ABSTRACT

SAN FRANCISCO'S GOLDEN ERA: 1852 to 1860
ITS CONTENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE PLUS REPRESENTATIVE SELECTIONS
AND AN INDEX OF CONTRIBUTORS

by Lawrence E. Mobley

The possibility in the 1850's of unearthing a fortune in the newly discovered gold mines of California lured from every section of the country thousands of men whose educational and intellectual backgrounds differed as widely as did their geographical ties. Initially the frenzied quest for ore shut out all other thoughts, but as the gold fever abated, these youthful Argonauts developed an intense interest in drama and literature. The record of this San Francisco literary renaissance appears in the Golden Era, a weekly literary journal founded December 19, 1852, by Rollin M. Daggett and J. Macdonough Foard, two youthful ex-miners who encouraged their fellow miners to write about their travels to California and about their experiences in the diggings. This study (1) describes the production and circulation methods adopted by Daggett and

Foard to enable the Golden Era to survive while rival papers died for lack of funds and classifies both original and "selected" items in the Golden Era from December 19, 1852, to April 15, 1860, when the founding editors sold the paper, and (2) it evaluates the contents of the Golden Era in relationship to national literary types, trends, and areas of interest.

Part I briefly describes the setting in which the Golden Era began. Part II covers the quarto period, which ended September 16, 1855, when the income from the 5,000 subscribers enabled Daggett and Foard to enlarge the Era to eight 21 x 28 inch pages. Part III takes the Golden Era up to April 15, 1860, when Daggett and Foard sold it. The relationship of the contents of the Golden Era to national literary currents is woven throughout the several chapters and then summarized and evaluated in Part IV. Appendices include typical selections and an index of contributors.

Daggett and Foard published the Golden Era to provide an outlet for California writers, whose poems, essays, travel and historical accounts, stories, and reports of local mining conditions were frequently critically evaluated and always preferred over the "selected" material used to fill out the Era's columns, which also included drama reviews, summaries of news, editorials, market reports, and advertisements. Early issues of the Golden Era relied heavily on material clipped from other journals, but gradually the Era attracted local

writers so that after a few months it contained largely original material written in and about the West. During the first few years these original selections drew heavily from local events and people, with especial attention to the miners, and here Western local color began. By 1860, the Golden Era had changed from a journal especially devoted to the local color of the miners to one featuring pale Western copies of Eastern sentimental romances. The local color begun in the Golden Era, though, was continued by Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and other writers whose Western local color eventually overshadowed the effete sentimental romance.

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By

Lawrence E. Mobley

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PREFACE

Although the Golden Era has frequently been used as a source of information concerning the California gold rush, no detailed study has been made of this important Western journal, which recorded San Francisco's renaissance during the 1850's. One problem has been the collection of a complete file; however I have been able to obtain on microfilm the first sixteen volumes of the Golden Era. The following libraries hold copies of the Golden Era: (1) The California State Library: This collection, together with the copies housed at the Sutro branch in San Francisco, has most numbers of the first sixteen volumes plus a few duplicate volumes, although many numbers are badly clipped; (2) The Huntington Library: A good collection of the first two volumes, about half of volume three; (3) The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley: Volumes 5, 8-16 complete, except for no. 27 of volume 5; (4) Los Angeles Public Library: About one-half of volume 5, one-fourth of volume 6; (5) The California Historical Society, San Francisco: A few scattered numbers; (6) Western Americana Collection, Yale

University Library: Volumes 2-4 complete, except nos. 4 and 6 of volume 2; (7) The Library of Congress: Seventeen scattered numbers; (8) Private collection of George L. Harding, Palo Alto, California: Ten scattered numbers; (9) American Antiquarian Society: One copy, no. 43, volume 10; (10) The California Historical Society, San Francisco: A few scattered numbers.

As far as I know, these are the only extant copies of volumes 1-16 of the Golden Era. However, the late Irving S. Underhill, Buffalo, New York, a collector of Mark Twain items, apparently had copies of volumes 5, 8-15, and parts of 16, 17, and 18, although I have not been able to confirm this report. If he did, they were probably purchased by The Chaucer Head Book Shop in New York. Beyond this I have no trace of them.

During this study the following individuals and libraries have furnished invaluable suggestions and assistance. Dr. Russel B. Nye, chairman, and Drs. Claude M. Newlin, Arthur Sherbo, Robert Geist, and Harry Hoppe, members of my graduate committee in English at Michigan State University, have given patient guidance, suggestions, encouragement, and helpful criticisms during my course work and during the preparation of this thesis. The La Sierra College Board and administrators have generously made available both time and financial assistance. The directors and personnel of the Henry E. Huntington Library, the Los Angeles Public Library,

the Bancroft Library, the California State Library, the Americana section of the Yale University Library, the Sutro Branch of the California State Library, the Society of California Pioneers, and the California Historical Society have allowed me to use their resources as well as to obtain microfilm copies of their holdings of the Golden Era. Finally, in addition to her loyal encouragement, my wife has given freely of her time in the typing and final preparation of the manuscript. Without the cooperation of all these persons and libraries this study would not have been possible, and I take pleasure in expressing my grateful appreciation for their assistance.

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All plates, which are prints from my own microfilm, are Thermo-Fax copies made through the courtesy of Mr. Robert P. Berner, Manager, Microfilm Reader-Printer Division, Thermo-Fax Sales, Inc., Los Angeles.

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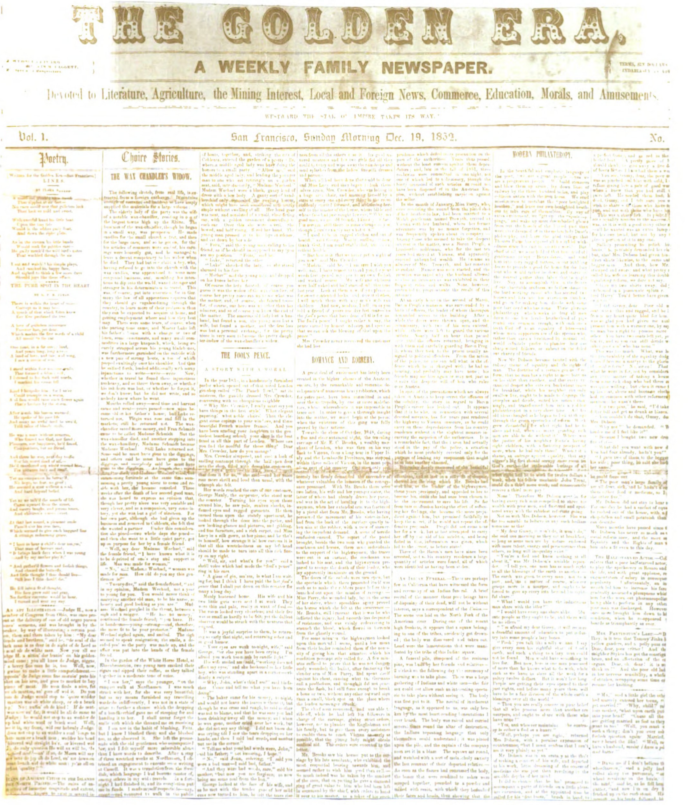

THE GOLDEN ERA.

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements.

"WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

Vol. 1. San Francisco, Sunday Morning Dec. 19, 1852. No.

Poetry.

[Written for the Golden Era—San Francisco.]

LINES.

THE PURE SPOT IN THE HEART

Choice Stories.

THE WAX CHANDLER'S WIDOW.

The following sketch, from real life, is extracted from a foreign exchange. It contains enough of romance and incident to have amply supplied the materials for a large volume.

The elderly lady of the party was the wife of a notable wax-chandler, residing in one of the largest towns high up the Rhine. The business of the wax-chandler, though he began in a small way, was prosperous. He made candles for the small church at first, and then for the large ones; and so he got on, for tho' his articles of commerce were useful, his earnings were honestly got, and he managed to leave a decent competency to his widow when he died. They had but one child, a boy, who, having refused to go into the church with the wax candles, was apprenticed to some more congenial business, and, moulding his intentions to dip into the world, waxed stronger and stronger in his determination to travel. This was, of course, put into execution; for in Germany the law of all apprentices requires that they should go vagabondizing through the country, to learn more of their profession than they can be expected to acquire at home, and getting employment where and how they best may. There were some tears, of course, when the parting time came, and Master Luke left his father's house with a change or two of linen, some sweetmeats, and many small commodities in a large knapsack, which, being securely strapped across his young bladebones, was furthermore garnished on the outside with a new pair of strong boots, a toe of which peeped exultingly over his shoulder. And thus he sallied forth, loaded additionally with many injunctions to write—write—write. Now, whether in travel he found these injunctions too heavy, and so threw them away, or whether his ink-horn was lost, or whether he forgot it, we don't know; but he did not write, and so nobody knew where he went.

Months rolled away—seed time and harvest came and went—years passed—new wine became old in his father's house; but Luke returned not. Virgin wax rose and fell in the markets; still he returned not. The wax-chandler saved more money, and Frau Schmidt came to be called Madame Schmidt. But the wax-chandler died, and another stepping into the wax-chandlery, Madame Schmidt became Madame Wechsel. Still Luke returned not.

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[illegible]

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements

Vol. 1. San Francisco, Sunday Morning February 27, 1853. No. 11.

Poetry.

NEVER LOOK BACK.

[illegible]

Original.

WRITTEN FOR THE CALIFORNIA PIONEER

REMINISCENCES

OF

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible] FOARD,
ROLLIN M. DAGGETT,
Editors and Proprietors.

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements.

TERMS, [illegible] A YEAR,
INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

Volume 1. San Francisco, Sunday Morning, April 3, 1853. Number 16.

Poetry.

THE MISSING SHIP.

[illegible] the breezes swell,
[illegible] the lessening land;
[illegible] a last farewell
[illegible] a snowy hand;
And [illegible] are on the main,
[illegible] wanders o'er,
[illegible] hour of parting pain,
[illegible] never heard of more.

[illegible] a mother's joy,
[illegible] a weeping fair;
[illegible]
[illegible] unceasing prayer;
[illegible]
[illegible] that [illegible] bore,
[illegible] in ocean cold,
[illegible] was ever heard of more?

[illegible] and trackless path
[illegible]
[illegible] and the bleeding wreath
[illegible] and calling on?
[illegible] and but one its the eye
[illegible] on a fatal shore?
[illegible]
[illegible] she never was heard of more.

[illegible] changed her form,
[illegible]
[illegible] and vessel of course,
[illegible] that ship hath gone
[illegible] well
And though we know that all is o'er,
[illegible] no tongue can tell
[illegible] she never was heard of more.

Written for the Golden Era.

THE DYING GIRL TO HER MOTHER.

[illegible] by Request.

[illegible] Addressed to her Brothers in California

BY MRS. [illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible] taught me
[illegible]
[illegible] are sleeping,
[illegible] the gloom;
[illegible] are standing
[illegible] new made tomb.

[illegible] that I planned,
[illegible] there,
[illegible]
[illegible] and of them,
[illegible] I dearest mother,
[illegible] wakes to birth
[illegible] countenance,
[illegible] on the earth.

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] portal
[illegible] thronging,
[illegible] home pleasures,
[illegible] was known
[illegible] fireside,
[illegible]

[illegible] all their beauty,
[illegible] were true,
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] dearest,
[illegible] farewell band,
[illegible]
[illegible] the golden land.

[illegible] delusive—
[illegible] and the strife,
[illegible]
[illegible] of life.
[illegible] when you greet them
[illegible] and Farewell—
[illegible] there matter
[illegible] but one regret.

[illegible] father slumbers,
[illegible] bride,
[illegible]
[illegible] beside
[illegible] mother,
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

* * * * * *

[illegible] household band is broken,
[illegible]

Romance.

A FORGERY AND A WEDDING.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

The circumstance which I am about to record was one that, at the time of its occurrence, made a strong impression upon me, and even now sometimes comes across my mind, bringing with it a strong feeling of what deep and dreadful injustice might be done to an individual who possessed not sufficient moral courage to take those steps which were necessary to his own redemption from evil attempted to be thrust upon him.

It so happened that I was in attendance upon a family professionally, for some years, where there were several daughters; and out of compliment to me, I presume, I was invited to the wedding of one of these young girls, with a gentleman in every way worthy of her, as regarded habits, manners and education; although, unhappily, he did not possess that amount of "virtue" he could have dispensed so well, and which, somehow or another, gets into wrong hands.

It is very well for foolish, unthinking people who form this fault, to presume to say that learning is better than house or land; but others, who know the world, would have no difficulty whatever in making a choice. Those who are at all practically acquainted with society, know that it is not education, or manners, or talent that makes the man—but money. The question now asked concerning anybody is not, "What is he?" but "What has he got?" and if the answer is "money," he, of course, becomes possessed of every virtue under the sun. But to return to my tale.

Mary Dempsey, then, was about to be married to Mr. John Sinclair, who, as I observed, had the learning, but, alas! not the house nor land, which the unthinking make so light of. In fact, he was a man of good talent; and it was no difficult matter to promise he was a man who, in due time, was highly calculated to become famous and celebrated for his acquirements. He won the heart of Mary Dempsey, and that was indeed, to my mind, a conquest worth the making; for a gentler, fairer being never had its birth.

Before the marriage, I happened to be mentioning the matter before a friend, and he said, when I mentioned the name of the bridegroom—"Sinclair! Sinclair! bless me! Did you say Sinclair? Is he a young man, a—a good looking expression of countenance?"

"Yes, the same."

"Oh, well, there is something wrong about him."

"Something wrong! What, is he out of his senses! I never saw a much better head in my life. There must be something wrong about you to say so."

"Oh, no! I can't tell you what it is, exactly, but I know that I have heard something of another that I cannot exactly call to mind.—It's very provoking to chase a thing through your memory, but really—what can it be?—It's something, however, against him, I know."

"It cannot be anything very important, then, as you have forgotten it; and I would suggest that you ought to be very careful, indeed, how you say anything of the sort against anybody. You don't know the incalculable injury it may do."

"Oh, I won't say anything against anybody, not I. But now I perfectly recollect it was Smith who told me there was something or another that he had heard from one Jones."

"Now really, it is too bad."

"Oh, no, it isnt too bad; and as I have recollected it, I'll ask Smith when I see him, what it really was now; and then you can judge for yourself. Upon my word, I feel uneasy about it, and, for the sake of Mr. Sinclair, it ought to be sifted, you see."

"[illegible] very well [illegible] you like [illegible] the matter [illegible]

[illegible]

This note gave me [illegible] uneasiness although if Mr. Sinclair had twenty brothers and the one half of their number had been hung, and the other half transported, I could not for the life of me, see that it constituted any charge against him. But I knew that I was on such points rather singular, and it gave me some uneasiness to think that this matter might seriously effect the prospects of good Mr Sinclair.

I went to the wedding. All was in readiness, all was cheerful joy, expectation and hilarity, until the time when the bridegroom ought to have made his appearance. And lo! he came not. Minute by minute flew by in anxious expectation, and at length the bride burst into tears, and declared that something must have happened to him, and implored some of the gentlemen to go and make inquiry for him. One of her sisters, however, interfered, saying—

"Mary, you ought to feel far too indignant, to send after your bridegroom. The insult of being five minutes too late, should be sufficient to eradicate him from your thoughts."

"That sentiment does you a world of honor, Miss Dempsey," said I, "and if you will permit me to go and make inquiry for Mr. Sinclair, I shall go, I think, in the spirit you would wish me."

She thanked me by a look, and I left the house. Luckily this affair did not take place in the church, but in the house of the Dempseys, where, although it was a little contrary to the custom to do so, the bridegroom had agreed to meet the bride, and accompany her to the sacred edifice.

I had the address of Mr. Sinclair given to me, and it was not three streets off where he lived in chambers. I walked there, and knocked at the door, on one side of the staircase, which bore his name upon the pannel. For a few seconds there was no answer, although I thought I heard some one move in the room; and then I knocked again rather sharply, when the door was opened by Sinclair himself, and I think I shall never forget the look of unutterable woe that was depicted upon his countenance.

"Mr. Sinclair," said I, "if this is an intrusion I hope you will pardon it. I come from Mary Dempsey."

He did not speak, but stretching out his hand, he took hold of my arm, and led me into the chambers. Then, when the door was closed, he said, in nervous and excited accents:

"Tell her to forget me, beg of her to forget me!"

"But what for? You have gained her affections, and it is very strange now for you to make such a request."

"It is a desperate thing, and under many circumstances would be a wicked thing, doctor. But I am doomed. Something has happened which may, and which I dread will, involve me in disgrace. She shall not share it with me, if I can help it."

I was silent for a moment, when I replied, in as impressive a tone as I could assume—"Mr. Sinclair, beware of what you do. Your own fate in life—your own happiness, as well as the happiness of the fair and intelligent girl whose affections you have won, depend upon your conduct. If you have yourself committed any act that ought to make you hesitate about yoking the fate another with your own, say so; but if you are a victim, instead of guilty, I implore you to summon courage to your aid, and do not allow yourself to be borne down by any amount of circumstances."

These words of mine seemed to have great effect upon him. He staggered to a seat, and covering his face with his hands for some moments he appeared lost in thought. Then suddenly he said—

"Heaven knows I am guiltless!"

"That is enough," I said. "I will [illegible] thing [illegible] but [illegible] you take [illegible] confidence [illegible]

[illegible] as I could, and here I [illegible] Sinclair a [illegible] he, who seemed wonderfully calmed by the [illegible] confidence which Mary had in him, [illegible] then he cried—

"Oh, can I ever be worthy of such a creature?"

"Yes," said I, "you certainly can be worthy of her if you choose."

"I cannot, I cannot. How am I to do so? when you have heard, which you shall hear, the melancholy circumstances by which I am surrounded, you will admit that I ought no longer to think of Mary Dempsey as a wife."

"And you say you are guiltless?"

"I am, I am. But know you not I have seen enough of this world to know that in order to preserve a fair fame, it is not enough to be innocent, but you must manage to seem so likewise, or you will not escape the very worst of censures?"

"I certainly know that the world is censorious, but I know, likewise, that we are always the worst judges of what affects ourselves, and that, let the circumstances be what they may, our imagination is apt to dress them up in false colors, giving an importance to them which they do not deserve."

He looked at me with something like hopefulness in his countenance, and I proceeded—

"Mr. Sinclair, it strikes me strongly that you are allowing your imagination to get the better of your reason, and suppose yourself to be involved in some affair from which extrication would be easy, with a little more resolution than you possess."

"Think you so? But you cannot judge until you know all, and all you shall know, if you will do me favor of listening to my recital."

I signified my consent, and at the same time expressed a [illegible] assurance [illegible] be of service to him; after which he began as follows—and I can only inform my readers that the tale is most strictly true.

"Sir," said he, "about ten years ago I was in a far more [illegible] situation than I am now, [illegible] too young [illegible] to have found [illegible] powers, and was, as it were, floundering [illegible], and being first one thing and then another, in the hopes of making a livelihood. I was unfortunately situated in my bringing up."

* * * * * * *

"You may depend," said I, "that as the world advances in knowledge, these things will be better understood. But proceed with your story, Mr. Sinclair."

"Well, then, after my father's death there was evidently a sort of [illegible] got up between my mother and the darling, the eldest, and his every [illegible] so that George was made to [illegible] after [illegible], and I candidly confess, whether from [illegible] or from natural bias, had [illegible] abilities about him. For myself, I was hunting about, and trying to get a living where I could, by turning to account what artistic and scientific knowledge I had, and [illegible] to acquire more.—Thus some years passed away, until one day George, who had learned copper-plate engraving, came to me—for I was the only one who had held out a friendly hand to him—and said:

"A beer dresser has employed me to engrave for him one of those 'Bank of Elegance' notes, which are used as an advertisement by many tradesmen, and as he wants it to be as like as possible [illegible] Bank of England note, can you lend me one for a day or two to copy?"

"I thought nothing of the [illegible] except that I [illegible] but I [illegible] day [illegible]

[illegible] lectures to deliver on some scientific subjects, a little distance from town, I forgot all about the affair, until a week afterward I received a note signed by George, which requested me to meet him by the General Post Office, at nine o'clock that evening. There was something about the tenor of the note that gave me some uneasiness—I know not why—it was so extraordinary that he should make a street appointment with me instead of coming, as he used to do—he might as easily have come to my chamber, as he had frequently done before. But I went. I had not walked but twice past the General Post Office when I saw him. He did not speak, but in a hurried manner led me down an opposite street, and said:

"Did you see any one watching?"

"Watching what?" said I.

"Watching us. Are you sure we are not followed?"

"Good God," said I, "what do you mean? what if you are followed?"

"Hush! hush! you recollect I borrowed a five pound note of you? well you thought it was to engrave a 'Bank of Elegance' note by, but between you and I, it was to engrave a real one."

"A what?"

"A [illegible] one—a forged one. I have got the plate in my pocket. I have changed one to-day, but I had to pay away some of the money, and I have spent the remainder, and what's more, I know I am suspected, because I have been followed about, and I think I have only eluded some one who was sent after me."

You may guess, doctor, what must have been my feelings at that moment. I recollect a sort of mist flocking about my eyes; and clinging to some iron railings for support, I [illegible] I should have fainted, and as George went on talking, all I heard was a confused sound, without the least understanding of what he said. This dreadful feeling, however, soon passed away, and a dreadful feeling it was. I can compare it to nothing but what I should suppose would be the near approach to death.

"Why, you seem to think more of it," said George, "than I do. What's the matter with you?"

"Oh!" said I, 'do you ask? George, George, have you no heart? Have you no head-piece, that you can talk so lightly of what must be your ultimate destruction?—oh! what is to become of you?"

"Oh! I must get somewhere in the country, and try to change a few of the notes."

"No, no, no," said I. "Listen to me.—There is but one chance for you, and that is to leave England at once and forever."

"That's all very well," replied he, "but where is the money to come from? I can't go under about twenty pounds or so."

"But would you go if you had the amount?"

He hesitated for a moment, and then he replied—

"Yes, I would—I would certainly; for as you say it is a bad chance here, and if I am taken the consequences are certain. You have alarmed me a little. I wish I had the last [illegible] to go over again. But the honest truth is, I wanted money, if for no other purpose, for the sake of showing in some way that I had it, and mortifying my mother and brothers. I was willing to run my risk for such an object, but I do begin to think it is a real failure."

"And is it possible," said I, "that for such a poor wretched motive, you have stooped to such criminality?"

"Never mind that. It's too late now for reformation. If, by any means, you can get the twenty pounds or thereabout, I will leave the country at once. I [illegible] Liverpool, and then I shall find some American trader [illegible] money you can [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible]—the sum of money in my hand amounted to about fourteen pounds. That was not enough, and although I had not seen them for some time, I resolved to go to my mother and brothers to crave their assistance. I did not consider that I was justified in telling them exactly how the matter stood, but I went to them in the evening, just a little before the hour at which I had to meet George again, and I saw them all. I told them that I had reasons to believe it was quite necessary he should go. I represented that for our own credit's sake, he had better be given the money and go. I knew that to them it would be no use to put the matter in any other light than as a matter of interest, and exhausted all the rhetoric I was master of. I soon got my answer, and that answer was decisive. I cannot at this distance of time, take upon me to say from whose lips it came—think it was my mother's—Heaven forgive her if it were so. I cannot assert that it was, but the answer came from one of them, and was fully subscribed to by all the rest, and it was this:

"There are four of us, and if a farthing each would save George from being hanged, we would not subscribe the penny."

