

A GREAT GOLD SCARE

When the Yellow Metal Was First Found in Australia.

AFRAID OF THE CONVICTS.

The English Government Tried to and Did For a Time Suppress the News Because it Feared a General Uprising in the Colony of Criminals.

Gold in Australia was discovered— one might almost be pardoned for saying first discovered—many times. But the news of the earliest discoveries was jealously kept from spreading. The secret of this reticence lay in the presence of the army of convicts which then composed the balance of the population. Had a gold panic broken out it was feared that a general uprising of the prisoners would take place.

Nevertheless the first gold found in Australia was by convicts. In 1814, near Bathurst, New South Wales. The discoverers gathered together a quantity quite sufficient to lead them to believe that they had found a gold mine, but when they reported what they considered their good fortune to the keeper he, instead of undertaking to recommend them for pardon or easing their hard labors in any way, threatened to give them all a sound flogging if they ventured again to say a word about the matter or to spend any more time picking up gold. The next find was made on the Fish river in 1823, not far from the spot where the convicts had come across it nine years before. This news, being reported to the authorities, was also ordered suppressed. Within the course of the next two years finds were so frequent that the London government began to take great interest in the affair. But the fact that another region of the yellow metal might be at the disposal of such as might seek was kept rigidly secret until in 1825 a dramatic incident precluded all possibility of further secrecy.

A convict was discovered with a nugget of gold in his possession. When asked how he had come by the metal, he said that he had picked it up in the bush. He was cautioned and told that the authorities had no doubt that he had stolen the gold, but the prisoner stoutly held to his original tale. At length he was taken out and severely flogged in public as a thief. There is now no doubt that the man told the truth. After this, although the public was every now and then keyed up to great expectations by some reported find, no further veins were discovered until 1830, when a Russian nobleman found a rich deposit in the Blue mountains. The British government again became fearful of the consequence of such news upon a colony of convicts and ordered the matter suppressed. Yet sufficient people had heard of it to keep the story alive and give credence to such rumors as arose from time to time. So matters drifted on. Time and time again bushmen, shepherds, convicts and surveyors picked up small nuggets and brought them to the centers of population, but at that day people were nothing like so keen on gold mining as they subsequently became, and the subject of gold in Australia was not pursued as one would expect it to be.

The discovery of gold in California changed all that. Those rich fields, panning out their golden store and filling the coffers of lucky individuals and governments at a rate never dreamed of, awakened a thirst for prospecting all the world over. In every part of the earth men went out with pick and pan, hoping to come across the precious metal.

When the news of California's fortune reached Australia, many took ship to America's shores, and among these was Hammond Hargreaves, an Englishman, native of Gosport, who had emigrated to New South Wales in 1832. In Australia he engaged in farming without much profit and was among the first to rush for California. On reaching the auriferous region the first thing that struck him was the similarity of the geological formation in California and Bathurst, Australia, and there and then he made up his mind to inquire into the subject should he ever return to Australia. He worked for something like a couple of years in California and then set sail for New South Wales. Returning, he of course carried in his mind the thought that perhaps there might be gold in Bathurst, and when he landed he set to work to make a thorough search.

Before this, however, he had made the acquaintance of William and James Toms and J. H. O. Lister, who were anxious to prospect for gold. Hargreaves taught them how to use pick and pan, the dish and the cradle—in fact, gave them a practical if rough education into the mysteries of gold and gold bearing rocks and gravel. These men struck out, and in April, 1851, the three pupils returned to their old master, and, lo, in their pockets they carried gold to the amount of four ounces! Hargreaves, knowing the ropes, took this gold and full directions to the proper quarter. The news went forth, the rush began, rich finds were made, and Hargreaves was hailed as the discoverer of gold in Australia. In reality he had won the title, for it was his knowledge that first educated the Tomses and Lister, and it was his knowledge again that sent them in the right direction.

Duty is what goes most against the grain, because in doing that we do only what we are strictly obliged to and are seldom much praised for it.—La Bruyere.

