consent I would bring you back to America for my wife."

Mary said nothing, keeping her eyes fixed on the panorama before her—Castle William, on Governors Island, the Brooklyn bridges and the skyscrapers of lower New York.

"If you'll consent to marry me here now it will save a lot of trouble. Say the word and we'll go inside, call a clergyman and be married."

If Mary had used the common phrase of a lady receiving a proposal, "It's so sudden," she would have made a record for telling the truth. She made no reply in words, but she showed in her face that a great relief had come over her which resolved itself in tears. John took her in his arms for a moment, then, releasing her, said: "Come."

Charlotte was called and informed of the method adopted to get her friend into the United States of America. They all went into the station and after a ceremony left together for Manhattan Island.

The Price of a Week's Board

By RUTH GRAHAM

Tom Burns, a farmer's boy, who didn't like farm work, went from Illinois out into the wild west. There he wandered about, making a living as best he could, but there was little for him to do, except kill the animals of the wilderness either for their meat or their skins. During his wanderings Tom married the daughter of a settler who had come from Ohio. She wished to get back to that state as much as her husband wanted to return to Illinois. But instead of drifting eastward they drifted farther westward, for as civilization encroached upon them the wild animals, by which Tom made a living, became scarce, and they were obliged to find new hunting grounds.

So at last they found themselves in a gulch where game was plenty and neighbors were few. It was a desolate life, especially for the woman. Tom offered to take his wife east, but she knew he had never fitted himself for the work to be done there, and she preferred to remain where they were rather than run the risk of starving in her former home.

One day a man came trudging up the gulch and, stopping at the Burns cabin, asked Mrs. Burns if he could be accommodated for a short time. She told him that her husband would be home soon and then she could give him an answer. The stranger said he would pay well for his board. When Tom returned it was agreed between him and his wife that they would take the stranger in, though there was only one room in the cabin, and they were all obliged to sleep in the same room, divided into two parts by a curtain.

The man went out every morning prospecting for something—he didn't say what—and every night returned to the cabin. He remained with the Burns couple a week, then said to them:

"I'm going away from here, and I can't pay you any board. I have been told that an article is to be found in this region that is very valuable. Had I found it I could have paid you thousands of dollars for my keep. As it is I can't pay you anything."

"That's all right, stranger," said John. "We wouldn't have felt warranted in charging you over \$4 anyway, so it doesn't matter much."

"It matters more to me than to you. It may be that I've missed the deposit I've been looking for, and some day you may stumble on it. But you won't recognize it if you do. I'm going to leave you some chemicals, and if you ever come across the article I refer to and mix it with the chemicals and burn the compound it will give a green flame."

He gave them some idea of what the substance looked like in its crude form and, pouring the chemicals from his stock into bottles, left them with him, with his address, telling them if they ever found the article to write him and he would make them rich.

A month passed after the stranger's departure and the Burns would have almost forgotten his coming had it not been for the bottles he had left them that stood in the cupboard. One day John, instead of hunting in the gulch and the region thereabout, went down to its mouth and, rounding a mountain spur, entered a valley. He encountered a trapper, who told him that nothing could live there, not even animals, and there was no use for him to try to get any game there. So desolate was the place that it was called Death valley. John had heard of it and concluded to have a look at it before going home. So he wandered about in it. He hadn't gone far before he saw scattered about a substance that answered the description his boarder had given him. He gathered some of it and took it home with him.

After supper, while his wife was washing the dishes, he took a piece of the substance he had brought from Death valley and, putting it in a tin pan, poured the chemicals over it and set fire to it. As he did so his wife paused in wiping a dish and watched him. As the flame burst forth the two looked at each other with surprise and pleasure.

It burned green.

The couple talked that night over various plans to secure what value there might be in their find to themselves. They thought of presenting a claim for the ground where they had found the substance, but realized that they were too poor and too ignorant of the subject to handle it themselves, so they wrote to their lodger that they thought they had found what he had been looking for. He came to see them, and John showed him a specimen of his find and also that it burned green. The stranger uttered an exclamation of delight.

"That is borax," he said, "used for washing purposes in every household in America."

He told John that if he would tell him where it lay he would form a company to take the ground, work it and would give John half of all he made out of it himself. John accepted his proposition, and an agreement was written out and signed by both according to the terms.

It turned out the stranger had a large borax company behind him with unlimited capital, a company was formed, and he retained 20 per cent of the stock. Of this he assigned one-half to John, which gave him more money than he and his wife could spend. They went back to the east, where they lived in comfort for the rest of their lives.

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