I went away at once. I took all I had myself, and handed it to him.

"Go," said I, "go at once, for Heaven's sake, although this may not be sufficient. Go away from London. Let me know where you are, and if any more is absolutely necessary, I will stir heaven and earth to get it for you."

He took the money—that amount which ruined me—and promising that he would leave London at once; in fact, that he would walk towards Liverpool, getting what cheap lifts he could on the way, and write to me when he got there, stating what amount he could get a passage in one of the American traders for. Now I felt comparatively easy, at all events. I thought there was a chance of his safety, and although I knew not which way to turn myself for means, I felt as if a great weight had been lifted off my heart. Alas, only two days passed, when one morning I received notice that he was in the hands of the police at Bow street—that he had given his real name of Sinclair, and had actually had the folly to mention me and my address—thus doing me all the harm he could and himself no good. Well, doctor, I attended his examination. I did all I could, but the whole affair was my destruction for the time—it blighted every prospect I had in the world, and another week saw me arrested for debt and an inmate of Whitecross street prison, while George lay waiting his trial at Newgate.

"Nearly ten years have passed away since that time. George pleaded guilty and was transported for life, and gradually I began again to get resources around me. From the time that I visited him in Newgate till this morning I have never seen him."

"This morning, Mr Sinclair? Did you see him this morning?"

"Yes. He came like an apparition. I could scarcely believe my eyes as he stood before me and said—

"Well, brother; you see I have come back. They let me off for eight years instead of life, and I have found my way back. I understand you are pretty well off and are going to be married."

"George," I said, "who would have thought of seeing you?"

"Ah!" he said, "who indeed. But to business; I expect you to support me now, and if you don't I shall accuse you of having had a guilty knowledge of my criminality, and although at this distance of time, I [illegible] think anything would be done by the magistrate in the matter, it will ruin you in reputation, mind you. I learnt this dodge in Australia, so you had better put up with it quietly. I intend to [illegible] London and call upon you [illegible] and I shall [illegible] you to [illegible] with [illegible]

[illegible] look me in the [illegible]

[illegible] heard, and [illegible] coming of the convict. He was [illegible] the minute, and I heard him say to Mr. Sinclair in a rough, insolent tone—

"Well have you considered? I have been on the watch, and you have not left the chambers; so you have had no opportunity to play me any trick."

"You know I am entirely innocent," said Mr. Sinclair, "of any participation in your crime, and that [illegible] you I [illegible]"

"Oh! yes. I know all that [illegible] the matter in the least. I know you had no more to do with it than [illegible], but how are you to prove that? [illegible] my meeting you at the [illegible] deny [illegible] you can't get out of it, [illegible] nothing to do with it, so hand me over some cash to begin with."

"Stop!" said I, emerging from the [illegible] board; "I shall [illegible] Mr. George Sinclair, and swear to what I have overheard, when I think you will have a very fair chance of being transported again."

"Beast!" [illegible] he said. "[illegible]"

Then without another word he dashed out of the place.

On that day week Mr. Sinclair married Miss Dempsey, [illegible] with the circumstances I have narrated [illegible]

"What [illegible] the [illegible] nality of others was [illegible] my [illegible] the misfortune of James Sinclair, [illegible] worthy a relative [illegible] on the contrary, [illegible] stronger [illegible] by the bonds of sympathy. Oh! [illegible] such a circumstance around [illegible] any [illegible]"

I had frequent opportunities of seeing Sinclair afterwards, and [illegible] can say it with truth—that [illegible] happiness [illegible] all qualities which have a tendency [illegible] mestic felicity in the disposition of Mary, she had, by marrying Sinclair, [illegible] fortune of [illegible] qualities to appreciate the [illegible] of disposition which she [illegible] justly claim. The vagabond brother [illegible] heard of.

HAVE WE A BOURBON AMONG US?

The last number of Putnam's Monthly Magazine has an article written by [illegible] J. A. Hanson, endorsed by the Rev. Dr. Francis L. Hawks, which occupies twenty-four pages to prove that the Rev. Eleazar Williams, a missionary among the Indians [illegible] the Protestant Episcopal Church, is no other than the Dauphin and son of Louis XVI of France. A mass of strong circumstantial evidence is furnished—[illegible] consistent, that it seems [illegible] fate of Louis the Seventeenth [illegible] that Dauphin was secretly [illegible] this country, and [illegible] the northern part of New York.

"A French gentleman [illegible] New Orleans in 184[illegible], named [illegible], was [illegible] his deathbed that he [illegible] brought the Dauphin to this country. [illegible] the Prince de Joinville [illegible] in 1841, he sought out Mr. Williams, and [illegible] from [illegible] and asked him to sign a [illegible] title to the crown of France, [illegible] Philippe. [illegible] through [illegible] went to him [illegible] Philippe [illegible]

Plate 7

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THE GOLDEN ERA

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

TERMS, SIX DOLLARS A YEA
INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements.

Volume 1. San Francisco, (California,) Sunday Morning, April 17, 1853. Number 18.

Poetry.

Choice Selections.

THE DEAD WIFE.

Plate 8

Vol. I, no. 31, page 1

THE CO

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

PUBLISHED TO LITERATURE, SCIENCE, THE MINING INTEREST, LOCAL AND GENERAL NEWS, COMMERCE, EDUCATION, MORALS, AND AGRICULTURE.

SAN FRANCISCO, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 17, 1853.

VOL. I. THREE DOLLARS A YEAR INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE

Poetry.

A PRAYER IN SUNDAY

[illegible]

Choice Selections.

AN HEIRESS FOR A SUPPER.

A beautiful young heiress had become so fascinated by the flattering use of soft words and passionate hearts, so cultivated, liberal, strongly attached to the interests of her country, and so full of the generous impulses of youth, that she had not yet paid the money deposited in all those beautiful little envelopes, and yet she was young and wise, and so much [illegible]

[illegible]

THE MARRIAGE ALTAR.

[illegible]

A PETITION TO THE

[illegible]

Cabinet-Post and Present.

JUDGES AND CRIMINALS;

SOLIDONS OF THE PAST.

[illegible]

THE GOLDEN REVOLUTION.

The New York Herald, on its arrival on the [illegible]

Cabinet-Post and Present.

JUDGES AND CRIMINALS;

SOLIDONS OF THE PAST.

[illegible]

THE GOLDEN REVOLUTION.

The New York Herald, on its arrival on the [illegible]

Plate 9

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The Golden Era.

The City.

The Ladies' Relief Society.

Plate 10

Vol. I, no. 31, page 3

THE GOLDEN ERA.

The Golden Era.

Marriages.

Deaths.

BUSINESS NOTICES

Amusements.

AMERICAN THEATRE.

New Advertisements.

EMPIRE SALOON

SELLING OFF

PAGE, BACON & CO.

Bankers.

Steamships.

Steam for the Umpqua River

Fremont.

MARVIN & HITCHCOCK

WHOLESALE PAPER WAREHOUSE

J. P. HOGARTH & CO.

Expresses.

HUNTER & CO'S EXPRESS

EXPRESS!

TODDS EXPRESS

First Premium Daguerreotypes

Plate 11

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Vol. I. THE GOLDEN ERA. No. 31

The Golden Era.

Agents for the "Golden Era."

[illegible]

Curious Statistics

If the streets of London were put together, they would extend [illegible] miles in length. The main thoroughfares are traversed by [illegible] omnibuses and [illegible] cabs [illegible] 40,000 horses. In 1849 the [illegible] quarters of wheat, 240,000 bullocks, 1,700,000 sheep, 28,000 calves and [illegible] pigs — [illegible] market alone supplied 4,024,400 head of game. London, in the same year, ate [illegible] salmon, which were washed down by [illegible] gallons of porter and [illegible] gallons of spirits, and [illegible] pipes of wine. 13,000 cows are yearly required for London milk, and reckoning two gallons a day from every cow, we have here 72,000 gallons of London [illegible] consumed by the London inhabitants. [illegible] gaslights fringe the streets, [illegible] water system supplies the enormous quantity of 44,383,328 gallons per day. A thousand sail are employed in bringing annually to London [illegible] of coal. They have no fewer than [illegible] tailors, [illegible] bootmakers, [illegible] milliners and dressmakers, and 19,701 domestic servants.

THE PROGRESS OF FIRE ARMS.—The percussion lock, it appears, was invented by an English clergyman, Rev. Mr. Forsyth, in the year 1807. In the year [illegible] fire-arms were fired by a lighted match carried in the hand. About 1510 the match-lock was introduced, which was so far an improvement, that the lighted match was attached to the gun. But a [illegible] was still an effectual damper [illegible] the bottom light. Soon after the wheel lock was invented, which produced [illegible] of a steel wheel against an inflammable substance [illegible] during the wars of [illegible] first [illegible] about the year 1692 [illegible] years after [illegible]

[illegible]

A [illegible] you [illegible] on trial for stealing [illegible] until you find [illegible] and [illegible] good. The jury retired, and after an absence of fifteen minutes, returned with a verdict of "Guilty" [illegible] and fourth verse. [illegible] Judge [illegible] sentence. "Fletcher [illegible] up and face the music. You are found guilty of suicide by stealing. Now, the court sentences you to pay a fine of two shillings, to shave your head with a dagger in the barracks, and if you [illegible] the heads of any of the [illegible] you'll catch thunder, that's all. Your fate will be a warning to others, and in conclusion, may the Lord have mercy on your soul. Sheriff, get me a pint of red-eye, I'm awful thirsty."

◆

THE Detroit Democrat says "it should be known that Mrs. Stowe has devoted all she may receive above what is necessary to pay for her house in Andover, to the establishment of an institution for the colored race in America."

◆

CARRYING YOUR FACE IN YOUR HAT! The latest dodge of the New York hatters is that of placing in every hat sold, a daguerreotype of the purchaser, finely affixed to the lining, so that whoever wears a hat thus garnished, is sure to have the *likeness of his own face on the top of his head.*

◆

A BAD SIGN.—It is a bad sign to see a man with his hat off at midnight, explaining the principles and theory of his party to a lamp-post. It is also a bad sign to see a fellow lie down in the gutter, supposing it to be his bed, and commence calling a poor, innocent dog all sorts of hard names, mistaking it for his wife.

◆

A CHINAMAN'S BELIEF.—One of the Chinese jugglers about being sworn as a witness the other day, was questioned in regard to his religious belief, when he replied through an interpreter—"I believe in the President of the United States and God Almighty."

A blacksmith was lately summoned to a town court as a witness in a dispute between two of his neighbors. The judge, after hearing the testimony, asked him why he did not settle the affair, as the costs had already amounted to three times the disputed sum.

"I told the fools to settle it," he replied, "for I said the clerks would take their coats—the lawyers their shirts—and if they got into your honor's court, you'd skin 'em."

◆

A married lady, who was very fond of her husband, notwithstanding his extreme ugliness of person, once said to a witty acquaintance:

"What do you think my husband has gone and laid out fifty dollars for a large saloon, on purpose to please me."

"The dear little man," cried the other, "well, it's just like him."

◆

WHY is a watch-dog larger at night than he is in the morning? Because he is *let out* at night and *taken in*, in the morning.—*N. Y. Post.*

◆

"Come here, you mischievous little rascal, you."

"Won't you lick me, father?"

"No."

"Will you swear you won't?"

"Yes."

"Then I won't come, father, for Parson Atwood says, he that sweareth will be [illegible]"

◆

A doctor and [illegible] noble widow up [illegible] gentleman for a breach of promise, in order that the world [illegible] market.

◆

[illegible] speak [illegible] a clergyman [illegible]

Please wait [illegible] I have done.

[illegible] I must speak [illegible]

[illegible] matter.

[illegible]

◆

[illegible]

The [illegible] of London.

[illegible] Reservoir of [illegible] makes more and [illegible] interest. By taking [illegible] said of [illegible] the inscription.

What ought to be there is mostly clogged up and spread about, to make room [illegible] the rest of the [illegible] in the form of pestilential gas in the air that we breathe. A man cannot go down to his grave in peace, without the prospect of evaporating and being [illegible] He [illegible] that so much of him as is mortal, and [illegible] a mortal [illegible] inhaled by his neighbors [illegible] and get into their stomachs as a solution of animal matter in the water which they drink. This consideration is enough to make us all stick to raw brandy, and the tee-totallers ought certainly to [illegible] The sad experience the [illegible] enough to make them rise from their graves [illegible] It would be much better if [illegible] would [illegible] the [illegible] deader [illegible] and the parish clerk is chiefly responsible for infamous jobbery and corruption.—*Punch.*

◆

A [illegible] EPITAPH.

Here I lie bereft of breath,
Because a cough
Carried me off;
Then a COFFIN
They carried me OFF IN.

◆

DELICACY.—A modest young lady, on being asked by a gentleman why she had a covering over her dressing bureau, replied, "I don't want to see its drawers!" The same young lady clothes a bare idea in the most becoming language.

MISCELLANEOUS.

B. C. HORN & CO.

[illegible]

HOWES & CO.

Furniture, Beds, Mattresses, &c., &c.

[illegible]

J. [illegible] HORAN & CO.

WHOLESALE DEALERS IN

FRENCH & AMERICAN BRANDIES,

PAINTS, OILS, GLASS, &C.

[illegible]

AT PRIVATE SALE

[illegible]

[illegible] AT PRIVATE SALE

[illegible]

Real Estate Broker.

[illegible]

J. O. BURTON,

[illegible]

MASON & MOULTON

Wholesale and Retail Dealers in

Paints, Oils, Varnish,

[illegible]

RAMSDELL & CO.

COAL MERCHANTS.

[illegible]

NELSON & DOBLE

BLACKSMITHS & HORSE SHOERS,

[illegible] Kearny,

[illegible]

BRYANT & KING,

[illegible]

FURNITURE.

[illegible]

DUNNE & CO.

COMMISSION MERCHANTS.

[illegible]

ANDREWS & CO.

[illegible]

NEW YORK BOSTON

[illegible]

SPANISH LANGUAGE.

[illegible]

THE PRIZE AND PREMIUM PLOUGHS AT REDUCED PRICES!

[illegible]

FRANK BAKER

[illegible]

[illegible] HAT MANUFACTORY

[illegible]

MAIN & WINCHESTER

Harness, Saddle, Bridle, Whip [illegible]

[illegible]

FURNITURE FOR SALE

AT GEORGE O. WHITNEY'S

[illegible]

MINERS' BOOK STORE.

[illegible]

COURTER'S NATIONAL HALL,

MISSION DOLORES.

[illegible]

W. [illegible] PALMER

[illegible]

HUGH McCONNELL

J. CUTLER,

SAN FRANCISCO

[illegible]

FRANKLIN PRINTING [illegible]

[illegible]

Plate 12

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[illegible]

City and County Journal.

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements.

WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY.

[illegible] SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 20, 1851. NO. [illegible]

[illegible]

Choice Selections.

Discovery of Chlorofoorm.

[illegible]

A Blind Prisoner

[illegible]

Interesting Philosophical Facts.

[illegible]

Curious Predisposition Occurrences.

[illegible]

The Coming Century.

[illegible]

Invasion of Mexico in 1846.

[illegible]

Cards.

[illegible]

Lola Montez and her Chiroforer.

[illegible]

MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCE.

[illegible]

AN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE.

[illegible]

Plate 13

Vol. II, no. 14, page 1

SUNDAY

Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 19, 1854. NO. 14

TO DEATH

Who Was Mary of Burgundy?

Choice Selections

THE SNAKE HUNTER'S REVENGE

Plate 14

Vol. II, no. 16, page 1

THE GOLDEN ERA.

SUNDAY

A Weekly Family Newspaper—Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements.

WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY.

II. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 2, 1854. NO. 16

Poetry.

Choice Selections.

San Francisco in 1854.

MONTGOMERY STREET—NO. 2.

The South American Murat;

A Theatrical Performance in Cadiz.

The Ascent of the Volga.

Scenes in Madagascar

Plate 15

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THE GOLDEN ERA

A Weekly Family Newspaper---Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements.

"WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 30, 1854.

Choice Selections.

THE OUTCAST.

San Francisco in 1854.

MONTGOMERY STREET—NO. 5.

A GHOST STORY.

THE DYING WIFE

HOME'S BRIGHT STAR

Plate 16

Vol. II, no. 40, page 1

THE GOLDEN ERA

A Weekly Family Newspaper---Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, and the Fine Arts.

"WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

II. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 17, 1854. NO.

E GOLDEN ERA.

OARD & DAGGETT

Poetry.

TO S—— G——.

OUR UNION.

A Romance of California Life.

PIKE COUNTY BILL;
OR,
The Maid of the Mountains.

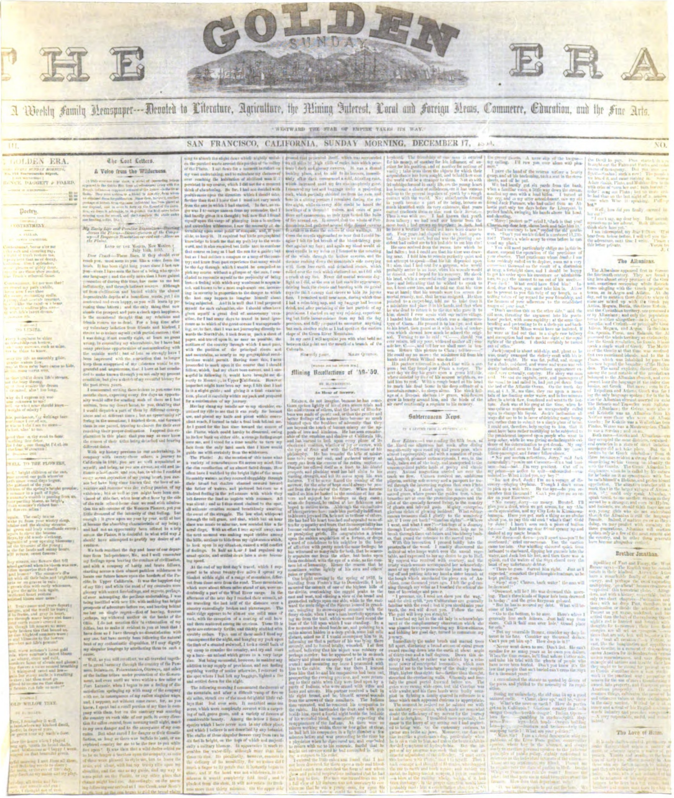
CHAPTER V.

Mining Recollections of '49-'50.

A True Story.

Plate 17

Vol. III, no. 1, page 1



THE GOLDEN ERA

SUNDAY

A Weekly Family Newspaper---Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, and the Fine Arts.

"WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

III. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 17, NO.

GOLDEN ERA.

DAGGETT & FOARD.

Poetry.

CONTENTMENT.

TO LENITA.

FAREWELL TO THE FLOWERS.

The Lost Letters.

A Voice from the Wilderness.

Mining Recollections of '49-'50.

An Hour of Sorrow.

Subterranean News.

The Albanians.

Brother Jonathan.

The Love of Home.

Plate 18

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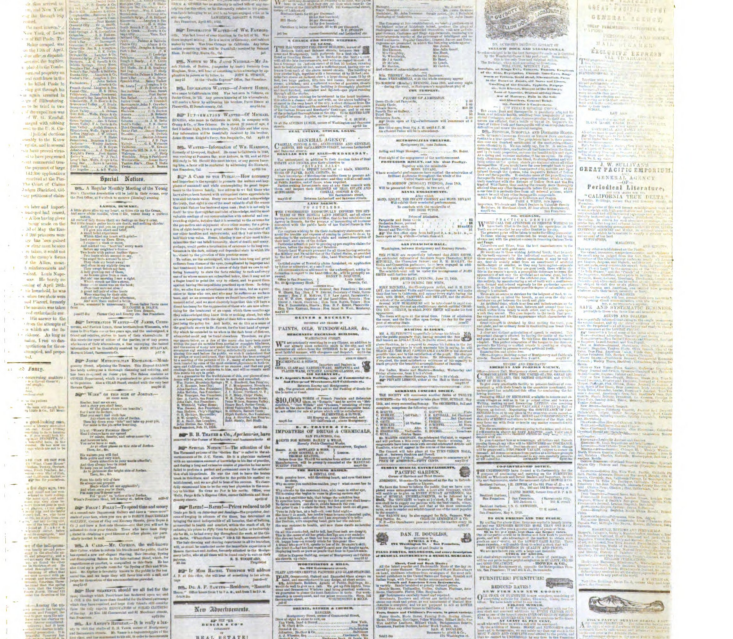

THE GOLDEN ERA.

No. 27.

Special Notices.

Special Notices.

Special Notices.

New Advertisements.

New Advertisements.

New Advertisements.

Miscellaneous.

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THE GOLDEN ERA

SUNDAY

A Weekly Family Newspaper---Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, and the Fine Arts.

"WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

III. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 9, 1855. NO

Plate 20

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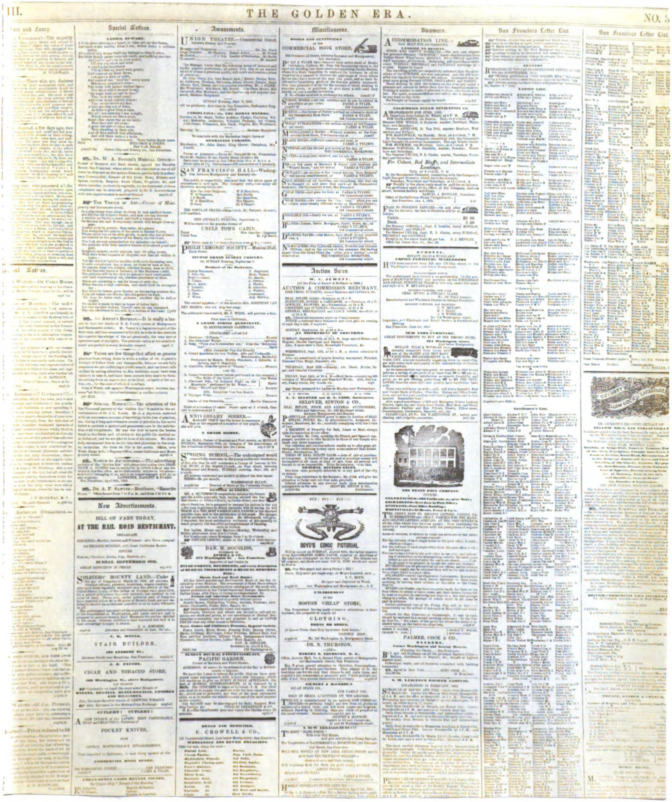
Gossip for the Week

Amusements

Plate 21

Vol. III, no. 39, page 3



III. THE GOLDEN ERA. NO. 5

Special Notices.

LADIES, BEWARE.

Dr. W. A. Styrer's Medical Office.

The Temple of Art.—Corner of Montgomery and Sacramento streets.

An Artist's Retreat.—It is really a luxury to visit the studio of R. H. Vance, corner of Montgomery and Sacramento streets.

There are few things that afford us greater pleasure than sitting down to write a notice of Dr. Guysott's Extract of Yellow Dock and Sarsaparilla.

Special Notice!!!