CHURCH TOWERS.

They Are a Distinctive Feature of the Mexican View.

There is no country better worth visiting than Mexico. It is very striking in crossing the border from the United States to note how completely everything changes. Here there hardly seems anything man has constructed which harmonizes with its surroundings; there everything seems to be entirely a part of the country. It is more foreign than Europe is now and constantly reminds one of the east. Hiding in some of the little traveled districts, I could hardly believe that I was not in India. The dust in the road, the thorn scrub on both sides, with that pungent smell of the blossoms, all reminded me of the country about Ahmedabad. The plateau in winter, the dry season, is very much like the desert—long stretches of country, with purple mountains in the distance, without a tree in sight except where there is a town or where irrigation has kept a little green and a few trees have been planted. Often the horizon is so distant that the mountains melt into the sky, and perhaps one catches a glimpse of the snow on one of the volcanoes. The color is that of its own Mexican opals—greens, blues and reds.

Everywhere the distinctive features are the church towers and tiled domes rising above the towns. The exteriors of these churches are always picturesque and interesting, but the interiors are usually disappointing, for they have suffered much during many revolutions and perhaps even more from senseless renovations. There are a few still untouched, where one can see them as nearly all were once, entirely covered with richly carved wood heavily gilded. Gold was used thickly everywhere till the carving looked like solid metal. I have seen much gold in churches, but none to equal that in Mexico.—Lockwood de Forest in Century.

NO ALTERNATIVE.

The Jury Had to Teach the Pompous Judge a Lesson.

A certain trial judge in a certain state became so unpopular that the only way he could get a verdict for the state was to make his charge in favor of the prisoner. When matters had reached this stage a famous feud fighter was arrested on a charge of murder and brought to trial. The case, which was the judge's first murder trial, attracted much attention, and the judge, whose unpopularity arose from his vanity and pomposity, greatly enjoyed his role as umpire of the law. The case was a clear one against the defendant, and his guilt was so conclusively proved that the judge even presumed to charge accordingly. The jury retired, and when they filed back into court it was noticed that they avoided the prisoner's eye and looked unusually solemn.

"Gentlemen," said the judge, waving the clerk into silence, "have you reached a verdict?"

"We have," said the foreman. The judge opened a paper bag and drew out a black cap. With an important look around the courtroom he placed this on his head and pulled it down until it met his ears.

"Prisoner," he said, "arise and look at the jury. Jury, arise and look at the prisoner. Gentlemen, what is your verdict?"

The jurymen, who had been whispering to each other, nodded cheerfully at the prisoner.

"Not guilty," said the foreman.

"Of course," he said later, when every one had shaken the innocent man's hand, "he was guilty all right, and that was going to be our verdict, but when the little judge put that black cap on his head and pulled it down over his ears like that there was only one thing for us to do, and we did it."—New York Sun.

Graveyard Neighbors.

The agent for a cemetery company was expatiating on the good points of a certain lot. Presently the prospective purchaser interrupted with the enunciation of several prominent families owning property there.

"Is this lot near theirs?" she asked.

The agent admitted that it was quite a distance off.

"Then," said the woman, "I don't want it. I'd rather pay more and get in a good neighborhood."

The agent collapsed.

"Has it come to the point," he said, "where people consider their next door neighbors even in a graveyard?"—New York Sun.

Business Sense.

In new lines of goods is where the profits lie. The old standbys that every dealer keeps have the prices all cut to pieces on them. Get the new things ahead of the other fellows and make money on them. Frequent change of the arrangement of your show cases gives the effect of new goods received. The same old arrangement month in and month out, no matter how many new goods, looks like the same old stock.—Printers' Ink.

Persuasive.

"Your wife is somewhat strong minded, isn't she, Little John?" "Strong minded? A furniture peddler came here yesterday and in five minutes she sold him some polish she had made herself."—London Telegraph.

An Easy Way.

One of the easiest and most effective ways of escaping the hardships of prison abuses is found in the simple old process of keeping out of prison.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Honor the tree that gives you shelter.—Danish.