Notice to Advertisers.

Dr. A. F. Sawyer—Residence, "Rassette House."

New Advertisements.

BILL OF FARE TO-DAY,

AT THE RAIL ROAD RESTAURANT.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH.

SOLDIERS' BOUNTY LAND.

C. A. JOHNSON, Attorney and Counsellor at Law.

A. R. WELLS.

STAIR BUILDER,

J. R. PATTON.

CIGAR AND TOBACCO STORE,

CUTLERY! CUTLERY!

POCKET KNIVES,

COMMERCIAL BOOK STORE.

FORTY-SEVEN CASES HAVANA CIGARS.

Amusements.

UNION THEATRE.—Commercial Street, between Kearny and Dupont.

SUNDAY Evening, Sept. 9, 1855,

CORIOLANUS; or, THE ROMAN MATRON.

BOMBASTES FURIOSO.

SAN FRANCISCO HALL.—Washington, between Montgomery and Kearny sts.

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—Musical Hall, Bush Street.

SECOND GRAND SUNDAY CONCERT.

A GRAND STRING QUARTETTE.

ANNIVERSARY SOIREE.

A GRAND SOIREE.

SINGING SCHOOL.

DANCING ACADEMY.

DAN. H. DOUGLISS,

PACIFIC GARDEN,

E. CROWELL & CO.,

Miscellaneous.

BOOKS AND STATIONERY AT THE COMMERCIAL BOOK STORE,

PARKS & TYLER,

Auction Sales.

W. L. JEWETT,

AUCTION & COMMISSION MERCHANT,

SELOVER, SINTON & CO.,

FUN! FUN!! FUN!!!

BOYD'S COMIC PICTORIAL.

BOSTON CHEAP STORE,

CLOTHING,

DR. N. THURSTON,

GILBERT & McCOMBS,

A NEW ARRANGEMENT!!!

Steamers.

ACCOMMODATION LINE.

CALIFORNIA STEAM NAVIGATION CO.

For Colusa, Red Bluffs, and Intermediate Landings.

FARE TO STOCKTON REDUCED.

Cabin	$6 00
Deck	3 00

REMOVAL.

BRYANT, ELLIS & WINEGAR'S

EMPIRE FURNITURE WAREROOMS

NEW YORK FURNITURE.

THE PENNY POST COMPANY.

PALMER, COOK & CO.,

BANKERS.

S. W. LANGTON'S PIONEER EXPRESS.

San Francisco Letter List.

LETTERS

LADIES' LIST.

Gentlemen's List.

San Francisco Letter List.

C. L. WELLER,

GUYSOTT'S YELLOW DOCK & SARSAPARILLA

BRITISH COMMERCIAL LIFE INSURANCE

Fact and Fancy.

Special Notices.

Plate 22

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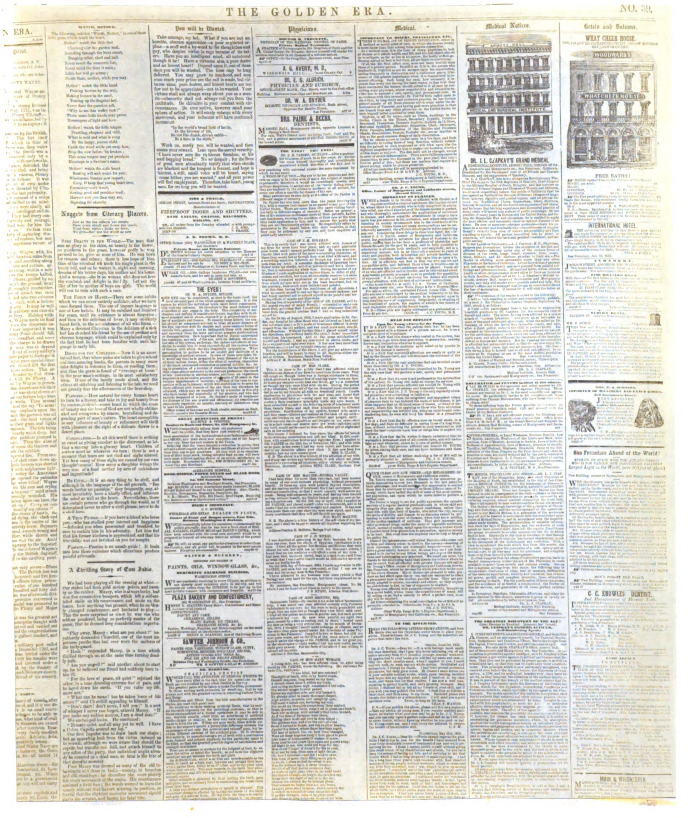

THE GOLDEN ERA. NO. 39.

WATCH, MOTHER.

The following, entitled "Watch, Mother," is one of those little gems which touch the heart.

Mother! watch the little feet
Climbing o'er the garden wall,
Bounding through the busy street,
Ranging cellar, shed and hall.
Never count the moments lost,
Never mind the time it costs;
Little feet will go astray;
Guide them, mother, while you may.

Mother! watch the little hand
Picking berries by the way,
Making houses in the sand,
Tossing up the fragrant hay.
Never dare the question ask,
"Why to me this weary task?"
These same little hands may prove
Messengers of light and love.

Mother! watch the little tongue
Prattling, eloquent and wild,
What is said and what is sung
By the happy, joyous child.
Catch the word while yet unspoken,
Stop the vow before 'tis broken;
This same tongue may yet proclaim
Blessings in a Saviour's name.

Mother! watch the little heart
Beating soft and warm for you;
Wholesome lessons now impart;
Keep, O keep that young heart true,
Extracting every weed,
Sowing good and precious seed;
Harvest rich you then may see,
Ripening for eternity.

Nuggets from Literary Placers.

Just as the bee collects her sweets
From every shrub and flower she meets,
What from various books we drew,
We give—tho' not the whole as new.

SEEK BEAUTY IN THE WORLD.—The man that sees no glory in the skies, no beauty in the flower, no goodness in the grass, however godly he may pretend to be, give us none of him. He was born for treason and crime; there is less hope of him, than of the criminal who tends his single plant in the lonely cell, and as he waters it, night and morning, dreams of his better days, his mother and his home. And a woman—she is no woman who does not love the rosebush and delight in the lily. Let not the like of her be mother of boys and girls. The world will run to ruin with such a race.

THE FORCE OF HABIT.—There are some habits which we can never entirely annihilate, after we have once formed them. The use of impure language is one of these habits. It may be subdued and slumber for years, until its existence is almost forgotten; and then in the delirium of fever, it may suddenly burst forth, to the astonishment of all who listen.—Many a devoted Christian in the delirium of a sick bed has shocked his friend by the use of profane and obscene language, which could be explained only by the fact that he had been familiar with such language in early life.

BOOKS FOR THE CHILDREN.—Now it is an ascertained fact, that where pains are taken to give school children amusing books, the parents in many cases take delight in listening to them, or reading them; and thus the germ is found of "evenings at home" in the poor man's cottage, in its most satisfactory form. If one of the family reads aloud, and the others sit stitching and listening to the tale, we need not greatly fear the allurements of the beer-shop.

FLOWERS.—How natural for every human heart to turn to a flower, and take in joy and beauty from its contemplation!—every heart in which the sense of beauty and the love of God are not wholly obliterated and overgrown by coarse, brutalizing and degrading part of man's nature. The heart susceptible to any influence of beauty or refinement will thrill with pleasure at the sight of a delicate flower in a desert place.

CONSOLATION.—In all this world there is nothing so sweet as giving comfort to the distressed, as letting a sun-ray into a gloomy heart. Children of sorrow meet us wherever we turn; there is not a moment that tears are not shed and sighs uttered. Yet how many of these sighs are caused by our own thoughtlessness! How many a daughter wrings the very soul of a fond mother by acts of unkindness and ingratitude!

BE CIVIL.—It is an easy thing to be civil, and although in the language of the old proverb, "fine words butter no parsnips," they frequently, nay, almost invariably, have a kindly effect, and influence the mind as well as the heart. Nevertheless, there are certain persons who go through the world, as if determined never to utter a civil phrase, never to do a civil turn.

A TRUE FRIEND.—If you have a friend who loves you—who has studied your interest and happiness—defended you when persecuted and troubled, be sure to sustain him in his adversity. Let him feel that his former kindness is appreciated, and that his friendship was not lavished on you for nought.

PASSION.—Passion is an unsafe guide! It leads men into those extremes which oftentimes produce painful rebounds.

A Thrilling Story of East India.

We had been playing all the evening at whist.—Our stakes had been gold mohur points, and twenty on the rubber. Maxey, who is always lucky, had won five consecutive bumpers, which left a self-satisfied smile on his countenance, and made us, the losers, look anything but pleased, when he suddenly changed countenance, and hesitated to play.—This the more surprised us since he was one who seldom pondered, being so perfectly master of the game, that he deemed long considerations superfluous.

"Play away, Maxey; what are you about?" impatiently demanded Churchill, one of the most impetuous youths that had ever worn the uniform of the body-guard.

"Hush!" responded Maxey, in a tone which thrilled through us, at the same time turning deadly pale.

"Are you unwell?" said another, about to start up, for he believed our friend had suddenly been taken ill.

"For the love of peace, sit quiet!" rejoined the other, in a tone denoting extreme fear of pain, and he layed down his cards. "If you value my life, move not."

"What can he mean? has he taken leave of his senses?" said Churchill appealing to himself.

"Don't start! don't move, I tell you!" In a sort of whisper I never can forget, uttered Maxey. "If you make any sudden motion, I am a dead man!"

We exchanged looks. He continued:

"Remain quiet, and all may yet be well. I have a Cobra Capella around my leg."

Our first impulse was to draw back our chairs; but an appealing look from the victim induced us to remain, although we were aware that should the reptile but transfer one fold, and attach himself to any other of the party, that individual might already be counted as a dead man, so fatal is the bite of that dreadful monster.

Poor Maxey was dressed as many of the old inhabitants still dress in India—namely, in breeches and silk stockings; he therefore the more plainly felt every movement of the snake. His countenance assumed a livid hue; the words seemed to leave the mouth without that feature altering its position, so fearful that the slightest muscular movement should alarm the serpent, and hasten his fatal bite.

You will be Wanted.

Take courage, my lad. What if you are but an humble, obscure apprentice—a poor neglected orphan—a scoff and a by-word to the thoughtless and gay, who despise virtue in rags because of its tatters. Have you an intelligent mind, all untutored though it be? Have a virtuous aim, a pure desire and an honest heart? Depend upon it, one of these days you will be wanted. The time may be long deferred. You may grow to manhood, and may even reach your prime ere the call is made, but virtuous aims, pure desires, and honest hearts are too few not to be appreciated—not to be wanted. Your virtues shall not always wrap about you as a mantle—obscurity shall not always veil you from the multitude. Be chivalric in your combat with circumstances. Be ever active, however small your sphere of action. It will surely enlarge with every movement, and your influence will have continual increment.

"In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle—
Be a hero in the strife."

Work on, surely you will be wanted, and then comes your reward. Lean upon the sacred veracity: "I have never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread." Never despair; for the lives of good men abundantly testify that when clouds are blackest and the tempest is fiercest, and hope is faintest, a still, small voice will be heard, saying "come hither, you are wanted," and all your power will find employment. Therefore, take heart, young man, for ere long you will be wanted.

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THE EYES!
DR. W. A. SNYDER, OCULIST.

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CASE OF WM. CLARK.

Medical.

IMPORTANT TO MINERS, TRAVELLERS, ETC.

DR. J. C. YOUNG,

IMPORTANT TO FEMALES.

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TO THE AFFLICTED.

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THE GREATEST DISCOVERY OF THE AGE!

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WOODWARD'S
WHAT CHEER HOUSE

FREE BATHS!

INTERNATIONAL HOTEL.

ALHAMBRA.

FINE BILLIARD ROOM,

San Francisco Ahead of the World!

C. C. KNOWLES DENTIST,

MAIN & WINCHESTER

Plate 23

Vol. I, no. 17, page 1: "Steamer Edition"

[illegible] Gold [illegible]

STEAMER EDITION.

FOR CIRCULATION IN THE ATLANTIC STATES, EUROPE, CHINA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Miscellanies.

Volume 1. San Francisco, Friday Morning, April 15, 1853. Number 17.

Poetry.

Choice Selections.

Wreck and Burning of the Steamship **INDEPENDENCE.**

[Engraved Expressly for the use of THE GOLD HILL NEWS, from a Sketch taken by a lady of San Francisco, on board.]

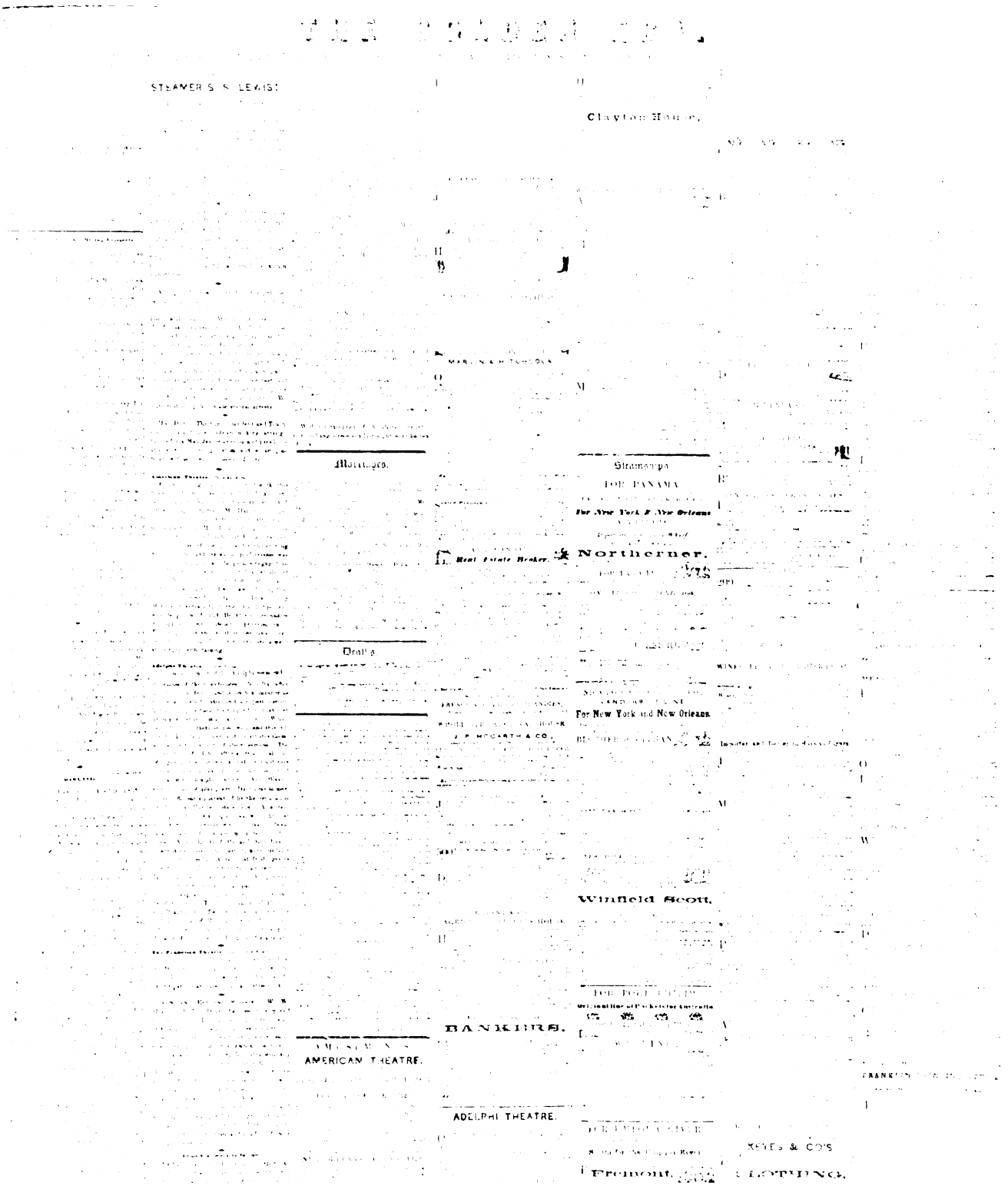
Plate 24

Vol. I, no. 17, page 2: "Steamer Edition"

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Plate 25

Vol. I, no. 17, page 3: "Steamer Edition"



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Steamships

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Northerner.

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Winfield Scott,

BANKERS.

AMERICAN THEATRE.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

Fremont,

KEYES & CO'S

CLOTHING.

Plate 26

Vol. I, no. 17, page 4: "Steamer Edition"

THE GOLDEN ERA

The Golden Era.

Miscellaneous.

Marriages.

Deaths.

Plate 27

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1853, page 1, top left

THE GOLDEN ERA PICTORIAL

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

J. MACDONOUGH PARKS, WILLIS D. BARNEY, Editors and Proprietors.

TERMS, ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusements

"WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

VOL. II. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY, 1854. NO.

Poetry.

THE POWER OF WAR.

[illegible]

THE GATHERING.

[illegible]

THE RENDEZVOUS OF THE FILIBUSTERS!

(SAN ST. LUCAS.)

(From a recent Sketch taken expressly for the Golden Era)

The spot represented by the above, is locke as the village of Lorete, and is situated in the extreme Southern part of the State of Lower California, about 200 miles from the Cape, and 60 miles from the Gulf of California. It is the place selected by them for a rendezvous of the different bodies about going thither, and preparing for the expedition.

The village contains but few houses, which are roughly built of adobe, with thatched roofs; but the people are hospitable, and ship has occasionally touched there, for the purpose of supplying the Mission of Lorete, which is the principal place in the Province. The occupations are very nearly in human form the aborigines, by much used by the settlers for days. The country around is a rocky sp of rolling ridges, and is fertile, which is pulsiness with cattle, and the cultivation of several monthly Americans, where immense herds of the cattle and horses had an abundance of good grass for the year round. As might be expected, the climate is delightful, and the people are quaint, indolent and happy.

THE CITY OF STOCKTON.

The above is a very correct view of "the City of Hospitality," as Sonora-town approaching it from the mouth of the principal Mining town which it is situated. Stockton, notwithstanding the disadvantages of its location, is destined to be a city of importance, commanding, as it does, a great portion of the trade of the Southern Mines. It is now the fourth city in the State in point of population and business, and is rapidly increasing in both.

Scientific Extract.

A Farm.

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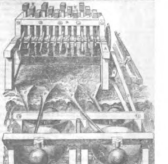


DERBAN'S QUARTZ CRUSHING AND AMALGAMATING MACHINE

Engraved for an original Sketch.

It is a pleasure to be enabled to present to our readers an complete representation of Derban's Quartz Crushing and Amalgamating Machine. It is formed with a view of combining the chief characteristics of both stamps, even amalgamated into the chute, and it is believed to perform the operation of crushing and amalgamating the quartz, in a more perfect manner than any other machine. It is already in operation in some of the most valuable quartz mines in Sonora county, and the most gratifying results.

BURNING OF THE SARGENTE BRIGG.

We give in the above a view of the brigg Sargente and Sacramento, as she appeared on fire, on the morning of the 3rd of December last, while lying at the wharf, in the Sacramento city, with a cargo of lumber, and the flames spread with the rapidity of a prairie conflagration, so that she was soon a mass of flames, and was cut loose from the wharf, and drifted down the river, where she was burned to the ground.

[illegible]

Ten village, and was protected for years by a stockade, which, however, now has been entirely burned by the Native Mexicans.

Plate 28

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 1, bottom right

THE RENDEZVOUS OF THE FILIBUSTERS;

(CAPE ST. LUCAS.)

(From a recent Sketch taken expressly for the Golden Era)

The spot represented by the above, is known as the village of Lucas, and is situated in the extreme Southern part of the State of Loretolapas, Lower California, between the village of San Jose and Cape St. Lucas. It is here that the 'Filibusters' landed and organized previous to their march upon La Paz, and it is also the place selected by them for a rendezvous of the different bodies about going there.

The village contains but few houses, which are roughly built of *adobes*, with thatched roofs; but the people are hospitable, and with few exceptions are ever ready to bestow upon the stranger every comfort within their reach. The cactus here grows to the height of from 75 to 100 feet, and its fruit, which is palatable and nutritious, is much used by the natives for food. The country around it is made up of rolling hills and pleasant and fertile valleys, over which are dotted the residences of several wealthy *Rancheros*, whose immense herds of fine cattle and horses find an abundance of green grass the year round. As might be expected, the climate is delightful, and the people are ignorant, indolent and happy.

are good; they pierce the earth with a purpose—they balance the firm green stem, and supply it momentarily with healthy life."

And he said of the flower—"it is useless, taking no hold on anything, swinging aimlessly in the unreal air."

So he crushed the flower, and mixed its leaves with the soil, to enrich those roots which day by day clasped the earth more surely, and called up sturdier strength to the one bare stem; but if ever the gardner found his plant unconsciously yearning into bloom, he stripped it, and trampled such needless glory into the clay.

So the tree drew all its life *from* beneath, and throve in its single existence; but it pleased no eye, gladdened no heart, and the garden was not more lovely because it had been planted.

But another said of the flower, "*this* alone is worthy; it lives heavenward, drawing its ethereal essence from air and sun, disdaining sustenance from the gross, unlovely clay."

He parted root from blossom, spurning the meaner, and exalting his crimson wonder to live out its own pure life in its native ether.

Alas! the glory faded; wind and sun were too rare for a plant which had no roots in earth, and after an hour the garden was not more lovely because of its coming.

Then came a third, and said of root and leaf and blossom, "*all* are worthy; roots for the earth to nourish the branches, branch and stem to balance the flowers, flowers to stand in the sun with listening upturned faces, feeding on nature's finer essences, receiving her subtler secrets, resolving the deepest problems of life into fragrance, and color, and form."

The actual, without the ideal, is mean and unsightly; the ideal which has not its roots planted deep in our common humanity, is yet worthless and vain.

BERDAN'S QUARTZ CRUSHING AND AMALGAMATING MACHINE.

Engraved from an original Sketch.

It is a pleasure to be enabled to present to our readers so complete a representation of "Berdan's Quartz Crushing and Amalgamating Machine." It is beyond doubt, one of the most important inventions connected with mining, ever introduced into the State, and it is destined to produce a complete revolution in quartz mining in California, and to develop the vast riches of this branch of mining. It is already in operation in some of the most valuable quartz leads in Nevada county, and works with the most gratifying success.

THE CITY OF STOCKTON.

The above is a very correct view of "the City of Sloughs," as beheld upon approaching it from the mouth of the principal Slough upon which it is situated. Stockton, notwithstanding the disadvantages of its location, is destined to be a city of importance, commanding as it does, a great portion of the trade of the Southern Mines. It is now the fourth city in the State in point of population and business, and is rapidly increasing in both.

BURNING OF THE BASSETTE HOUSE.

We give the above as one of the most awful conflagrations ever witnessed in California. Although the flames were confined within the compass of a square, yet the combustibility of the buildings was such as to render the scene truly terrific. The "Bassette" was a large wooden building of four stories, and the flames spread with the most frightful rapidity, mounting to a height that they almost reached the clouds. Although the building was filled with lodgers at the time, yet the bones of but two men were found in the ruins. The escape of its occupants was miraculous.

THERE was a famous problem among the Stoics, which ran thus: "When a man say, 'I lie,' does he lie or does he not? If he lie, he speaks the truth; if he speaks the truth, he lies." Many were the profound works written on this wonderful question. Chrysippus favored the world with no less than six; and Philetus studied himself to death in his vain attempt to solve it.

THE villain who was arrested for passing counterfeit copper coins, has been sentenced to the PENNY-tentiary.

LET our young men read the following: "No wreck is so shocking to behold as that of a dissolute young man. On the person of the debauchee, inebriate, infamy is written. How Nature hangs labels over him to testify her disgust at his example. How she loosens all his joints, sends tremors along his muscles, and bends forward his frame! The wretch, whose life-long pleasure it has been to debase himself, and to debauch others; whose heart has been with sin so spotted that it is black all over, is an affront to the heart of the unblemished."

OAKLAND.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY.

This delightful little village is rapidly gaining favorable notoriety with the citizens of San Francisco, as a resort for a day of leisure from the strife of business and the hum of city life.

YERBA BUENA CEMETERY.

The grounds of the Cemetery were set apart for its present use, in the survey of the city, in the latter part of 1849, and the first interments were made in it in March, 1850. It has now nearly five thousand occupants, although many bodies have been exhumed and sent to the Atlantic States for final interment.

Plate 29

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 2

THE GOLDEN ERA.

The Golden Era.

SAN FRANCISCO:

Fortification of Port Point.

Rough and Ready Correspondence

The Interior.

Plate 29

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 2

THE GOLDEN ERA.

The Golden Era.

SAN FRANCISCO:

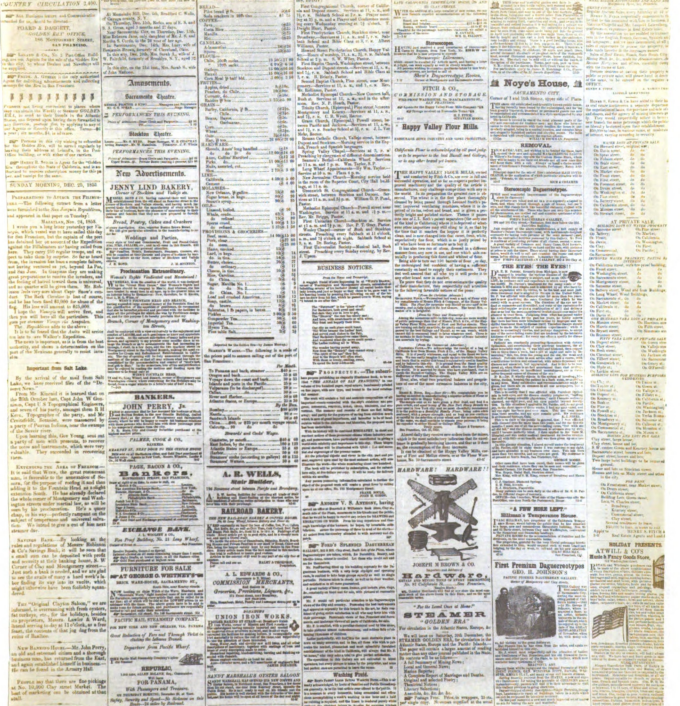
Fortification of Port Point.

Rough and Ready Correspondence.

The Interior.

Plate 30

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 3



THE GOLDEN ERA.

Volume II. The Golden Era. Number

Deaths.

Whole Prices Current.

Amusements.

Sacramento Theatre.

New Advertisements.

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EXCELSIOR BANK.

A. H. WELLS.

RAILROAD BAKERY.

Miscellaneous.

CENTRAL HOTEL.

Horoscopes.

Miscellaneous.

Cedar Garden Ranch for Sale.

Noye's House.

Happy Valley Flour Mills.

REMOVAL.

Horoscopic Diagnosis.

THE EYE! THE EYE!

HARDWARE! HARDWARE!

HARGWARG.

STEAMER.

"A FINE BOAT LIST"

First Premium Daguerreotypes

REAL ESTATE SALES

R. S. FITCH & CO

HOLIDAY PRESENTS

ATWELL & COY

Hunts & Pinney Goods Store.

Plate 31

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 4

PICTORIAL GOLDEN ERA.

HAPPY VALLEY, IN 1849.

(recognized by any one who visited San Francisco in 1849. The nearer years of foreground in the sight, is not far from the present location of the new Mission or Custom House. If any one now goes down to the city, the wonderful changes within the past four years cannot fail to be happy contrast. There is now the hurried on street bridge of crossing buildings—while the site of Rincon is heard all around.

Disasters on the Pacific Coast during the year 1853.

WRECK OF THE "TENNESSEE."

(As she appeared on the third day after going ashore.)

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company's Steamer "TENNESSEE," more where and was wrecked near the entrance of the Bay of San Francisco, on the morning of the 3rd of Jan. 1853. The Steamer was a fine sailer, and her wreck a great loss to the company.

LOSS OF THE "INDEPENDENCE."

The Nicaragua Steamship Company's Steamer INDEPENDENCE we lost on the 10th of February, 1853, on a Southern point of Nicaragua Island, of the coast of Lower California. This was one of the most and disasters that ever occurred on the Pacific Coast, and is one which will long be remembered by the people in San Francisco, for many a year to come. Leaving the Bay of San Francisco, at 4 o'clock, on the 3rd of Jan. 1853, the Independence would arrive at San Juan del Sur, on the Nicaragua, and Lower-Coast, on the morning of the 10th, the weather was mild, the sea smooth, and the passengers were in good spirits, and the Captain was in good hopes of a speedy and safe passage. Everything of a light nature and dancing continued for the passengers to sing by, and men, women, and children, with shouts and laughter, plunged in after them. The scene was appalling and 150 of the passengers and crew were killed instead in the Bosom or deep-sea. Out of the survivors, in describing the scene, said the "Madam, going to meet their Dear husbands, Some their offspring into the world.

Wives, Girls and Sweethearts.

How many "California" and "Spanish" wives, who pass in solitude, lamenting the loss of their mates, would have now been comfortable and happy, could they have obtained and had in letter the advice contained in the following heroic letters:

How often we hear a man say, I am going to California, Australia, or some where else, and I will be back in course of two years, and the same time, in some one's letter of him, I am not happy, I am not, I have been unfortunate in business, and I have made up my mind to try my luck in California, or Australia, or some other place. While fortune favored me, I was more than whose I thought to be my friends, but when the ends turned, they also turned the cold shoulder against me. My wife, she that I left behind, she was my only friend, and encouraging me, was the first to point the finger of scorn and say it is your own fault, you have left us, and we are now in poverty—I, if you, you have left us, and your own business as they have, you would not be where you are now. These and other like instructions often drive a man to desperation, and he seeks to drown the memory of living wedded at home. He may have children that he loves; he cannot reply life with them as he would; he may love them as dearly as ever, yet home is to him a place of misery, and he seeks for happiness elsewhere. Now I would say to all such wives, sisters, and in fact all friends, if you love, if you wish, if you ought, remember that he is very to be treated. A little word continually chewed, or jeer rather a word that they may have had. Then be cautious; man is but human, and he is liable to err, he is liable, from going wrong, even most true, with a smile, and with the kiss of affection there may be a tear, and the tear may be a sigh, and the sigh may be a groan, and he may be unfortunate enough to begin his career, and ruin himself and children from an unhappy fate. Be cautious, be cautious, be cautious, and a little word that may sting, it is to late a little word that may heal him.

F. F. Sunday Dispatch.

I had a vision in my sleep last night—

A vision strange, and somewhat bright,
Methought I saw living Mrs. Brown the
Wife of a man who left her, and left the money
And he turned out a perfect bit of dung,
Making her take at sixty on the school,
Her husband, who was a perfect fool,
Who had between one hundred and two thousand
Dollars, and left her in poverty and woe.
One of her most intimate friends
Was a young lady, who was married
And living three miles distant off her,
I was, and heard my friend of a visit
I had been reading, thought I, I will go.

Decorum is the author of the following beautiful lines:

Thy single the moment's pain than years
Dying at dawn on the silent beach
Of the Pacific, and the sea
The sight of dying, but it pleased me,
For I did not bring home the cause and day,
To sang by my side—sang in my ear,
"Thrice the hurried waits we hold—
Thrice the sun shall rise and set—
Ere we wed the maiden, sister, mother
But left it alone with the, long year.

MINERS' TEN COMMANDMENTS.

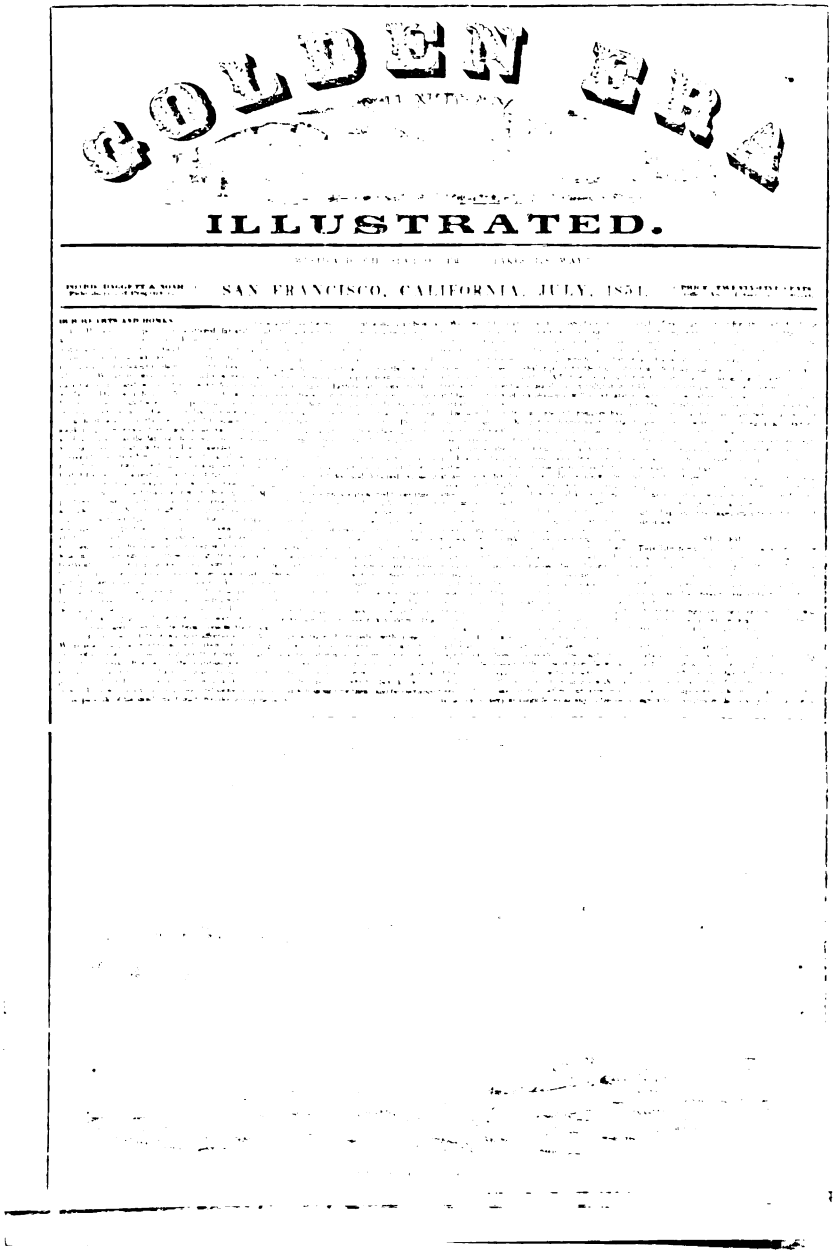
A NEW YEAR'S GIFT—DEDICATED A PARABLE, TO SAINT AND SINNER.

MINERS' TEN COMMANDMENTS.

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT—DEDICATED A PARABLE, TO SAINT AND SINNER.

Plate 32

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 1



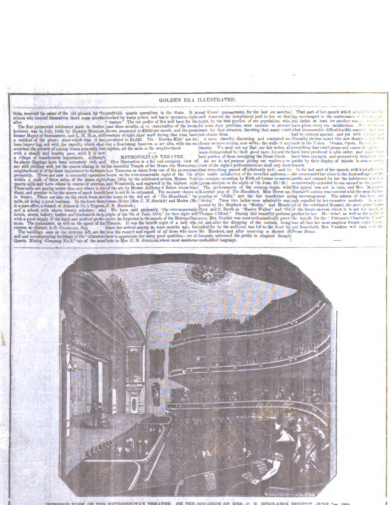
GOLDEN ERA

ILLUSTRATED.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, JULY, 1854.

Plate 33

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 2



GOLDEN ERA ILLUSTRATED.

NEW CATHEDRAL NAVES.

METROPOLITAN THEATRE.

INTERIOR VIEW OF THE METROPOLITAN THEATRE, ON THE OCCASION OF MRS. C. N. SINCLAIRE BENEFIT, JUNE 7TH, 1854.

Plate 34

The <u>Golden</u> <u>Era</u> Illustrated, July, 1854, page 3

GOLDEN ERA ILLUSTRATED.

OFFICERS.—William H. Patten, Foreman.
A. Macabee, 1st. Asst.
Wm. T. Chase, 2d. do.
Wm. S. Bird, Secretary.
Fred. Lewis, Treasurer.
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DELEGATES—J. McCarty. T. J. L. Smiley.

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J B Bidleman,
A J Tobias,
T K Battelle,
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Chas Plummer,
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F A Hussey,
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J Bound.

GEN. JOHN A. SUTTER—HOCK FARM.

There is not a more delightful spot in all Northern California than Hock Farm, the residence of the good Old Pioneer, Gen. John A. Sutter. It lies on the right bank of the Rio de las Plumas—Anglice, River of Feathers, and, very poetically, named Feather River, by the unpoetical Yankee gold miners—on the verge of a broad and fertile prairie, whose agricultural capabilities, though surpassingly great, have not yet been but slightly developed. Some day, not far distant, it will rival, in floral wealth and beauty, the richest imaginings of the poet of Lalla Rookh, who sang the praises of the *Elysian-like* vales of Cashmere. There is a world of beauty and youthful promise in the broad, *rich acres* of Hock Farm—but, there is still a greater beauty to be met on its threshold, in the honest but unostentatious hospitality of its master. What are blooming gardens, fields of golden wheat and groves of umbrageous oaks, if unconsecrated by the tones and the grasp of hospitable greeting? Gen. Sutter deserves a princely home, for his heart is princely. We use the word "princely" in a poetical, not a republican sense, and we feel, while we say it, that a better, truer, or purer republican than the "Old Pioneer," exists not in all California.

It is not necessary for us to speak of the generous welcome we received. He rambled with us through his spacious vineyard, densely covered with luxuriant vines, from which a bounteous vintage will soon be yielded. He showed us his flower garden—one grand wilderness of floral beauty—and discanted with the enthusiasm of a romantic arborist, upon the thrifty promise of his fruit trees. There were plantations of the peach, the apricot, the nectarine, the orange, the lemon, the fig, the pomegranate, the apple, the cherry, the plum, and all else that fills the long schedule of Pomona's treasures.

In the midst of the flowery lawn, in front of the mansion, is planted a flag-staff, from which the Pioneer, "full many a time and oft," causes the "Stars and Stripes" to be flung to the breeze; and at the foot of this flagstaff, is a grassy mound, on which is mounted a brass field-piece, of somewhat peculiar workmanship. That field-piece has a history, and here it is:

It was cast in St. Petersburgh, in 1804. In 1812, it belched its thunders against the invasion of Napoleon, and afterwards lent its brazen throat to assist in the jubilations of the Russians over the retreat and consequent downfall of their dreaded enemy. It was afterwards sold by the government to the 'Russian American Company,' on the North West Coast, and was sent, along with a great variety of other warlike engines, to Sitka. Thence it was sent to Fort Ross, on the coast of California. When the "Russian American Company" sold their possessions on the coast of New Albion to General Sutter, he became the owner of this field-piece. It was employed by him in the campaign under Gen. Micheltorena, against the rebels in 1845. The first shot, fired from it in that service, broke the wheel of General Castro's artillery carriage. It afterwards fell into the hands of the native Californians, who ought to have surrendered it, along with many other captured articles, to Gen. Sutter, after the capitulation of the Mexican General—but Castro did not observe the stipulations to which he had subscribed, and retained the cannon—and when Col. Fremont came into the country, this identical field-piece was employed against him by the Mexican forces. At last, by the fortunes of war it fell into the hands of the Americans, for whom it did good service at Mesa. Com. Stockton was so well pleased with its performance, that he christened it "Sutter," and, when it was fired and did good execution, the volunteers shouted "Hurrah for Old Sutter!" After the close of the Mexican war, the military Governor of California, Colonel Mason, returned "Old Sutter" to her legitimate owner.—*Marysville Herald.*

MISS CATHERINE HAYES' FIRST CONCERT IN MUSICAL HALL, BUSH STREET.

Plate 35

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 4

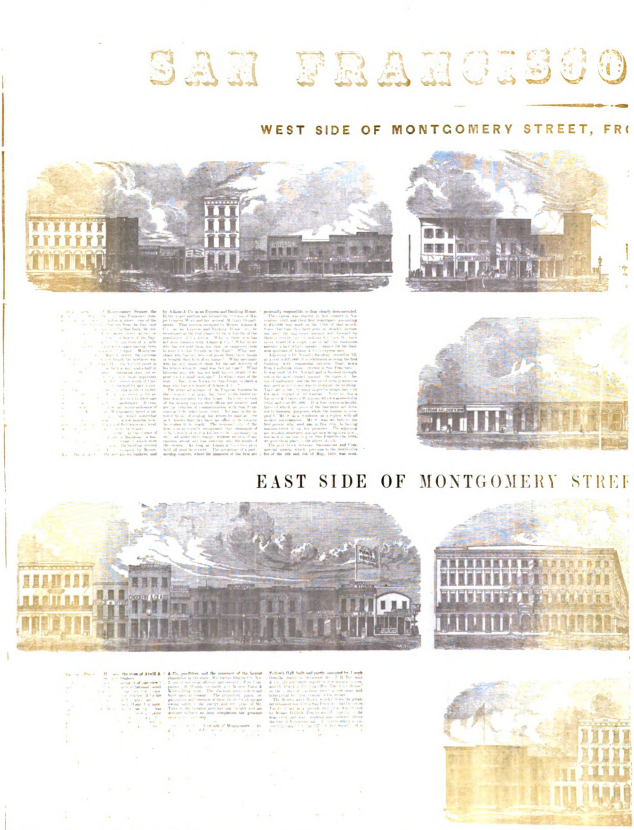


Plate 36

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 5

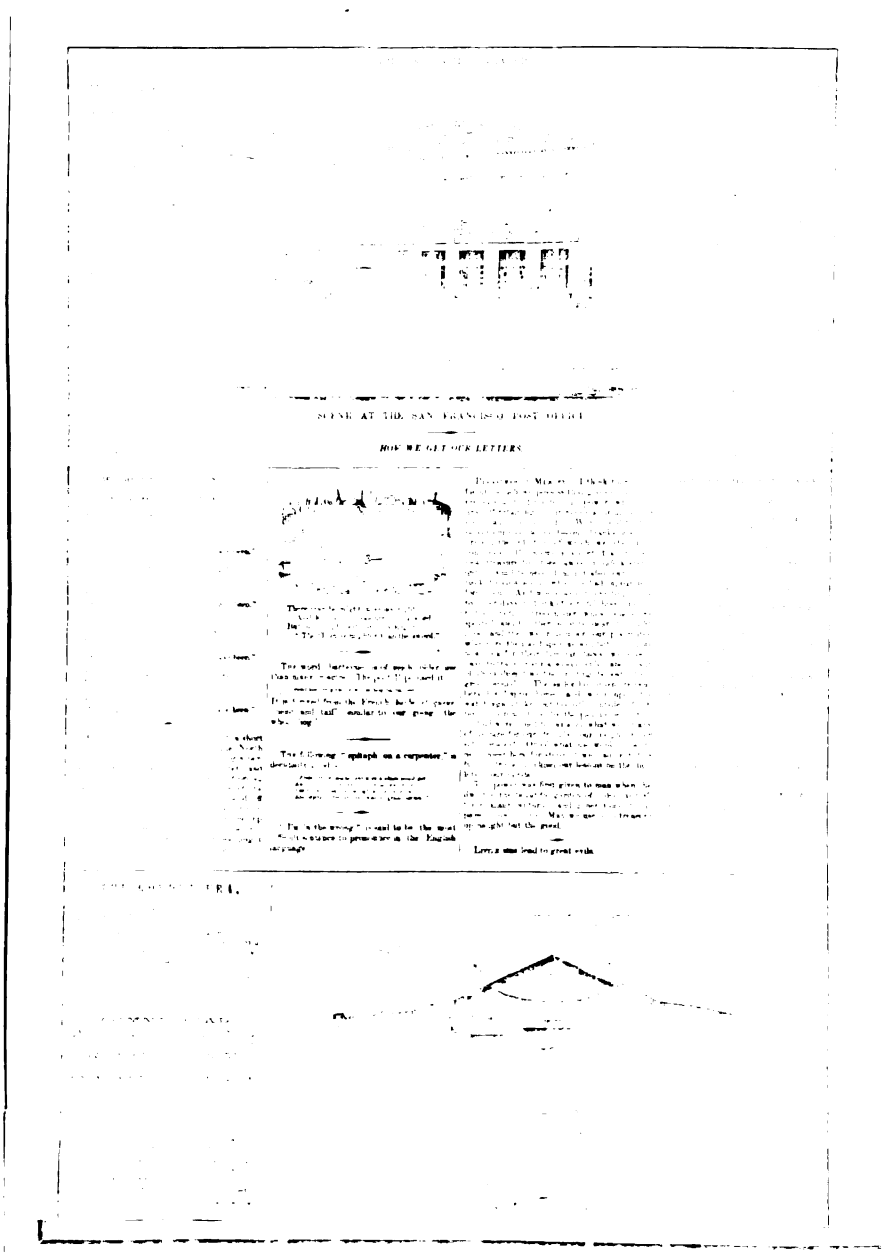
ILLUSTRATED.

OM CALIFORNIA STREET TO JACKSON.

:T, FROM JACKSON TO CALIFORNIA.

Plate 37

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 6



SCENE AT THE SAN FRANCISCO POST OFFICE

HOW WE GET OUR LETTERS

PART I

Introduction and Setting

INTRODUCTION AND SETTING

The cold, winter rains which had been drenching San Francisco for days undoubtedly served to strengthen the opinion of two erstwhile miners that publishing San Francisco's first literary journal would be more rewarding than digging in the rain-soaked, bone-chilling, fever-producing gold mines of California. This wet, raw Sunday morning (December 19, 1852) was obviously a day for being indoors. As Rollin M. Daggett and J. Macdonough Foard, editors and publishers of the just-established Golden Era, peered out from the shelter of their rented publication offices at 186 Montgomery Street, they envisioned a flourishing California literature which would soon supply a local outlet with distinctly Western productions. The Golden Era was created to be this outlet when on December 19, 1852, it joined the twelve daily, two tri-weekly (both French), and six other weekly (three religious, one commercial, one French, and one Spanish) papers struggling for survival in the swelling tide of San Francisco's growth.