Tombs of the Patriarchs.

No spot in all Palestine is so jealously guarded as the haram or sacred area built above the cave where, according to tradition, lie buried the bodies of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah. This haram is inclosed within a double wall, an outer one of Arab workmanship, dating from the fourteenth century, and an inner very massive one with many buttresses, which competent authorities ascribe to the days of the Herods. No Christian or Jew is, except by very special permission, allowed within these walls. The most the "unbelievers" may ordinarily do is to ascend from the street to the seventh step on one of the staircases between the walls. At a spot near the stair is a stone with a hole in it, down which, it is said, a long Bedouin lance can be thrust its whole length without reaching any obstruction. This, the Jews believe, reaches to the sacred cave itself, and in its neighborhood they assemble every Friday to mourn and pray, as they do before the wall of that other haram—the temple area.—In Jerusalem.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Proving His Honesty.

"You say you have confidence in the plaintiff, Mr. Smith?"

"Yes, sir."

"State to the court, if you please, what caused this confidence."

"Why, you see, sir, there's allers reports 'bout eatin' house men, and I used to think."

"Never mind what you thought. Tell us what you know."

"Well, sir, one day I goes down to Cooken's shop and sez to the waiter, 'Walter, sez I, 'give's a weal pie. Well, just then Mr. Cooken comes up and sez he: 'How do Mr. Smith? What ye going to have?'"

"'Weal pie,' says I. 'Good,' says he. 'I'll have one tu.' So he sets down an eats one of his own weal pies right afore me."

"Did that cause your confidence in him?"

"Yes, indeed, sir; when an eatin' house keeper sets down afore his customers an' deliberately eats one of his own weal pies no man can refuse to feel confidence. It shows him to be an honest man."—London Scraps.

A Philosopher in a Cyclone.

"I believe in optimism," said the cheerful citizen, "but there is a limit even to that. I saw a man the other day whose house had been carried away by cyclone, and he was the most cheerful citizen in town. 'Why,' I said, 'I thought you had lost your house?'" "I did lose it," he replied, "but there was nobody in it but me at the time an' 'thar wuz lifted a hair of my head hurt. The cyclone lifted the house high, but the ground floor where I was sleepin' in peaceful in my bed, an' I hain't never seen nor heard of that house since! An', anyhow, I didn't have no fire insurance on it an' wuzn't able to put up a lightnin' rod, an' ef the wind hadn't took it away who knows but lightnin' would 'a hit it, an' I've got the rheumatism so bad I couldn't run in case of fire."—Atlanta Constitution.

Dream Troubles.

"Once when I was blind," said a business man, "a friend told me I was worrying over imaginary troubles. He cheered me up with a yarn about his little nephew. This little fellow's sister said one morning:

"'Oh, Gussie, I had such a lovely dream last night! I dreamed I was at a cake shop, and I had such loads of good things—ice cream, pie, strawberries, shortcake, chocolates, jelly macaroons, kisses and lots of other things besides.'"

"The little boy's eyes glistened. He smiled with delight.

"'And what was I eatin'?' he asked eagerly.

"'Oh, you wasn't there, Gussie.'"

"Then, overwhelmed with sorrow, little Gussie hid his face in his hands and wept bitterly."

Hercules' Labors.

The twelve labors of Hercules were: To slay the Nemean lion; to kill the Lernean hydra; to catch and hold the Arcadian stag; to destroy the Erymanthian boar; to cleanse the stables of King Augeas; to destroy the cannibal birds of Lake Stymphalia; to capture the Cretan bull; to catch the horses of Diomedes; to get possession of the girdle of Hippolyte, queen of the Amazons; to capture the oxen of the monster Geryon; to get possession of the apples of the Hesperides and to bring up from the infernal regions the three-headed dog Cerberus.

The Irresponsible Child.

Small Boy (noticing the Phi Beta Kappa key hanging from the minister's watch chain)—Dad you find it again, or is this another?

Minister—Why, my little man, what do you mean? I never lost it.