Most of them soon died, but the Golden Era endured to become the leading literary journal in the early West.

San Francisco has a history unlike that of any other place in the world. Until 1776, when the Spanish established a mission and presidio there, San Francisco had remained uninhabited, except for occasional Indians and explorers who stopped there briefly. A Te Deum service on September 17, 1776, marked the founding of the Spanish presidio, which was supported a few days later on November 9, the day of Saint Francis, by the establishment of a mission. Like the other Spanish missions in California, which totaled eighteen by 1802, the San Francisco establishment strove to convert the surrounding Indians to Roman Catholicism and to teach them rudimentary farming. These eighteen missions increased in converts and cattle until 1825, when the San Francisco mission possessed land "forty leagues in circumference. Its stock, in 1825, consisted of 76,000 head of cattle, 950 tame horses, 2,000 breeding-mares, 84 stud of choice breed, 820 mules, 79,000 sheep, 2,000 hogs, 456 yoke of working-oxen, 18,000 bushels of wheat and barley, $35,000 in merchandise, and $25,000 in specie."[1]

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[1]Walter Colton, The Land of Gold; or, Three Years in California (Boston, 1886), p. 441.

After 1825 the missions gradually lost power and possessions in the transition from Spanish to Mexican authorities, who refused to support them. The mission period was over by 1845, when several were sold at public auction, leaving the Indian converts to wander idle and wretched over the country, although ordered by the weak Mexican government to return to the cultivation of the lands. Californians soon rejected Mexican rule and joined the United States, entering the Union as a state in 1850 without having first been a territory.

The commercial growth of San Francisco began in 1835, when Captain W. A. Richardson, the first harbormaster, erected the first house in Yerba Buena (Spanish for "good herb"), the early name of San Francisco. This same building was described by Richard Dana in Two Years Before the Mast: "There was no other [i.e., except the presidio and the mission] habitation on this side of the bay, except a shanty of rough boards put up by a man named Richardson, who was doing a little trading between the vessels and the Indians."[2]

In May of 1836, Jacob Primer Leese opened the second mercantile establishment. While Leese was finishing his frame house, Captain Richardson journeyed the thirty-five miles to Sonoma to invite all the leading citizens to a July

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[2]Modern Library edition (New York, 1936), p. 236.

4 celebration to commemorate the independence of the United States and to give Mr. Leese a house-warming. Colored bunting provided a festive touch as the Mexican and American flags flew side by side, the first display of the American flag at Yerba Buena. Captain Hinckley, who always kept a few musicians, furnished "the most stylish orchestra, perhaps, ever before heard in California. . . . This consisted of a clarionet, flute, violin, drum, fife and bugle; besides two small six pounders to form the bass, and to add their emphatic roar to the swelling din, when a toast of more than usual importance should be given."[3] The sixty celebrants, including General M. G. Vallejo and all the principal families from the surrounding area, were kept merry by an ample supply and variety of liquors. Mr. Leese, displaying Yankee enterprise, a few days later landed merchandise which the grateful guests and admiring but uninvited Indians and poor whites flocked to buy. In less than a year Leese married General Vallejo's sister, who on April 15, 1838, gave birth to Rosalie Leese, the first child born in Yerba Buena.

Yerba Buena continued as a center for hide trading until 1846, when the Hudson's Bay Company, which had bought Leese out, moved away. At the same time, however, the

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[3]Frank Soulé, John H. Gihon, and James Nisbet, The Annals of San Francisco (New York, 1855), p. 169. Unless otherwise identified, subsequent quotations in this chapter are from this source.

number of inhabitants began to increase as a result of the political events which were to bring California under United States rule. "By mid-summer of 1846, the population numbered upwards of two hundred, and the buildings of all kinds had increased to fifty." In January, 1847, Yerba Buena was officially renamed San Francisco, which had by April seventy-nine buildings and a permanent polyglot citizenry representing twenty-one countries. San Francisco, then, with her new name and her "1 apothecary, 2 blacksmith, 3 butcher, 1 cabinet maker, 2 carpenter, 1 cigar-maker, 2 cooper, 1 gun-smith, 1 shoe-maker, 2 tailor, and 1 watch-maker [shops]; 8 stores; 7 groceries; 2 hotels; 1 wind-mill; 2 printing offices, and three bakeries," looked forward to 1848, neither prepared for nor expecting the influx of gold seekers who would swell her population to upwards of 50,000 in five years.

Early in 1848 the citizens of San Francisco concerned themselves with moral reforms and education. In January the city council outlawed gambling, stipulating that monies found on the gambling tables were to be confiscated for the benefit of the town. However, the reform measures were repealed at the next council meeting. Back in 1847 the people of San Francisco had erected a school building and had unsuccessfully attempted to establish a school. By the spring of 1848 there were sixty children of school age for

whom on April 3, Mr. Thomas Douglas, A.M., a Yale graduate and "experienced teacher, of high reputation," opened school with an annual salary of one thousand dollars. This school term ended the next month, however, when the citizens deserted San Francisco for the gold regions, leaving Douglas "minus pupils, minus trustees and town council, and minus tuition and salary. He, therefore, locked the school-house, and shouldering his pick and pan, himself started for the 'diggings.'" School was over and education forgotten until December 12, when the public school reopened "after having been closed for many months during the gold-mania." Tuition per term was eight dollars, which would also fetch a gallon of brandy.

At the beginning of 1849, the population had increased to two thousand; by July, there were five thousand; and by the end of the year, twenty-five thousand. Streets were bottomless mud, houses merely canvas tents or rough board shanties, with an occasional frame one-story house. "Only the great gambling saloons, the hotels, restaurants, and a few public buildings and stores had any pretensions to size, comfort, or elegance."

Unimaginable activity took place everywhere; houses, hotels, buildings of all kinds went up daily. Most of the immigrants lived in crowded boarding houses and hotels, where space on the flea-infested floor commanded premium prices.

Lack of room in their lodgings encouraged men to spend their time in the bars and gambling saloons, with occasional balls or masquerades to vary the amusements. Gambling, however, was the principal recreation of everyone, with large stakes not uncommon. Gold was to be had, by means fair or foul. Rents were fantastic. "Three thousand dollars a month, in advance, was charged for a single store, of limited dimensions, and rudely constructed of rough boards. . . . The 'El Dorado,' a gambling saloon. . . , which was only a canvas tent of moderate size, brought at the rate of forty thousand dollars per annum." Interest rates were eight to fifteen per cent a month, on real security, and in advance. Lots which sold for twelve dollars a few years ago brought eight to sixteen thousand dollars.

Not everyone, however, had the Midas touch. A poor, miserable, and destitute few eked out a marginal living, sleeping often on the bare ground. Many "lost heart, pined, took sick and died, cursing the country and its gold, and the foolish fancies, that had led them to it," and suicides not infrequently helped to check the growing population. Public officials and private citizens, however, subscribed large sums of money to save these destitute persons from utter starvation.

During 1850 nearly thirty-six thousand persons arrived in San Francisco, with twenty-seven thousand arrivals in

1851. Fires, Vigilance Committee justice, and clipper ships came and went. The Flying Cloud arrived in August, 1851, eighty-nine days out of New York, followed in 1852 by the Sword Fish, which made the trip in ninety days. During 1852, there were 66,988 immigrants, including too many Chinese, according to local papers, with only 23,196 departures. Even though many new arrivals quickly moved on to the mines, by the end of 1852 San Francisco's population approached 42,000, as compared with 2,000 at the close of 1848. Streets were being planked and fire-proof houses, hotels, and gambling saloons erected to replace those destroyed by fires as well as to accommodate the growing population. Amid the growth, an occasional church made its appearance. By the end of 1852 a stabilizing force of permanent citizens was exerting a positive influence in San Francisco.

California journalism began in 1846, when the weekly Californian appeared August 15 at Monterey, site of the custom house. Published by Commodore R. F. Stockton and edited by Walter Colton and Robert Semple, the Californian's four small pages, which were printed on cigar paper, at first contained some copy in Spanish, but this practice was soon discontinued. A few months later, on January 7, 1847, the larger and typographically better California Star began in San Francisco. This second weekly, edited by Dr. E. P.

Jones and printed on equipment brought to California by Mr. Samuel Brannan, who was also the publisher, became San Francisco's first newspaper. With four pages about twelve by fifteen inches, the California Star announced that it would avoid any sectarian bias, probably to allay fears that Sam Brannan's Mormonism would spill over into the copy.

Because of Monterey's few residents, on May 22, 1847, Robert Semple, who had become its publisher, moved the Californian to San Francisco, where he began a second and much enlarged and improved volume. By modern standards, however, even San Francisco in 1847 would not have appeared promising with its permanent population of less than four hundred. The two weekly papers continued until their workers succumbed to the gold fever and departed for the diggings. The Californian ceased publication on May 29, 1848, because everyone had left to search for gold. Two weeks later, on June 14, the California Star ruefully announced its suspension, as all the crew had gone to the diggings and the paper "could not be made by magic." The Californian, which resumed publication on July 15 with the promise of an occasional paper, depending upon help to put it out, continued until November 18, when the owners of the California Star purchased the Californian and commenced publication of the Star and Californian, which was really the California Star with a new name. The Star and Californian,

which became the Alta California on January 4, 1849, was the leading newspaper for two decades, only to disappear in the eighties.

During 1849 the Pacific News and the Prices Current, both weeklies, began, the former to last two years and the latter less than one. At the close of 1849 on December 14, the Alta California began a tri-weekly edition while continuing the older weekly edition. This change proved to be short-lived, however, for on January 22, 1849 the Alta California became a daily paper, the first in California, although the weekly still continued. By the end of the year the Alta California had competition from the Journal of Commerce, the Pacific News, the San Francisco Daily Herald, the Evening Picayune, and others. Most of these quickly died, but a few continued for several years.

In addition to the many newspapers published in San Francisco, papers from the East and from Europe arrived in San Francisco with every ship. However, among all these journals, none was devoted to developing California literature. Because the Golden Era met this need, it became unique in this land with journals of all varieties. Here was an outlet for the recently transplanted writer whose rough appearance and crude habitation often belied an appreciation of and longing for the refinements of a distant home. If Daggett and Foard had not founded the Golden Era,

someone else would probably have established a similar journal, for California citizens were ready for a paper devoted to literature and the arts just as citizens all across the nation were concerning themselves with the development of a distinctly American literature.

As a matter of record, Californian's supported not only the Golden Era during the 1850's but for a brief period two similar journals produced in San Francisco plus subscribing to many papers shipped in each month. The closest rival to the Era was the Wide West, which began March 17, 1854. Published weekly, the Wide West featured more "selected" material than the Golden Era, preferring rather the better quality of the material available from the New York Sunday Times, Punch, Blackwood's Magazine, Frazer's Magazine, Household Word, from which the Wide West copied Dickens' Hard Times, and other similar magazines available in San Francisco. The Wide West also had more engravings and illustrations than the Golden Era plus a column comparable to the Era's "To Our Correspondents," but the column, which contained no literary criticism, did not have the friendly, folk touch found in the Era. To build a list of subscribers, the Wide West offered prizes, such as popular novels, for new subscribers, instead of following the policy of Daggett, who went out to the diggings to sell his wares. Although the Wide West gave its readers slightly more polished literature

than did the Era, it (1) lacked the touch with the miners which the Era had, it (2) was not able to attract agents in the outlying areas as the Era did, it (3) failed to sense the importance of using local material as well as selected stories from Eastern journals, and it (4) consequently did not become the center for the development of a California literature. Because the Wide West never received widespread public support, the owners announced with the July 4, 1858, edition that they did "not find it a profitable business to publish so good a paper at present, and prefer not to print one less worthy of support." Turning over its subscription list to the Golden Era, the Wide West, after just over four years in San Francisco, joined the Valhalla of California newspapers and literary journals.

The Pioneer: or, California Monthly Magazine was begun in 1854 by Fredinand C. Ewer. Issued monthly with about forty pages, this new journal lasted two years. Today it is probably best known for publishing the "Shirley Letters," which tell of "Dame Shirley's" life in California with her physician husband. Other contributors included "John Phoenix" and Edward Pollock. In July, 1856, Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine appeared with the aim of picturing California and California life. Lasting five years, this paper never seriously threatened the Era because it did not establish rapport with writers and subscribers as the Era did. After 1860 came

other rivals, including the Overland Monthly, edited by Harte. By this time, however, the Golden Era was turning away from the literature of the California gold rush, which had given it distinction during the 1850's.

PART II

The Golden Era: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

The Folio Period

CHAPTER I

Introduction: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

The general objectives of the Golden Era were clearly stated in the first number. Although San Francisco and California had numerous papers, J. Macdonough Foard and Rollin M. Daggett observed the need for "a Good Family Paper; calculated for circulation in every parlor and miner's cabin; that would be found of interest to the merchant, the farmer and the mechanic; untainted with politics, and unbiased by religious prejudices" (I, 1). In addition, the editors preferred the productions of Californians "who possess literary attainments of a highest order" (I, 1). However, the slow realization of these objectives during the early years caused the editors to despair of the success of their struggling offspring.

Gargantuan problems challenged the plucky editors, who managed to overcome them so that the Golden Era became the West's leading literary journal. Both men had come to California in the '49 tidal wave of gold seekers, and both had failed to realize their early dreams of finding a fortune.

John Macdonough Foard was born in 1829 in Cecil County, Maryland, where he learned the printers' trade. While working on the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin in 1849, he heard the news of California gold. "Without even waiting to 'space out' his line, as he afterward frequently related, he laid down his stick, grabbed hat and coat, packed a scant 'grip' and joined the band of argonauts in quest of the golden fleece" (San Francisco Morning Call, January 16, 1892). Traveling by ship, Foard came to California via Cape Horn. At the same time his future partner, Rollin Mallory Daggett, was journeying across the plains. Daggett, who later drew heavily from this experience for his novel Braxton's Bar, was born in Richville, St. Lawrence County, New York, February 22, 1831. Six years later the family moved to Defiance, Ohio, where Rollin attended school and learned the printing business. During his trek west, Daggett traveled extensively among the Indians, even living with the Hopi and other tribes, an experience which he later described in the Golden Era. Arriving in California in 1849, Daggett worked for the Sacramento Times before attempting mining near Grass Valley. The circumstances which brought him and Foard together in San Francisco are unknown. Perhaps they discovered at Jerry Sullivan's bar a mutual background in printing; but a complete lack of information concerning their decision to found the Golden Era leaves this and other questions unanswered.

In any case, they established the Golden Era, which prospered until it easily excelled all rivals.

Because many miners regarded their stay in California as temporary, they had little concern for local issues or problems. A California daily paper filled with accounts of local crime, corruption, and hardships did not interest them, and the summaries of national and international events in the California daily papers were often inferior to the coverage in the papers sent out from the East and probably no more recent. But the Golden Era, which appealed to cultural and literary interests in a land where such things were often pushed aside in the quest for gold, became a friendly memento of these cultural and literary ties, a foretaste of better days in California literature. Although the Golden Era did not approach the quality of the better literary journals from the East and Europe, such as Godey's Lady's Book, with Emerson, Holmes, Longfellow, Poe, et al. as contributors, Harper's Monthly, Athenaeum, Southern Literary Messenger, Literary World, and a few more, still for these immigrants, transplanted from cultural environments to the raw, crude frontier, the Golden Era helped to keep burning the torch for literary and cultural activity.

The contents of the Golden Era followed the general pattern established in the first issue. There were poems, stories and romances, miscellaneous articles and features,

editorials, drama reviews, letters to contributors, reports from correspondents in the mines and even in the East, numerous short items or filler, and advertisements. In order better to discuss the journal's early years, I shall (1) treat the problems of production, circulation, and editions of the Golden Era and then (2) describe and evaluate its divisions.

CHAPTER II

Production, Circulation, and Editions: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

Although basically the Golden Era became famous and remains of interest today for its contents, certain problems of production and circulation had to be solved before the Era could reach its readers. Because the legal and business records have apparently been lost, whatever one gleans about the production and circulation of the Golden Era must come largely from the scant accounts and hints in the paper itself. A tantalizing indication of what might be found is the statement by Ella Sterling Cummins: "Up to 1854, the paper had quite a struggle, having many a bout with the Sheriff to prevent him from putting his lock on the door."[1] This is the only reference found to these bouts with the sheriff, except perhaps the following: "Whenever you see an editor suddenly turn a corner and dodge into a dark alley, conclude the Sheriff is after him, and by throwing a rail

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[1]The Story of the Files: A Review of California Writers and Literature (San Francisco, 1893), p. 14.

across a mud-hole to assist his flight, you will earn the gratitude of the profession" (II, 52). Daggett and Foard described these early times as "precarious" (see V, I; VIII, 20, 26), but gave no specific information except for occasional references to production problems.

When the Golden Era began December 19, 1852, it was printed on a 28 x 42 inch sheet, which was folded once to make four 21 x 28 inch pages. Each page had seven columns fifteen picas (two and one-half inches) wide; on the front page the name plate took up about thirty picas (five inches) of the length, leaving room for about 112 lines (approximately 21 inches) of type per column; pages two, three, and four carried a shorter heading and about 150 lines of type. All columns contained copy new to that issue except the advertisements, which were usually rerun for a number of issues.[2] As the Golden Era acquired advertisers, this ratio of copy to advertisements changed so that by the end of the first volume, pages one and two were all copy, page three averaged two columns of copy and five of advertisements, and page four usually had three columns of copy and four of advertisements. This ratio of copy to advertisements then remained about constant throughout the folio period. Advertisers represented a wide variety of interests, ranging from

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[2]An advertisement for Christmas toys (see plate 3, col. 7) was still being printed the following July.

patent medicines and health cures to steamship lines, from book shops to mining supplies.

The size of the Golden Era continued unchanged, except for nine numbers in volume one, until the Golden Era became an eight page, quarto journal on September 23, 1855. Numbers thirty-one to thirty-nine inclusive of volume one (see plates 8, 9, 10, 11) were printed on a 24 x 28 inch sheet, making four 19 x 24 inch pages. The editors explained that they had been forced to reduce the size one column because "there is at present in California but one cylinder press which would work so large a paper, and our circulation making it impossible to have our work done on a hand-press, it has been necessary for us to reduce it for the present to a dimension suitable for having our press work done on a smaller sized power-press, of which there are several in the city" (I, 31). The reduction was to be in advertisements, however, not in "reading matter."

Initially subscriptions cost $6 per year, "invariably in advance" (see plate 1, heading). This rate was reduced to $5 per year, or $3 for six months, with II, 29 (see plate 16, col. 1), in an attempt to survive the economic stress during the summer of 1854. The $5 rate then continued throughout the folio period.

Another problem was the high cost of printing. Composition costing 25 cents per 1000 ems in Boston was $1.50 in

San Francisco (I, 13). The first page, which was set in 10 point type, with seven columns 15 picas wide and approximately 112 lines per column, then cost about $21 to set. Composition for page two ran $28 to $30 because it had more copy (not so much space taken up by the heading) and also because some columns were set in 8 point type. Because advertising copy usually ran for a number of weeks, it did not have to be reset each week. With the new copy and new advertisements, pages three and four probably averaged one page between them of new copy per week, or about $28 to $30 per week. Hence composition alone cost approximately $80 per week.

Paper selling for $3 per ream in the East brought $10 in San Francisco. A subscription list, then, of 5,000, which the Era reached by volume III, required ten reams, or $100 for paper each week. Press work costing 25 cents per token (240 sheets) in Boston cost $2 in San Francisco, or $42 per week for the 5,000 copies of the Golden Era. Composition, paper, and presswork totaled about $220 per week, or $11,440 per year. With 5,000 subscriptions @ $5 per year, the price in 1855, the editors realized $25,000, assuming one hundred percent collection. With nearly half of their income spent for printing alone, the editors were hard pressed to pay the other expenses of doing business, such as maintaining an office, meeting payrolls, paying agents

or writers, to say nothing of a return on their time and investment. One obvious solution was for the editors to do much of the work themselves, and "night and day they labored with composing-stick and pen, and the reward came not" (VIII, 20).

Advertising provided additional income, although one can only guess how much. Up to the time when John McCombe became a partner (II, 16; see plate 14), advertising rates were quoted at "one square of 8 lines for one month $5;--Business Notices of 5 lines or less for one month $3" (II, 14; see plate 9, col. 1). After McCombe joined the firm, the rates were no longer printed. Charges for longer periods or for more copy were not given, although the publishers probably reduced rates to meet these needs. Also, not all advertisers paid their bills (see I, 9). By the beginning of volume III, the Golden Era carried about nine columns, or 1350 lines of advertising. If the editors realized 50 cents per line per month, or slightly less than the quoted price of "8 lines for one month $5," their income from advertising would have been $675 per month, or $8,100 per year. Even though the revenue from advertising was quite likely considerably less per month, advertising still must have produced a welcome source of income, even after the agents' commissions were paid. One conclusion seems safe: money was scarce, and probably good reasons existed for the visits of the sheriff.

Undoubtedly problems of finance and production were numerous, probably at times critical, but in some way they were all solved so that the Golden Era regularly appeared each Sunday morning. Noting in II, 23, that their supply from the East had been due for a fortnight, the editors explained that the "paper upon which the Era is printed this week is an inferior article, but the only kind to be had in this market."

Indications of other problems can be seen in the changes in the name plate, in Daggett and Foard's attempts to find a suitable third partner, and in the changes in printing and publication offices. The first name plate carried the title Golden Era in large, shaded display type (see plate 1), which was replaced after ten numbers by a bolder, more boxy display type, the rest of the name plate remaining the same (see plate 5). The second name plate was used for five numbers and then superseded by an elaborately engraved figurehead carved out of quartz which weighed "8 pounds 4 ozs., and according to analysis contains 17 dwts. of gold to the pound of rock" (I, 17). Immensely proud of their new figurehead, the editors described it for their readers:

> And now we ask our patrons to look upon our new figurehead, as seamen say. It is a panorama in itself, emblematic of California.--There on the left is a mining scene, exhibiting our lofty Sierras in the distance, and the miners with pick and shovels extracting the oro. In the foreground appear the arms of the State, Minerva holding a spear and shield, a Grizzly Bear crouching at her feet; while the cornucopia on her right displays the rich fruits of our State, below the

> figure are the fleet ships which grace our noble harbor, and in the background appears Yerba Buena, steamboats plying to and fro in our glorious Bay, and the undulating hills on the opposite shore. On the extreme right are scenes illustrative of Agriculture--the Plough, the Sickle and the Corn Sheaf--with broad and rich plains which turn up golden harvests to the husbandman.
>
> The feature of our title floating in the clouds above, carved out of the quartz rock, is a striking proof that we are ascending and mean to ascend, in elevating our paper to high standards. . . (I, 16).

Two numbers later, the editors added the word California to their name plate, leaving the rest unaltered (see plate 7). This quartz figurehead was used until I, 31, when the reduction in size forced the editors to trim their name plate to fit the smaller page width (see plate 8). California was also dropped at this time, only to be inserted nine issues later.

When, with I, 40, the Golden Era returned to its original size, the old name plate had to be discarded because it was now too small. Consequently, the editors returned to a name plate set in type, with the word Golden in bold type flanked by The and Era in a square, shaded type. At the same time, the designation "City and Country Edition" was added, along with the word California, which had been dropped in I, 31 (see plate 12). This revised name plate served until II, 14, when the terms "City and Country Editions" were replaced by "Sunday" (see plate 13).