Small Boy—Oh, mother said you had lost the charm you had when you were young.—Judge.

Saw Things.

Oculist (trying various glasses)—How do they look now? See them any better? Mr. Wunmore—Well, the green giraffe I can see first rate, but that red elephant an' the purple potamus still look kinder—kinder blurred.—Puck.

Sympathy.

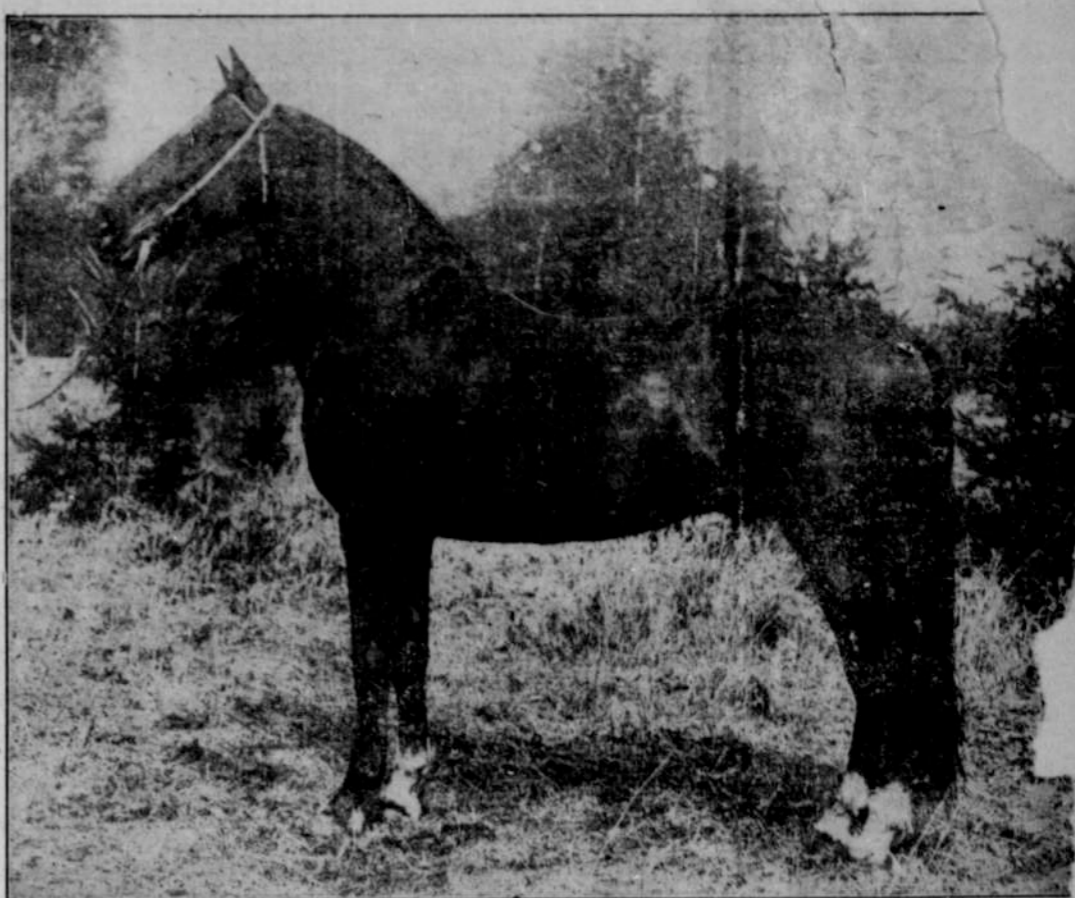
"What made you kick Jimpson?" "He called me an ass."

"Oh, well, kicking is a characteristic of asses, but I shouldn't think you'd want to confirm Jimpson's statement so quickly."—London Telegraph.

Why It Was There.

Aunt—Tommy, I put three pies in here yesterday, and now there is only one. How is that? Tommy—Please, it was so dark, aunty, I didn't see that one!—Punch.

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