Two issues later (II, 16), when John McCombe joined the editorial staff (he remained for seven issues), the names of

the editors were taken out of the name plate and placed at the top of column one, page one (see plate 14). At the same time, the characteristic "Terms, Six Dollars a Year, Invariably in Advance" was discarded, apparently to please McCombe, the new business partner. With II, 20, the Golden Era carried an engraving of the San Francisco harbor with the word Sunday above the tops of the distant hills (see plate 15). Three issues later, when Noah replaced McCombe as a partner, the phrase "Morals and Amusements" was replaced by "Education and Fine Arts" so that the subtitle then read: "A Weekly Family Newspaper--devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign Items, Commerce, Education, and the Fine Arts" (see plate 16). This name plate remained unaltered for the rest of the folio period, except for the addition of Lawrence's name when he joined the editorial staff (see plate 17).

Sometime early in 1854, Daggett and Foard apparently decided that they needed a partner, perhaps one who could invest some capital in the Golden Era. If Daggett was to spend weeks at a time in the mines soliciting subscriptions and agents, then a third partner could help Foard in San Francisco. The first partner, Mr. John McCombe, was to manage the business affairs. McCombe's name was duly entered in the list of proprietors on II, 16, along with the other minor change in the heading mentioned above (see plate 14).

The spring and summer of 1854 brought economic depression to San Francisco, and the editors probably selected McCombe for added financial strength, but he remained for only seven issues. With II, 23, the editors announced the selection of "Mr. M. M. Noah, the eldest son of the late Major Noah, so universally known and respected as the veteran of the American Press. . . . Mr. McCombe's daily increasing business rendered it imperative that he should devote his whole energies to one employment." So now the list of proprietors read "Foard, Daggett and Noah." The Golden Era, however, remained unchanged as the "many new and important features" promised with the announcement of Noah were not added.

Daggett and Foard were soon looking for another partner, though, for with II, 35, Noah's name was omitted in the list of proprietors. Three issues later the Golden Era carried the following notice: "M. M. Noah is in no manner connected with the editorial or financial department of the Golden Era--his connection with that paper having been suspended on the 5th of August."

At the beginning of volume III, Colonel Joseph E. Lawrence, former editor of the Times and Transcript, joined the Golden Era as a partner and editor (see plate 17). At last the editors had a suitable partner. Lawrence stayed with the Era until V, 8, when he sold out to edit the more

sophisticated Wide West, the only serious rival of the Golden Era. Even Lawrence could not bring success to the Wide West, which failed fifteen months later.[3]

Initially the Golden Era was published at the Franklin office, 186 Montgomery Street. With I, 12, the editors opened at Fern and Co., Bookstore an agency for subscriptions and advertisements. Later, with II, 23, the publication office was moved to 124 Sacramento Street, where it remained for a while.

In addition to the appeal of its contents, the Golden Era had an excellent system for obtaining subscribers and for distributing the papers promptly. With I, 3, the editors claimed a "city circulation of 2,000"; by no. 16, they had received 1100 regular subscriptions from the country, and with no. 32, they boasted of over 200 lady subscribers. According to I, 43, subscribers numbered 2,300, with 5,040 by II, 26, or "more than any other paper published in California." By III, 41, the editors claimed 7,000, with 5,200 interior subscribers. Not all the subscriptions were for California cities either, for in II, 20, the editors told of twenty-six new subscriptions "to be sent to the East." This fast-growing subscription list enabled the Era to secure at the beginning of volume III the contract for printing the

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[3]See pp. 12-13 for discussion of the Wide West.

list of uncalled-for letters remaining in the San Francisco post office. This list was doubly desirable because it provided both income and prestige since the postmaster awarded the list to the paper having the largest circulation, certified by him to be over 5,000 at the beginning of volume III. The Alta, which had had the list previously, cried foul and eventually won its point some years later because the Era's subscribers were not, for the most part, in San Francisco. For the time, however, the list was a welcome addition, a sign of having arrived in the publication world.

In Villains Galore, The Heydey of the Popular Story Weekly, Mary Noel was wrong in several evaluations of the Golden Era. Its glory certainly did not end "with its title and its head showing a magnificent ship-filled harbor," and the San Francisco letter list had considerably more advantage than that "of taking up a lot of space."[4] In fact, the list, which added only about one and one-half columns (see plate 21, cols. 6 and 7), could save the widely scattered readers, who had often originally directed that their mail be sent to the San Francisco post office, a trip to San Francisco.

Acquiring subscriptions was no simple task. Just how the editors secured subscribers prior to issuing their first number is not known. A search of the files of the San Francisco papers for several months before the publication of the

[4](New York, 1954), pp. 50-51.

Golden Era did not locate any advertisement for the Era or even any reference to its impending publication, nor are there any other clues to the methods used to build the city circulation of 2,000 claimed in I, 3. Quite possibly copies were merely sold by the various newspaper shops in the city, with the figure including wishful thinking as well as paid subscribers. After about three months Daggett began one of his legendary subscription selling trips to the mining regions when "With an eye to the picturesque effect, Daggett arrayed himself in a red shirt and top-boots, and went traveling among the miners, getting enormous subscriptions wherever he went."[5] Although some details of this colorful account remain questionable, Daggett did make several journeys to the mining regions, reporting on mining and travel conditions as well as securing needed subscriptions. The announcement of 1100 regular subscriptions from the country, obviously the work of Daggett, appeared in I, 16.

An indication of the perils involved is the following account in I, 18:

> Robbing an Editor.--M. Daggett, our worthy "Junior,"[6] who has for several weeks past been sojourning in the mountains, came very near being a "goner" last week, while going from Jackson to Fiddletown, having been fired upon by a gang of Mexican robbers, tied to a

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[5]Cummins, p. 14.

[6]Daggett, who had just turned twenty-three, was two years younger than Foard.

> tree, robbed of his boots, (a new pair,) coat, carpet bag and $180 in cash, and we may say, considerably frightened, though "no further violence was attempted." They, with Mexican liberality, gave him back six dollars of his own money for his boots, telling him that was the price of boots in that region.

In addition to dodging robbers and securing subscriptions, Daggett arranged for local agents who solicited additional subscribers and distributed the papers, which were usually delivered in a bundle by the express companies. In I, 15, the Era listed twenty-six agents. The number grew steadily, with forty-one agents three months later. By the end of the second volume, the Golden Era had over 100 agents representing nearly every town in California including such men as H. R. Stiles and A. Delano, who not only represented the Golden Era in their area but also sent in copy (see plate 18, col. 2).

During the summer depression of 1854, Daggett again visited the mines, soliciting subscriptions and local agents. In addition, the Golden Era began employing roving representatives, who occasionally proved dishonest. Several times the editors announced replacements for these agents, denouncing their erstwhile representatives as unprincipled rogues guilty of withholding funds.[7]

The weekly issues were delivered by the express companies and by the post office. Perhaps the editors' own account best describes this system:

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[7]See I, 6, 33; II, 13, 18; III, 25, 37, 41.

It is a matter of speculation, among many, by what means the Golden Era attained its present enormous interior circulation, and numerous are the surmises in regard to the method adopted by its conductors in distributing it with that satisfaction and punctuality in every portion of the State for which, we believe, it is proverbial. That there are features in the editorial conduct of the Era well adapted to the tastes of the intelligent of our interior population, we think we can, without egotism or fear of contradiction, assert, since each week brings to us such unmistakable proofs of the fact, in a largely extended list of patrons. Yet a somewhat chequered experience in newspaper business in California, warrants us in saying that without that complete system of circulation, which it is gratifying to know the Era has attained, no paper, depending in the main upon its circulation for support, can flourish in California, even though the combined literary talent of the State blazes from its columns.

Every Sunday morning the Golden Era is served by carriers to subscribers in forty-three interior towns, and before sundown of the same day, no less than seventy-five mountain and valley villages have been supplied by the same means. But besides these, places of easy access by express and mail agents, wherever a weekly mail finds its way, or in whatever part of the country the adventurous letter or newspaper expressman risks his neck in scaling craggy mountain passes, and descending with careful step into the most remote corners of every habitable canon, bearing to their rough occupants the welcome words from home,--there the "Golden Era" may be found, for search the judiciously selected pack of every weary expressman, and a bundle of the Eras will be found a part of the burthen.

As to our agents, (the principal of whom are given in the published list,) who attend to their tasks of circulating with pleasure, as well as with a view of profit, we speak of them with confidence and with pride. Among them will be recognized names identified with the history and progress of California for the past six years--men of literary attainments, wealth and standing, whose names are not used in that capacity for effect, but who are actively exerting themselves in giving the Era a wide circulation and forwarding to its columns early and reliable correspondence.

> With such men as agents, our circulation cannot but increase with the population; and we look with confidence to the time when the Golden Era will lend a potent hand in starving from California the hosts of Atlantic papers now received and read, so much to the detriment of newspaper enterprises in this State (II, 29).

A preference for the express companies over the post office was general with newspaper publishers. In the summer of 1855 a strong movement existed in San Francisco to abolish the post office in favor of the express companies.[8] Several reasons existed for this preference. First, until sometime in the middle of 1855, the express companies carried newspapers without charge because they received a flat contract price for transporting the mails regardless of weight or bulk. Hence they would still have to transport the papers without additional revenue if they were part of the mail. The resulting goodwill actually cost them nothing, and in the dispute between the express companies and the post office, the newspapers naturally supported their benefactors. "For a period matters progressed smoothly and satisfactorily enough, but after a time it transpired that the newspaper bags were partially filled with merchandise, papers being packed in at the mouth of the sack for the purpose of deception" (Sacramento Union, November 8, 1855).

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[8]See III, 27; Alta California, July 13, 1855; Sacramento Union, November 8, 1855.

Second, the express companies gave faster service and reached more places than the post office. Third, papers shipped by express were sent out in one bundle to the local agent, who could then distribute copies quickly and efficiently to the waiting crowd, while copies sent by the postal system were delayed because they had to be sorted and put in the patron's box. As a result, "he who depends on the mail for his paper finds his neighbor who relies on the express will have read it through and can lend it to him while he is waiting for the post office to open" (Alta California, July 13, 1855). So although the Golden Era, like its rivals, used the express companies to distribute the papers, the editors still defended the post office, as would be expected of a paper holding the contract for printing the list of uncalled-for letters.

An area of tangential interest was the use of engravings in the Golden Era. In the beginning there were none, as San Francisco had no engravers. The first engraving, which appeared in I, 13, pictured the wreck of the P.M.S.S. Tennessee. This engraving had been made expressly for the Golden Era by Mr. A. V. S. Anthony, a recognized artist who had come to San Francisco with a good background of experience in New York. From this time on, the Golden Era regularly featured engravings of local scenes, and these

engravings were the heart of special editions issued.[9] These excellent engravings attracted new subscribers and encouraged people to send copies of both regular and special editions back home.

In addition to its regular Sunday morning edition, the Golden Era published some extra numbers or editions. Even before the Golden Era began in December of 1852, San Francisco papers were issuing steamer editions which compiled news for several days or weeks. Because these special editions, labeled "For the Steamer -------," were sent back East to report the growth and progress in California, they became something of a souvenir. The departure of the steamer marked a hectic day: letters to friends back East had to be readied, payments on goods met, merchandise ordered, gold loaded, and similar activities completed. For this special day the San Francisco papers prepared extra or steamer editions for inclusion with the ship's mail. The popularity of this practice is seen from the following notice in the Golden Era, I, 14: "We learn from the Whig that the number of letters sent by the mails on the Golden Gate was 77,440 from the San Francisco Post office. There were 21,440 newspapers, on which the postage was paid. The above amount does not include the subscribers, exchanges,

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[9]See plates 14, 20, 23--a reprint of the first engraving, 27, 28, 31, 33, 34, 36, and 37.

or papers sent unpaid. The number of unpaid newspapers was 50,000. These papers are the weeklies, dailies, and steamer editions of eleven papers printed in San Francisco, and seventeen from the interior. The total amount of papers sent by the mails of the 16th was 71,166."

The editors of the Golden Era did not delay long before they, too, had a Steamer Edition. The first mention of a Steamer Edition came in I, 9, when the editors announced: "Steamer Golden Era! We will issue on Tuesday morning 15th inst., the Golden Era made up expressly for circulation in the Atlantic States, Europe and the Pacific Islands.--The paper will contain a larger amount of reading matter than any other journal published in the State." Two issues later, in number 11, they announced the "Steamer Golden Era! Published the 1st and 15th of each Month. We will issue on Monday morning, Feb. 28th, the Golden Era made up expressly for circulation in the Atlantic States. . . ."

In an attempt to locate copies of these Steamer Editions, I have examined all the known copies of the Golden Era, vols. 1-16. This search produced only three copies. (1) The California Historical Society has a Steamer Edition for March 15, 1853, which is the same as the issue for the previous Sunday, with only minor changes. The Steamer Edition had a slightly different heading and a later date (Tuesday, March 15), and page four omitted some of the

advertising of the regular number and substituted copy printed earlier; otherwise this Steamer Edition is identical with I, 13, of the regular editions. (2) The Society of California Pioneers has a Steamer Edition for April 15, 1853 (see plates 23-26). This edition, like the March 15 edition, is only slightly changed from the regular issue and duplicates most of the material of the April 10 number. Pages one, two, and three are identical, even to the advertisement on page three, column one (see plate 25) announcing this very Steamer Edition. Page four has less advertising copy, reprinting instead columns from an earlier number, including "Reminiscences of San Francisco" by "Filings," which appeared in number 16. (3) The California State Library has a copy of the Steamer Edition for April 15, 1853, which is a duplicate of the copy held by the Society of California Pioneers.

If any generalization may be drawn from such scanty evidence, Steamer Editions of the Golden Era were merely slightly modified numbers of the regular editions, with a little less advertising copy and a few reprinted stories, poems, or articles.

Evidently Steamer Editions appeared regularly, as indicated by the somewhat frequent advertisements or puffs for them and by other occasional comments about them. For instance, a note in I, 18, stated that over 4,000 copies of

the Steamer Edition "were sold yesterday and the day previous for the mails, by the Northerner," and II, 14, promised a reprint in the next Steamer Edition of the engraving of the San Francisco post office. How long the practice continued is not clear, although advertisements for Steamer Editions appeared now and then as long as Daggett and Foard published the Era.

In addition to Steamer Editions, the Golden Era issued at least two other special editions. An advertisement first printed in I, 51, and repeated in the next number promised a "Pictorial Golden Era, for the Holidays, . . . for circulation in the Atlantic States, the Canadas and Europe. It will be printed on the best quality of paper, and well filled with splendid, original engravings, illustrative of life and scenes in California, and will be one of the most interesting presents for Atlantic friends ever issued from the press of this State." The promised holiday Pictorial Golden Era was dated January, 1854 (see plates 27-31). The two outside pages contained mostly engravings, some new and some reprinted. Probably the most famous item was the "Miners' Ten Commandments" (see plate 31, cols. 6 and 7) written by J. M. Hutchings, who "sold nearly a hundred thousand copies in a year."[10] The inside pages were identical with the regular number of the Golden Era for December 25, 1853.[11]

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[10]Franklin Walker, San Francisco's Literary Frontier (New York, 1943), p. 28.

[11]The Bancroft library and the Yale library have a copy each of this Pictorial Golden Era.

The second special edition, which was first announced in II, 28 (June 25, 1854), was to contain "Sixteen Illustrations!! Executed in the highest style of the Art by San Franciscan Designers and Engravers Expressly for this occasion! . . . together with suitable and interesting literary matter." All this could be purchased by the Fourth of July for twenty-five cents. Titled "Golden Era Illustrated," this special issue measured up to its advance announcements, although some of the engravings had been used before (see plates 32-37). Probably the most interesting feature was the double page spread[12] of engravings showing the buildings along Montgomery Street, San Francisco's leading business section. Page two had engravings of the Metropolitan theatre plus a review of California drama (see plate 33), and page six pictured the San Francisco post office and a wifeless miner's cabin (see plate 37). This pictorial number was apparently the Golden Era's most elaborate issue. So far as I know, no other special editions of the Golden Era were published.[13]

Although Daggett and Foard were probably unaware of it, the founding of the Golden Era was part of a national

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[12]The spread was actually equivalent in size to four pages of this illustrated edition because the paper was folded twice, quarto style, so that the folded size was considerably smaller than the regular edition; this fold gave four small pages and two large ones for the center spread.

[13]The California State Library has three copies (one at the Sutro Branch in San Francisco) of this special edition, and the Library of Congress, Yale, and George L. Harding have one copy each.

trend toward the publication of local literary journals far away from the Eastern coast, the cultural center of the United States. As early as 1803 Daniel Bradford started the short-lived Medley, or Monthly Miscellany, at Lexington, Kentucky, and sixteen years later William Hunt began the Western Review at the same place. Gradually other rather pallid literary magazines sprang up as the population expanded westward.

CHAPTER III

Poetry: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

From the first the editors of the Golden Era promoted poetry by devoting column one, page one, to it. In addition, they assisted the neophyte poet by evaluating his works. By far the largest number of original selections submitted to the Golden Era were poems. The editors often used only passable poems in order to encourage contributors. As a result, many a miner sent his verse to the Golden Era because he knew that its friendly editor would print his "pome" if it had any qualities to recommend it. The readiness of the editors to give the novice poet a corner helped establish rapport between the miners and the Golden Era. Because the Era would print their struggling literary efforts, the people of California regarded it as their paper and gave it such hearty support that in a few years it had a circulation larger than any other paper in the West.

Although poems were frequently "selected" from a wide variety of sources, such as Blackwood's, Putnam's, Harper's, Olive Branch, and other available magazines, many original

poems appeared in the Golden Era. The editors preferred a tolerably good original production to a better one copied from some other magazine. The original poetry submitted to the Era often reflected in subject matter and prosody the Romanticism of Wordsworth, Longfellow, and especially Burns. Generally "poetry" in the Golden Era's terms meant regularity in meter and rhyme, with no attempts at free verse. The poems usually were short lyrics of four to eight lines per stanza and two to eight stanzas per poem. The prevailing meter was iambic; rhyme patterns were usually simple and uninvolved, with "sonnet" and "ode" used without regard for their precise meanings. Many "poets" apparently lacked sustaining power because frequently only one or two poems by the same author appeared, although a few writers, including "Alpha," Mrs. T. P. Shirley,[1] "Luof," "S.O.P. (S. O. Pearson), James Simmonds, and "Yellow Bird" (John Rollin Ridge), contributed quite frequently to the poetry columns. Surprisingly enough, poems from known or recognized authors were seldom used, and when they were, they revealed no preference for any one poet.

In subject matter, the poems published in the Golden Era during these early years may be divided into Western[2]

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[1]Mrs. T. P. Shirley apparently was not "Dame Shirley" (Louise Amelia Knapp Smith Clappe), author of "The Shirley Letters," which appeared in The Pioneer; or California Monthly Magazine.

[2]By Western I mean selections containing local color specifically related to the West, including places, rivers,

and non-Western. The non-Western poems were more often "selected," but many original poems were also non-Western. These non-Western poems usually followed the standard romantic themes of nature (see "Earth no Dream More Bright Than This," Appendix B, Part 1, p. 199), death, the grave, simple people, the seasons, religion, home, romanticized legends and historical events, and similar subjects. Many of them, such as "Persevere" (see Appendix B, Part 1, p. 198), stressed moral or didactic lessons. The following two poems are typical in subject, style, quality, and length of the non-Western poems. Additional samples may be found in Appendix B, Part 1. All are original, i.e., written expressly for the Golden Era.

LINES

Written for the Golden Era--San Francisco, by Clara R-----.

A child sat playing by a brook
That rippled at its feet--
No care could mar that guileless look,
That look so mild and sweet.

With careful hand his little boat
Upon the tiny tide
Would in the eddies gaily float,
And down the riplet glide.

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mountains; descriptions of local industries, such as mining; natives, including Indians and Spaniards; living and travel conditions, both in the diggings and in the towns; local speech patterns; and similar items which mark a piece as distinctly associated with and drawn from Western (usually California) life, customs, and geography.

As in the stream his little hands
   Would seek for pebbles rare--
He gaily mock'd the wild bird's notes
   That warbled through the air.

I sat and watch'd his simple plays,
   And marked his happy face,
And sighed to think a few more days
   Should joys like these efface.
(I, 1)

LOVE AND ART

A life of Love, a world of Art--
   How shall I choose between the twain--
For both are life-springs to my heart?
   I reason and reflect in vain.

Thou glorious Art--since childhood's hour,
   When first my mind began to climb,
I've bowed my soul beneath thy power--
   And kneeling, worshipped at thy shrine.

While wandering by sweet Arno's banks,
   Or standing on old Tiber's shore,
I was a soldier in thy ranks:
   A child of thine for evermore.

O tender Love, that like a sun,
   Shines clear and bright within my heart,
And binds my life and hers in one--
   What claims hast thou compared with Art?

Life without love is drear and dark:
   Though Genius light its devious way--
And rough and dreary seems the path
   That leads to light and endless day.

Of what avail is highest Art,
   That does not lend to higher life--
That fills the brain, but leaves the heart,
   A prey to discord and to strife?

Alpha

(I, 44)

Poetry drawn from Western life or experiences also regularly appeared in the Golden Era. This poetry, usually original, was frequently less polished and longer than non-Western selections. On occasion the editors printed these poems on inside pages, apparently believing that they were worth publication, if not on page one. Some of them described mining and allied experiences somewhat unrealistically, such as "A Miner's Life," by Plumas.

> For his daily pains he reaps golden grains,
> And his dreams still run on treasure.
> Cheerily brothers turn the sod,
> Thus light to our efforts yielding,
> There lurks a charm in each dull clod,
> That may follow the spades we're wielding.[2]

More frequently, however, these original poems pictured quite frankly the rugged hardships in California, taking often a light, humorous tone, as "Town versus Country;--or An Exquisite's Visit to the Mines."

> The rills were all muddy from washing of gold,
> Through a Long Tom each fountain its dark water roll'd
> The trees were cut down; there were no Sylvan bowers,
> The curs'd miners had dug up the earth and the flowers.[3]

Poems expressing embitterment were not printed in the Golden Era as a rule. Optimism and endurance were the prevailing moods, not bitterness or hopelessness.

This lack of strong criticism in poetry of these trying days seems to have stemmed from two causes. First, to survive

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[2]See Appendix B, Part 2, pp. 208-9.

[3]Ibid., pp. 204-5.

in California called for perseverance and courage, not defeatism and despair; to bewail, either in poetry or prose, the hardships of the gold mines would not solve them. Second, since the immigrant felt some obligation to defend his decision to come to California, he wanted to present California in the best possible light so that he could vindicate to his friends at home his coming west. This tendency to picture things better than they were is seen in almost all sections of the Golden Era, as well as in comparable papers. Local pride motivated these California writers just as strong nationalism influenced the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The following three poems are typical of the original poetry based on Western settings. Additional poems may be found in Appendix B, Part 2.

LINES TO THE SACRAMENTO

Roll on thou mighty river--
   In all thy grandeur roll;
Thou whose impulsive current
   No mortal may control.
Thy free and bounding waters
   Ne'er pause or think of rest--
Thy course is onward ever,
   Thy goal the Ocean's breast.

Where deepest lies the mountain's shade
   Thou hast thy noble birth,
Fit emblem of His power, who made
   The firm and solid Earth.
And from full many a rocky dell
   Springs forth the sparkling rill,
And murmuring cascades, gushing streams,
   Thy swelling bosom fill.

Then o'er thy deep, broad pathway borne,
   Thy restless waters glide;--
Man's puny power is laughed to scorn
   By thy resistless tide;
For thou, when in thy angry mood,
   Will own no mortal sway,
Man's efforts sink beneath thy will,
   Thy course he cannot stay.

Yet 'long thy banks, a few short years,
   A greater change have wrought,
Than e'er on history's page appears
   A record to have sought.
A few brief years, a white man's foot
   Thy shores had scarcely trod,
Or in his swiftly gliding barge,
   Sailed o'er thy ample flood.

Then thy bright waters only bore
   The Indian's rude canoe--
And thy uncultivated shore
   No other masters knew.
Along thy echoing banks was heard
   The savages' wild yell,
And on thy breast the wolf's dread howl,
   In dismal cadence fell.

The bounding antelope and deer
   Along thy woody brink
With tossing heads, uncheck'd by fear
   Sought their accustomed drink.
Beneath the oak-tree's verdant shade,
   Close by thy murmuring tide,
The swarthy brave at eve repaired
   To woo his dusky bride.

But now the busy hum of life
   Thy changing echoes bear,
And on thy banks is heard the strife
   Of labor, toil and care.
The woodman's axe, the builder's saw,
   The church-bell's ringing peal,
And gay and smiling villages
   The white man's home reveal.

Along thy glittering surface now,
   Uncheck'd by winds or tides,
The Steamer's proud majestic prow
   With magic swiftness glides.

And through thy valleys far and wide,
   Does light and truth progress
From that great fountain-head of power--
   The massive printing press.

And when the harvest moon shines bright
   Upon the teeming soil--
Wide fields of glistening grain invite
   The farmer to his toil.
And far and near, on hill and plain
   Are blooming gardens seen,
Where once the timid doe was wont
   Her daily food to glean.

Thousands now tread thy busy shore,
   Drawn by one magic sound--
To seek the rich and glittering ore
   In thy deep mountains found.
And thousands yet will onward press,
   And brave the dangerous way,
To gather wealth and riches where
   The hidden treasures lay.

Yet while thy history's page shall bear
   A record of the past--
One honored name will linger there,
   Unfading to the last.
And many a grateful bosom yet
   With fervent heart shall bless
The Pioneer whose early home
   First broke thy wilderness.

Yet, while upon thy varying shores
   Time's changes come and go,
Still on thy restless current pours
   With never ceasing flow.
As constant as in ages past,
   Thy waters still will glide,
While frail mankind will pass away
   Like bubbles from the tide.

Sacramento, February 1853 S. O. Pearson

(I, 10)

MINERS' THOUGHTS

The Girls We Left Behind Us

We sometimes think in our sojourn,
   That "the girls we left behind us,"
Can, if they choose, when we return,
   Weave silken chords to bind us.

So when we make a decent pile,
   Sufficient to bestow them,
Most ev'ry man in rank and file
   Will ask them Yes or No, then.

For pride or scorn, or if they're vext,
   Or for a flat denial,
Just "right about," and scan the next,
   But make another trial.

To modest maid, the pure in heart,
   Possessing not a shilling--
With cultured mind, you may impart
   The knowledge that you're willing.

To join your fate to hers for life,
   And bow at hymen's altar--
To consecrate her for your wife,
   And vow you ne'er shall falter.

Fear not from such a dire result,
   They judge not by the mantle--
But with their parents will consult
   If you are free from scandal.

How cordially would we divide
   With them our hard earned dollars,
And they for us might provide
   Clean shirts and "stand-up" collars!

(II, 23, p. 4)

MY MOUNTAIN HOME

O, come to my cot on the high mountain side,
And I'll show you a home that's my joy and my pride--
Surrounded with roses just bursting in bloom,
The air is all ladened with sweetest perfume.
Near by is the ocean, all foaming and white,
Just off to the westward, yet always in sight;
The valley below, with its fat, bleating herds,
And meadows made glad with the songs of the birds.
Then there is the city just down by the Bay--
The islands and mountains but one step away;
And in front of our door is a wild mountain rill
That joyously sweeps through the valley and hill;
It murmurs soft music when evening draws nigh,
At home from our labors to our cottage we hie.
Then come to my cot on Pacific's old shore,
You'll love its wild beauties and leave it no more.

"Maude Modows" to A.W.

(III, 16)

The poetry of the Golden Era during the folio period was mediocre, as a rule. Although the writers were often reasonably skilled in rhyme and meter, many irregularities are evident. For example, "Lines" by Clara R----- on pages 44-45 has a regular abab rhyme except for the third stanza, in which "hands" and "notes" lack any semblance of rhyme; and "Love and Art," page 45, has "climb" rhymed with "shrine" and "dark" with "path." The meter was sometimes irregular, with wooden and awkward lines often filling out a stanza. For many of these would-be poets, the essence of poetry seemed to lie in attempts at rhyme and meter, rather than in beauty of language, force of image, or aptness of phrase. In other words, few, if any, of the poems in the Golden Era had lines so striking as to force themselves on one's memory.

However, these poems have certain characteristics worth noting as part of the development of poetry in the United States during this period. The poems in the Era were generally romantic, although those about local experiences often had realistic elements. "Miners' Thoughts," page 50, illustrates this point. Religious or moral sentiments were common, just as one often finds a moral tacked to the ending of poems written during this period by Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, Bryant, and many lesser American poets. This predilection toward moralizing was characteristic of the period, which stressed moral lessons and religious experiences by

following Emerson, Theodore Parker, Charles Finney, and others who desired to develop man's inherent goodness. Hence moralistic or didactic poems were in keeping with the general temper of the whole country.

These poets reflected the prevailing national optimism about man. They were not ones to set new standards or to develop a different poetic technique; Poe's campaign against the "heresy of the didactic" would, for instance, have probably found both poets and editors of the Golden Era solidly in favor of didactic poetry. If Whitman's Leaves of Grass had been reviewed by the editors, they would surely have deplored his lack of rhyme and meter, decried his frank treatment of sex, and dismissed his work as vulgar and unpoetic. Had Daggett and Foard taken sides a few decades later, they probably would have aligned themselves with Edmund Stedman, Bayard Taylor, and others in holding out for the ideal in poetry as opposed to the work of the realists and naturalists such as Robinson, Frost, and others.

Even though the poems in the Golden Era during this period lacked poetic excellence, they merit study for several other reasons. The poems provide good examples of what well-intentioned but often untrained poets saw in poetry. Their heavy dependence on rhyme and meter and their extensive use of didactic elements indicate, in turn, their own literary standards. Also significant is their use of language. At

first one might suspect that the Westerners had discarded their concern for purity and precision in language along with other non-essential baggage during the prairie crossing. At least there is often a difference between the language used for poetry by these Western bards and the language of many Eastern and European poets. However, although the prairie crossing and allied difficulties may have taught the Westerners a new language not used in more culturally developed portions of the country, in writing poems for the Era they quite likely tried to imitate the poetic diction of their Eastern counterparts as they always wrote with concern for Eastern recognition and approval of their verses. The differences in language between poems in the Golden Era and those in the better literary journals of the East were due to at least two reasons. First, many of the poets writing for the Era would probably not have matched the language of poets writing for the better Eastern journals had they never left their homes for the West because their background and training had not made them aware of the concern good poets have for language. The Era poets also were often using local dialect or terms to add local color to their poetry. Across the nation, Lowell was using dialect in the "Bigelow Papers," and other poets would soon improve on these early beginnings.

Although the editors regularly printed poetry and encouraged local talent to write it, they seemed to regard poetry

as essential for a literary magazine but not necessarily as something to be used as a vehicle for important ideas. They emphasized poetry because no literary journal could do without it rather than because they regarded it as the highest of all literary forms. The editors would print a poem which really did not say anything as long as it appeared to be reasonably orthodox in prosody.

"Love and Art," page 45, serves to illustrate this point. The author has taken a standard poetic question--the conflict between love and art; however, he says little of significance. From a superficial examination, "Love and Art" appears to be good poetry because it deals with a standard poetic question in passable prosody. Upon a closer examination, it (like Colonel Seller's stove in Twain's The Gilded Age) proves to have only a dim candle, not a glowing fire. Essentially the same criticism may be made for "Lines to the Sacramento," pp. 47-49. The writer wanted to develop a California literature worthy of the great state. He also knew that rivers were standard subjects for poets. Under these circumstances, what could one do except to search for a river to immortalize? The poem, however, fails to inspire, and both poem and the river are easily forgotten.

The Golden Era had better local-color prose than poetry, although the poetry is interesting because it indicates what would-be literary men thought about poetry and were doing with

it in California during the middle years of the nineteenth century. If a school of local-color poetry comparable to local-color prose had developed, then one might conceivably look to some of the poetry in the Golden Era as a significant start of the movement. However, since none did, the poems of the Golden Era, including poems about the West, are often classed with the vast quantity of sentimental, moralistic poetry characteristic of the first half of the nineteenth century in American literature.

CHAPTER IV

To Our Correspondents: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

Linked with the Golden Era poetry, and frequently complementing it, were the columns entitled "To Our Correspondents," which regularly appeared in column one, page two, during these folio years. Through this casual, chatty feature the editors kept in touch with the aspiring writers who sent their "pomes" to the Era. In the beginning, it was used in part to attract more original contributions by acknowledging all material received. Its informality undoubtedly encouraged would-be writers, who were sure to have their work acknowledged here, even if it did not merit publication. At the start, the column lacked prominence; however, the editors, sensing its appeal, almost immediately gave it a regular place, a distinctive heading, and a wider scope. They also began an exchange with various friends of the Golden Era, whether or not they actually contributed to that particular issue, and they soon adopted an old newspaper feature, answering questions on various topics sent in by their readers. In a few instances one Era contributor would communicate with

another through this column, which occasionally carried snatches of poems not worth publication in the regular poetry columns. However, as criticism of items sent to the Era became the mainstay of the columns, they are useful for revealing the editors' standards for both prose and poetry.

At the beginning Daggett probably wrote the columns. Foard lacked Daggett's writing ability (or at least there are no extant poems or stories by Foard). In contrast, Daggett occasionally wrote poetry and also earned a reputation as a skilled prose writer. When Daggett was out in the mines soliciting subscriptions for the Golden Era, the columns lacked the style they had when he was apparently in town working on the Era. In later years, when Robert F. Greeley joined the paper (August, 1854), he probably wrote most of these items, as they seem consistent with Greeley's general interests and temperament; furthermore it is quite likely that the editors would have turned over the columns to a writer as skilled as Greeley. Whether Colonel J. E. Lawrence wrote for the columns after he joined the Golden Era is not clear, but he may have. At any rate, the sprightly columns established good rapport between the editors and contributors as well as making interesting copy for the ordinary reader, who enjoyed this insight into the inner circle of the Era's correspondents.

Comments on material contributed to the Golden Era varied from the simple "declined" to a detailed criticism, with the reviewer often stating bluntly his reasons for rejection. The following selections typify the shorter, more candid rejection notices:

"Dobbs: There are only two objections to your communication; one is, that it is too lengthy--the other, that it is sadly devoid of all manner of interest" (II, 30).

"Greenhorn.--Put the account of your troubles in plain prose, and we will publish it. After carefully reading the thirty-six verses before us, we are led to believe that you did not survive the disaster, but actually died some four years ago" (II, 9).

In contrast with these refusals, the editors often praised poems and promised to use them. The following item is typical of the initial approval and promise to print. In order that one may see what type of poems the editors commended, the "acceptance notice" is followed by the poem as printed in the Golden Era. Additional notices of approval and the corresponding poems may be found in Appendix B, Part 3.

"'Evening'--Poetry, by S.O.P.--Sentiment good and well measured; shall appear next week. Do not let it be the last" (I, 4).

EVENING

by S.O.P.

'Tis evening now, the shadows deepen
O'er valley, hill and rock,
And the pathway smoothly beaten,
Homeward guides the bleating flock.

The husbandman his labor ending,
Turns towards his cottage door;
And the milking-maid is bending
O'er her nightly task once more.

Hushed is now the warbler's prattle,
All his tuneful songs are o'er,
And his notes no longer rattle,
Through the oak and sycamore.

Wantonly the breezes dally,
With the trembling oaken leaf--
Brightens now the dusky valley
With the moonbeam's pale relief.

One by one, the stars are peeping,
Close upon the verge of day,
And their nightly vigils keeping
Dimly light the traveler's way.

Every daily task completed,
Man in sleep forgets his woes;
Silence on her throne is seated,
Nature sinks in calm repose.

Written for the Golden Era--San Francisco
(I, 5)

In what ways the accepted poems were superior to those declined is not known, although the poems accepted frequently lacked poetic merit. The editors apparently had a preference for certain types or subjects, with poems reasonably good in rhyme and meter accepted or rejected according to the need for copy as well as on the basis of poetic worth. Characteristic of the general evaluations is the following example. For other examples, see Appendix B, Part 4.

> ----. Diamond Springs.--In rejecting a communication, we consider it an act of courtesy if not of justice to the writer of it, to give reasons for so doing. In such cases, if the author be reasonable, and the defects of his production are satisfactorily pointed out, without a desire to wound, but merely to convince, no offense is construed, and he is thankful for it--or at least should be. It is very generally (a few exceptions might be cited) the case, that young writers are the first admirers of their own effusions, and can see in them either expressed or intended beauties which will of course escape the observation of others; and as few write merely for their own amusement, but almost all with a greater or less hope of attracting the attention of the literary world, sooner or later their compositions will find their way into an editor's drawers. It is not strange, then that they are frequently disappointed at being told that their writings possess no merit, and that they should sometimes look upon the disheartening announcement as the result of a superficial examination of their favorite article, or else a want of judgment. An article is submitted to the world through the editor, who becomes by giving it in his columns partly responsible for its merit; yet ten articles are published which are not worth the space they occupy, where one meritorious is rejected. It is indeed seldom that errors are pointed out that do not exist, or that an article is declined which is worth putting into type. We do not apply these remarks particularly to you, by any means, but to writers and scribblers generally, that they may become reconciled to the reception which their productions may have met, or may hereafter receive, at the hands of the

editor. But to your case. You may be, and doubtless are, a passable writer of prose, yet you are totally ignorant of the principles of orthometry. Still, to be unable to write poetry is no discredit, for those who can are generally fit for nothing else, and Macauley, who is pretty good authority, says poetry is an evidence of an unsound mind. In the lines before us--"Spring" --the measure is imperfect, there is no uniformity in the rhythm, and even rhyme itself is not attained in all cases, the last defect of which appears to have been occasioned by ignorance of what constitutes it. We will give an example in the second stanza:

Spring has come, and April showers
   Like shadows have passed away,
And the calm, blue sky above us
   Tells 'tis the ever welcome May.
In the past the dusky outline
   Of winter still is lingering,
While every heart in unison
   Hails again the summer's coming.

"Lingering" and "coming" in no wise rhyme, notwithstanding their terminations, nor do "returning" and "coming," in the first stanza. The imperfect rhythm will be noticed by all judges of poetry, as will also the inaptness of the figure implied in the two first lines. The concluding stanza, however, is more perfect in every respect, and is quite pretty--

Summer's coming--the bright sun,
   And the skies of June are near,
And the wild bird's note of gladness
   Welcomes back the summer here.
Time is passing slowly onward;
   Ere the rolling seasons bring
Back the months now quickly passing
   We'll bid a last adieu to spring.

(III, 24)

Some poems used in the Golden Era were probably as faulty as the ones rejected, with the quality of both poems and criticism varying from issue to issue. The criticisms, which stressed metrics over the more fundamental elements of poetry, often needed careful editing and revising themselves.

Certainly the critics might have dealt more directly with language, beauty of expression, and aptness of thought, and yet these criticisms were useful to the beginning writer. And considering the background of the editors, who were still in their early twenties and who had had no formal education beyond high school, if they had that much, one must accept the criticisms for what they are without expecting criticisms comparable to Longfellow or Lowell. At times these young critics appear to have been more sincere than trained, but they did possess a certain amount of native poetical skill and acumen, and no one else in the West was doing more to advance literature.

These editors had, nevertheless, definite ideas of what poetry should do or be. Basically, "poetry consists in the harmonious blending of smoothly expressed sentiment in perfect and musical measure" (III, 4), and ". . . as long as the human soul has music enough remaining in it to distinguish the filing of a saw from the soft melody of the lute, so long will the harmony of perfect rhythm be to poetry its best recommendation" (III, 21). "No poetry can create a favorable impression upon the reader, does it want harmony of expression. It will sound harsh and uncouth, though its language be as poetical as the highest flights of Byron. This is a prevailing fault with first attempts; and aspirants for poetical fame should be made aware, that

nothing will prejudice a publisher more against a production, than to find its finest thoughts robbed of their force and beauty by bad measure" (I, 51). In addition, the poet should not "coin words" unnecessarily, and his figures of speech should make sense. Although originality is good, it should not be achieved at the sacrifice of the "harmonious blending of smoothly expressed sentiment in perfect and musical measure." "In our day of poets and poetasters, the wide field of literature has been trampled over and over, until scarce a green and untouched spread can be found over its broad surface" (III, 4), but in reworking the ideas of earlier poets, the writers must not "sully the fame of departed bards by entirely corrupting the sense and beauty of their best efforts, in attempting to patch up their own miserable rhymes with portions of them" (III, 4). Blank verse should be left for the gifted poet and not attempted by the novice (III, 6), as it "is really the most difficult part of poetry" (II, 43) because "there is no rule to govern the poet in respect to these important attributes of good poetry, save that rule dictated by the ear alone" (II, 2). Commenting on the blank verse of Andrew J. Plumb, the editors observed "that blank verse is a style of composition in which you can never hope to excel. . . . It is obvious that you have not the most remote conception of measure, method or harmony, as applied to blank verse. . . . The above

description of the approach of rain is very thrilling, as will doubtless be acknowledged--so poetical, too! You must have measured your lines by the inch, without making any allowance for erased words" (III, 6).

In the main these principles of good poetry are sound, although the editors' belief that "the wide field of literature has been trampled over and over, until scarce a green and untouched spread can be found. . ." is not consistent with what Whitman and others were doing. In addition, one senses that the critics themselves were not entirely clear on just what blank verse is, as their criticisms of blank verse indicate that the term had only a rather general meaning to them. But again, one cannot gainsay the fact that these two self-trained critics helped to establish a literary climate in San Francisco, where Mark Twain, Bret Harte, and other writers who eventually achieved national acclaim advanced their writing careers by contributing to the Golden Era.

Plagiarism aroused the editorial ire more than anything else, and a scorching reply was given to any detected attempts of this practice. "A person who would be guilty of such an act, has not honor enough to entitle them [sic] to notice" (I, 44).

Prose was also discussed and evaluated by the editors in the "To Our Correspondents" columns, although not so

extensively as poetry. Generally they favored romantic, sentimental prose using local material, a preference which led to their serializing of numerous sentimental novels in later years. The recital of ordinary details is not enough, even though the writer is a careful observer. Rather, sketches should have a thread of romance in them, for "it will do no harm; it will but season them for the palate of the reader, without in the least detracting from the force of their reasonings or the effect of the moral" (III, 12), which the editors also expected from a writer of stories. To be popular, a writer

> must aim to work upon the passions and feelings of his readers; he must attempt to elicit their sympathy, love, or hatred towards the objects described, and joy or terror at scenes portrayed; if he is successful in this, let the story end as it may, it will occasion with the reader a momentary pleasure or regret, and the object is attained. This applies more particularly to sketches of the imagination, or to the sketching of incidents too common-place to be made readable without the aid of fiction and metaphor. Descriptive and instructive writings we of course class under a distinct head--the knowledge they impart being their recommendation (III, 12).

In addition to being clear, good prose avoids superfluous words. The subject must "elicit the feelings of the reader" (III, 19), and the mere recital of ordinary circumstances witnessed daily cannot awaken interest unless specially written to appeal to the feelings and emotions of the reader. "A description of the most common events of life can, with the aid of good imagination and a graceful pen,

be rendered into an interesting story. If a sketch is good, we are not at all nice in regard to its correctness in every particular" (III, 6).

In their criticism of both poetry and fiction, the editors were looking backward as well as forward. They expected fiction to provide entertainment and moral instruction, and their emphasis on appealing to the readers' feelings reminds one of the sentimental novel, which was popular at that time. To state that the object of a piece of fiction was attained if it "occasioned with the reader a momentary pleasure or regret" is not consistent with the more serious work of contemporaries such as Hawthorne and Melville, who certainly produce more than a "momentary pleasure or regret" in their readers. More significant is the principle that "the most common events of life can, with the aid of a good imagination and a graceful pen, be rendered into an interesting story." This concept, which was carried out in local-color stories such as those of Blunderbuss and others in the Golden Era, looks forward to the gentle realism of Howells and James, but certainly not to the work of Dreiser, Crane, and others, whose realism depicted the side of life consciously avoided by Howells.

In addition to criticism of poetry and prose, the "To Our Correspondents" columns contained answers to many questions on such topics as politics, grammar, geography, spelling,

and a host of others. All these items together made this column one of the most varied in the Golden Era during these early years.

CHAPTER V

Fiction: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

From the beginning the editors of the Golden Era attempted to have one or more "Choice Stories" on the front page, which at the start, were nearly always "selected" from magazines and books available in San Francisco. These stories, often quite good, fall into several major divisions. First, there were many sentimental stories, usually having some or all of the following: an attractive girl in distress; several suitors, some good and some bad; breathtaking escapes; simplicity and innocence triumphant over affected airs; a Pollyanna ending; an ascendance of good over evil; and intrigue.[1]

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[1]Typical sentimental stories were: "The Miller's Maid," the story of a young girl left alone in a mill on Sunday while her master was at church. During his absence, her lover, who turned out to be a rogue and thief, appeared, tried to rob the mill, and threatened harm to the young, innocent girl and the sweet children in her charge. She managed to resist him and to warn the miller, who arrived with his son just in time to effect her rescue. Consequently the miller's son became aware of the value of this simple lass, and they were married to enjoy eternal bliss (I, 3). "A Forgery and a Wedding, the Doctor's Story" related the problem of young lovers, about to marry, who discovered

A second type of "selected" story included those with grotesque or oriental touches, although this and the first classification of stories obviously shade into each other.[2] A third class of "selected" stories used translations from various foreign languages, usually French, Spanish, or German. These items drew from many sources, including, portions of Don Quixote translated by John S. Hittell, who later became an authority on California history.

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criminal elements in the prospective groom's family. The doctor solved this problem for them, enabling them to live happily ever after (II, 16). "A Thrilling Scene" told of the wife who revived her husband, who had supposedly died of yellow fever (I, 32). "A True Story" recited the account of a young soldier wounded in battle and then nursed by a young maiden who married him and inspired him to become a great man (I, 36). "The Doomed Sister; or Blighted Flowers told of orphaned sisters who died from a lack of love and attention (II, 12). "The Dreamer of the Danube" gave the story of lovers separated by the war. The girl sought advice from a fortune teller, who said her lover had been slain in battle. The fortune teller was wrong, and the boy returned unharmed, but grief over his supposed death had already driven the girl insane (II, 17). "The Outcast" told of a young woman rejected by her father and sisters, but taken and cared for by an old sea captain (II, 20).

[2]Examples include: "A Tragedy of other Times," a story of a mason called to wall up a beautiful lady (II, 5); "Romance and Robbery," the story of a mysterious highwayman in Vienna (I, 1); "The Master of Love: An Eastern Tale," of an old tutor in Cairo and the attempted seduction of his daughter by his pupil (I, 3); "Life in a Harem," which implied more in the title than the story contained (I, 14); "The Gambler's Last Stake, A Tale of Spain," the story of a gambler posing as a member of a wealthy Spanish family (I, 51); and "The Longest Night in a Life," the account of a woman inadvertently locked at night in a room with a maniac (II, 19).

A fourth class of stories contained those with strong moral or didactic elements. These stories were sometimes labeled "A Moral Story," or "Sunday Reading," but more frequently their titles gave no hint of their strong moral emphasis.[3] Again, the sentimental and the moralistic story overlapped, but while many stories had characteristics of both types, some were obviously stronger in moral intent than others. A fifth type of "selected" story was the brief anecdote about some famous person. There were numerous short items about George Washington, Napoleon, and other figures. Generally these stories, which were only a paragraph or two in length, attracted readers because they related incidents about a well-known person, as their story content was rather meager. In addition to the men mentioned above, there were items about Aaron Burr, the Empress of Russia, Daniel Webster, Luther, Milton, Lindley Murray, Lafayette, Franklin, et al.

Selections by authors with established reputations, although rare, included "A Haunted Ship," by Washington Irving; "The Two Widows," by Nathaniel Hawthorne; "The Treasure Grove," by Leigh Hunt; and "A Perfect Wife," quoted from Edmund Burke's tribute to his wife.

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[3]Typical stories included "The Timely Warning--A Lesson for Young Ladies" (I, 4), from the Olive Branch (one wonders how many young ladies read I, 4, of the Golden Era); "Lead us not into Temptation" (II, 45); "A Story for Boys" (I, 52; not many boys among the readers either); "The Last Letter of a Drunkard's Wife" (I, 42); "The Smooth Shilling" (I, 4); and "The Fool's Pence, a Story with a Moral" (I, 1).

Although these "selected" stories contributed much to the success of the Golden Era (and certainly without them the Era in the early years would have had a number of empty columns), the significance of the journal rests more solidly on the original material it published, the poems, the stories and sketches, the articles, editorials, and other things written with special attention to events of the period. In harmony with their announced intentions, the editors featured original stories, usually based on travel to California or living there. Some of the narratives were well written, displaying modest talent for writing about the West. These original items gave purpose and distinction to a paper which otherwise would have become over-sentimental and would inevitably have died an early death.

During the beginning years several writers contributed a series of original, local-color stories or sketches which have still not lost their charm or merit. Two outstanding series were "The Lost Letters: A Voice from the Wilderness," by Miles Quinton, and "Mining Recollections of '49 and '50" along with other related tales, by Blunderbuss. Both of these series were written by Daggett.[4]

The first series of sketches by Blunderbuss, which began with II, 37, and continued intermittently to III, 43, contains perhaps the finest original local-color prose written

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[4]See VIII, 20, for identification of Miles Quinton and Blunderbuss as Daggett.

for the Golden Era. Touching on almost all California activity, the sketches range from courting to the first attempt at mining, from the rough humor of the miners to their indomitable spirit in the face of unusually trying circumstances. As the entire series is worth reading, selection of typical stories is difficult because they are nearly equally good and tend to complement one another. However, two tales have been placed in Appendix B, Part 5, as examples of Daggett's sketches drawn from local color.

"A Voice from the Wilderness," or "The Lost Letters," based on Daggett's crossing the plains in 1849, began in the Golden Era with I, 44, and continued without interruption until all nine letters had been published. Then, beginning with III, 1, the series was reprinted, accompanied by the explanation that additional letters had been received and would be published after the first series had been republished. Following the reprint of the nine letters of the first series came the second series of sixteen letters which tell in Daggett's smooth, readable prose the history of Miles from the time when he left the caravan until smallpox had nearly wiped out the small Indian settlement where he had been living. In the interim he had become a favorite of the chief, married his daughter, and determined to remain there forever. When the smallpox epidemic caused the death of his wife and her father, along with most of the Indians, Miles

wrote his final, nostalgic letter to his friend in San Francisco.

The well-written letters, which if read together, unfold a touching story told with simple restraint, reflect a loneliness probably felt by many California gold miners. Certainly Daggett was following the advice given in the Golden Era (and most likely written by him) that one "must aim to work upon the passions and feelings of his readers; he must attempt to elicit their sympathy, love, or hatred towards the objects described, and joy or terror at scenes portrayed; if he is successful in this, let the story end as it may, it will occasion with the reader a momentary pleasure or regret, and the object is attained" (II, 19). The last letter of the second series (see Appendix B, Part 6) gives a good sample of their quiet power.

The Golden Era during these early years also featured many other original local-color sketches and stories. One of the best of these was the series "San Francisco in Early Times," by D'Arc, whose identity is lost in his pseudonym. Apparently drawn from personal experience, these sketches relate various incidents from early California days, although they are not so well told as the sketches by Blunderbuss. Now and then A. Delano, or "Old Block," as he signed himself, contributed a sketch, as was mentioned in the "To Our Correspondents" columns. Other writers of sketches of early

times were "Old Salt," "Baron Vieux," "Jules," "Seth," and "Dick Desultory." Finally, Robert F. Greeley, who joined the Golden Era in August, 1854, contributed a few items for volume two, but they lacked the genuine ring of personal experience. In addition to these few sketches, Greeley also wrote "A Romance of California Life: Pike County Bill; or the Maid of the Mountains," which is a mediocre, sentimental piece with a Western setting.

In subsequent years, the founding editors and their successors gradually turned from local-color material to original and "selected" stories by well-known authors, including Dickens. In a sense, then, one may trace the development of the stories in the Golden Era from the beginning, when most of the stories were selected; to the second period when original, Western sketches and short stories were featured; to the final phase when the editors were often able to offer their readers serialized romances, either "selected" or original, which (they declared) compared favorably with the best romance serials in Eastern or European journals.

This use of fiction parallels in many respects the contents of the Era. Initially the Golden Era stressed original, Western material which appealed to the miners more than to the possibly more refined tastes of the citizens of San Francisco. The poetry, stories, features, and editorials were

usually written for, about, and by the miners. Men and events in San Francisco were not ignored, but the miners received more attention from the editors at first.

Under the editorship of Colonel J. E. Lawrence, who took over in 1860 (he had worked as co-editor from III, 1, to V, 8), the Golden Era was directed toward a more refined, perhaps more feminine taste. The original material became somewhat more sophisticated and of greater interest to the city than to the mining areas. The main features were serialized romances, usually by a well-known author. In the transition, original stories dealing with Western subjects became scarce. Although the writers were possibly showing more polish, the Golden Era was turning away from its close ties with the miners, who were, of course, waning in number. Even though the Golden Era flourished under the editorship of Lawrence and Brooks, a change had come in, and the Era, though still a literary paper, was on the way to losing some of its rugged distinctiveness, as the writers often lacked personal knowledge of early California life, a touch which gave the Golden Era something no other journal approached, a touch which was fundamental to its success.

From the beginning of the 19th century there had been a demand in the United States for an American literature, which was often interpreted to mean the use of American materials, the application of established techniques of

writing to native subjects. Under this influence, writers such as Cooper, Irving, and Longfellow often used American subject matter. However, the rise of local color in the Golden Era was not just an outgrowth of this earlier desire to create a distinctly American literature. The writers were not using native sources in a studied attempt to develop an Americanized literature, but rather they were using local, regional material because it was what they knew best. In the Golden Era the miner, the pioneer, the particular flavor of the gold rush, the struggle to achieve law and order--all these became the special forte of these miners turned editors whose background and experiences had especially prepared them for editing this kind of paper.

Selections by Daggett from the Golden Era and by Harte from the Overland Monthly and other journals make a good comparison of Western local color. Harte, who had little actual mining experience, if any, was not the pioneer that Daggett was. Harte's stories, such as "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "The Outcasts of Poker Flats," "Tennessee's Partner," and others suggest a greater distance between writer and subject matter than do the writings of Daggett. In contrast with Harte, who had been a more detached observer, Daggett had participated in the events he described, with the result that local color and realism are sharper in Daggett's work than in Harte's. Undoubtedly part of this difference

between Daggett and Harte was due to the audiences, as Daggett wrote to please miners who were in daily contact with life in the mining camps while Harte wrote for and became popular with readers who usually had had no mining experience. Incidentally, Twain's work represents a good combination of these two points--he had an intimate knowledge of conditions and the ability to write the short story to perfection. Harte's famous "The Luck of Roaring Camp' appeared in the Overland Monthly in 1868, or about fifteen years after Daggett's Blunderbuss sketches in the Golden Era. By this time the hardships of the mining camps had taken on a sentimental patina characteristic of the work of Harte. What Daggett wrote was closer to actual conditions in California, but what Harte wrote appealed to people not experienced with the '49 days.

Wallace Stegner[5] states that the Western local colorists "stemmed from Bret Harte" and that "'The Luck of Roaring Camp' is the father of all Western local color." In a sense this is perhaps true, but Bret Harte undoubtedly learned much about writing local color from working under Daggett on the Golden Era and from reading Daggett's sketches therein.[6]

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[5]Stegner wrote the chapter "Western Record and Romance" in the Literary History of the United States edited by Robert E. Spiller et al. (New York, 1959), pp. 863, 867.

[6]Harte joined the Era in 1857 as a compositor and occasional contributor. See index for list of Harte's contributions up to April 15, 1860. George R. Stewart, Jr., in "A Bibliography

Harte's first known attempt at local color is "The Work on Red Mountain," published in the Golden Era on December 9, 1860, and subsequently revised, enlarged, but not much improved as "The Story of M'liss, an Idyll of Red Mountain," which began in the Era September 20, 1863. A comparison of "M'liss," revised when Harte was twenty-seven, with the sketches of Blunderbuss, written when Daggett was twenty-two or twenty-three, will show how much more skilled Daggett was in using native materials in 1853 than Harte was in 1863. In fact, with the exception of "M'liss," almost none of Harte's work for the Golden Era was based on Western material. It appears as if Harte had admired Daggett's skill in writing local color, found in writing "M'liss" that he was not up to Daggett's light, humorous description based on personal observation, and then modified Daggett's style to include his own "heart of gold" formula. By 1868, when Harte published "The Luck of Roaring Camp," readers were ready for his type of local-color fiction. If Stegner includes Harte's "heart of gold" technique as essential to Western local color, then Harte probably did begin the movement. But Western local color based on the picturesque and on native traits of ingenuity, shrewdness, humor, and individuality without Harte's formula, looks back, as Harte

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of the Writing of Bret Harte in the Magazines and Newspapers of California 1857-1871," University of California Publication in English, III (1933), 119-170, lists 130 additional Harte items in the Era plus six probable ones.

himself did, to Daggett and his Blunderbuss sketches, which foreshadowed the rise of local color in subsequent years.

An interesting fact is that the editors, in spite of the quality of such selections as those of Blunderbuss, placed great value on the sentimental novels or stories, for these items, as they became available, crowded out the local-color material. At first, the editors declined to publish continued stories, preferring the shorter, original local sketches. Gradually, however, they changed their policy, although they still strove for original material, even in the continued story. By the end of the editorship of Daggett and Foard, the serialized, sentimental romance had become the stock-in-trade of the Era

Another indication of this change in material in the Golden Era is the fact that what Mark Twain[7] and his contemporary humorists wrote for the Era in the 1860's was often relegated to the inside pages to leave space on the front page for a serialized romance, frequently by some Eastern or British author. Perhaps this change came about partly because of the difficulty of obtaining local-color sketches, as few writers were apparently able to produce them on a sustained basis. The evidence indicates, however, that the

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[7]Mark Twain's first items appeared in the Golden Era September 13, 1863. See Supplement to Index, pp. 351-2, for list of Mark Twain items in the Golden Era up to 1867.

editors believed that the original serialized novel patterned after those in other literary journals had the greatest attraction for their readers. A serialized romance brought their paper more in line with other literary papers, and the editors assumed that publishing a literary journal meant imitating as far as possible Eastern and European publications while still using local materials. What they did not sense was that they had something distinctive in their local color, something which writers would strive for in later years. Through their influence the editors helped to begin the Western local-color movement which later became popular while at the same time allowing themselves to be swept away in the current preference for the sentimental novel.

CHAPTER VI

Non-Fiction Prose: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

In addition to fiction, the Golden Era featured many non-fiction items. In order to discuss them in some order, I have classified them as (1) original material dealing with past events, usually related to California, (2) original material covering contemporary events, and (3) miscellaneous selected items, including filler.

As with stories and poems, original Western material became the hallmark of the non-fiction prose of the Golden Era. Probably the best and most readable of these items was the series written by "Filings," or Joseph T. Downey, who spent several years in California before and during the gold rush.[1] Beginning with events of 1845 and drawing from his personal observation and participation, Filings described many of the important developments in California history, including the early growth of cities and the activities of several military groups during the transition from Mexican to

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[1]Because these sketches are reprinted in Fred Blackburn Rogers, ed., Filings from an Old Saw, by Joseph T. Downey (San Francisco, 1956), I have not included any in the Appendix. Colonel Rogers identifies Filings as Downey.

United States control. As a result, these interesting and well-written sketches provide an excellent account of this period. The series was undertaken at the request of the editors, who also promised a "second series. . . containing an account of the operations of the Naval Forces, and that portion of the 1st Regiment of New York Volunteers who served in Lower California. . ." (I, 19). The second series never appeared.

The first sketches, which began in I, 4, opened simply: "Thinking that a picture drawn from life (if not on stone) yet on paper, of Yerba Buena in 1845, may be recognized by at least a few of your readers, and be interesting to many, I have overhauled the locker of my memory, and among the rubbish discovered a few choice hand-fulls of filings, which have been most carefully laid away from time to time, embracing a period of eight years, and have come to the conclusion to scatter them about for the edification of the community." What followed was an interesting account of early days in Yerba Buena. Filings continued to submit his sketches, missing an occasional issue because of illness, for about six months, when they ended with I, 29, without comment by either the author or editors. Because Downey took part in some of the military campaigns of the period, his accounts are quite useful to fill in details not found in other sources.

Downey himself seems to have been something of a notorious character. "Juris Consult" (whom I will discuss later)

mentions Downey in connection with the first election in Yerba Buena.

> A wild, reckless and dissipated fellow named DOWNEY (Joe,) belonging to the ship Portsmouth, had been appointed clerk of the election, and received from one of the candidates a sum of money to be used in electioneering for him. Downey, however, had the opinion that he would make as good an Alcade or Chief Magistrate as either of those who had offered themselves for the offices, besides being a sailor himself, he found, that with the aid of the money he had received, he would have no trouble in obtaining a majority of the votes of his fellow tars, whom he had liberally drenched with bad rum. The ballot box was opened, and each candidate was confident of success, believing that he had the influence of Downey, the clerk of the election, on his side, but Downey, in the absence of regular candidates, had erased their names from the tickets and placed his own instead. The election terminated by the casting of sixty-four votes, out of which Downey received thirty-four, and was accordingly announced as the winning candidate. But unfortunately for the newly elected Chief Magistrate, the cheat got wind, and the thirty-four voters were to be deprived of the official services of their favorite, for it so happened that he was a seaman on board the Portsmouth, and the officer of which vessel hearing of his "doings on shore," sent a guard after him and had him brought on board as a prisoner (I, 48).

The story is apparently true, as Downey offered no rebuttal, and the editors of the Golden Era asserted that the items written by Juris Consult were correct. The last notice in the Golden Era about Downey appeared a few weeks later, on January 15, 1854:

> Joe Downey.--A Honolulu (Sandwich Islands) paper says:--"A theatrical personage, well known in California as Joe Downey, caused some excitement by suddenly disappearing for Sydney, leaving debts to the nice amount of ten or twelve thousand dollars."

> If "Joe" did leave so much in debt, he must have bought the whole city of Honolulu on time. We are at a loss to know in what other way he could have reached that sum--unless the place has much improved within the past two years (II, 5).

But there is no mention that Downey was Filings. Although Colonel Rogers is probably correct in his identification, this notice is abrupt treatment of one who contributed such able sketches to the Golden Era.

Something of a companion piece to "Filings From an Old Saw," although probably not planned as such, was "Judges and Criminals; or Shadows of the Past," by Juris Consult, commencing with I, 26, and ending with II, 12. Written from a more impersonal, formal point of view, these accounts trace the history of California from the period of Spanish rule, with special attention on rulers and military conquests. The author, who intended to reveal some of the hidden injustices in the early history of California, caused little stir until he began to write about men who were still living and apparently influential in California affairs. His straightforward presentation was a little too revealing for some of the men of the day; at least the editors of the Golden Era reported in I, 49, an attack on Juris Consult, who "is aware of the threats which have been made by some of San Francisco's 'biggest' men, whom he has had the audacity to mention in their true colors." Juris Consult declared himself unafraid of their threats, and the editors

of the Golden Era personally assumed responsibility for the accuracy of his accounts. The series ended soon after this incident, however, although seemingly not as a result of pressure from these "biggest" men of San Francisco. Threats of violence or challenges to a duel were not uncommon to these frontier editors, who were not scared off by these "big" men. The articles provide a good account of the early governments and legal proceedings of California.[2]

Other original historical material included articles by Yellow Bird (John Rollin Ridge) on the Digger Indians of California; the "derivation and definition of the names of the several counties of California"; "Recollections of the

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[2]These historical sketches were written by R. F. Ryan, a lawyer then living in San Francisco. A few months after the sketches terminated in the Golden Era, the editors, in reviewing the History of California by E. L. Capron, commented that the work was, "in our opinion, a twice-told, 'flat, stale and unprofitable' tale--and by no means as authentic and interesting, in historical point of view, as the series of articles published in the Golden Era some months since, from the pen of R. F. Ryan, Esq" (II, 31). Only "Shadows of the Past" by Juris Consult fits this description. In addition, in II, 2, the editors commended R. F. Ryan, Esq., who had begun a history of California, to be issued in one 700 page volume "the first of May next. . . . Mr. Ryan is eminently qualified for this task, and we expect the work to be one of uncommon reliability and interest." Apparently the work was never published, however. Finally, in support of Ryan as the author, the editors observed that Juris Consult was one of the "ablest members of the legal profession in the city" (I, 47), and previously in I, 45, they had listed Ryan among the eleven leading lawyers of the city. Hence there appears to be no question that Ryan was Juris Consult. See Index to Contributors for additional items by Ryan in the Golden Era.

Azores," a series written by "Alpha" telling of his travels there; "Days of the Vigilance Committee," by Robert F. Greeley; "Progress of Civilization During the Past and Present Quarter of a Century," by John S. Hittell; and portions of E. Gould Buffum's Journal of Three Years' Residence of Upper and Lower California, 1847-8-9. Because the Golden Era frequently printed articles on early California history, it serves today as one of the rich sources of material for this period.

This preference for early California history was part of a nation-wide interest in history and travel. Dana's Two Years Before the Mast (1840), Parkman's The California and Oregon Trail (1849), George Bancroft's History of the United States (initially 1834), the works of William H. Prescott, and of several others are typical of the widespread historical activity in the country as numerous historical societies were formed throughout the nation after 1820. Travel books by Hawthorne, Emerson, Irving, and a host of other writers had wide popularity; and Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter (1850) and Melville's Moby-Dick (1851) are two of many novels based on history or travel experiences. In fact, just two years after the Golden Era began, the most comprehensive study of early California produced in the 1850's, The Annals of San Francisco, was published, and Hubert H. Bancroft was soon to begin his History of California.

Although the Golden Era styled itself a literary journal rather than a newspaper, it also printed a sizeable quantity of original material covering contemporary affairs as well as regularly reporting summaries of national and international news. Popular features were the personal accounts from the various mining camps, written either by local men who sent their copy to the Golden Era or by traveling correspondents, such as Cadez-Orion (Harry R. Stiles), who acted as both agent and correspondent for the paper. Apparently Stiles traveled from one mining area to another, selling subscriptions for the Golden Era and also reporting on the mining prospects, growth of the town, spirit of the miners, and related items. After several months of this itinerant existence, Stiles settled in Nevada, California, and regularly contributed "Mountain Correspondence" to the Golden Era. Other correspondents also reported from widely scattered mining camps. Interest in mining activity was always high during the early years of the Golden Era.

Two other regular correspondents were S.O.P. (S. O. Pearson) from Sacramento and "Double Eagle," who submitted several long accounts on the social, political, and literary events at Philadelphia. Apparently "Double Eagle" was a returned gold miner, for he made frequent reference to events and men in San Francisco and the diggings. These reports from the mining areas enabled the miners to compare their situation with other places scattered throughout the state.

Toward the end of this early period, newspapers began to flourish in many interior towns. From these papers the editors of the Golden Era selected items to be summarized for a column entitled "From the Interior." In addition, Daggett and Foard began a column called "Crimes and Casualties," which covered news of violence. These columns allowed maximum news coverage in a minimum of space. In a sense, then, the Golden Era acted as a collector, summarizer, and redistributor of news and miscellaneous personal items from the surrounding regions. The miner might not have all the details, but he could follow the general trend by reading the Golden Era.

News from the Eastern states and Europe came from newspapers brought by the steamers. This information was combined in one column labeled "News from the East," or some similar title. In addition, the Golden Era listed marriages, births, deaths, and places of public worship, as well as wholesale prices current in San Francisco and the uncalled-for letters in the San Francisco post office.

The Golden Era carried on a feud with Australian mining regions, always being careful to report accounts of unfavorable conditions among the miners "down under." This hostile attitude toward Australia, however, was not so emphatically pushed as was the dislike and distrust of the Chinese. The Golden Era, which frequently reported events unfavorable to

the Chinese, often supported a policy to limit or abolish Chinese immigration.

Local events in San Francisco were summarized in "Gossip for the Week." In addition, the fire department for a period of time had a weekly column, which reported the personnel and events of the several companies in the city. The Golden Era was selected by the California Academy of Natural Sciences as the official journal of their meetings, which the Era quite regularly reported after the group organized in 1855.

California agriculture received rather extensive and regular reporting. During the first year items on the development of agriculture in California frequently appeared in the Golden Era, which editorially asserted that the future of the state lay in agriculture, not in mining. The editors printed reports from various farmers concerning crops, water supply, and related problems, especially during the first year.

One of the first writers with an established reputation to join the staff of the Golden Era was "Dow, Jr.," or Elbridge Gerry Paige, whose "Short Patent Sermons" had won for him something of a reputation during his editorship on the New York Sunday Mercury. Paige, who came to California in 1854 or 1855, joined the Era as a compositor and contributor in May, 1855. From then on, almost every number of the

Golden Era featured on page one a "Short Patent Sermon" by Dow, Jr. Hardly sermons, these essays abound in homely remarks and pertinent observations written in a style to please the rough miners of California. Dow, Jr., began with a "text," usually a quotation, perhaps even one of his own, and then wrote in a discursive way an essay containing moral overtones. Although many of these sermons make rather tedious reading today, they had a wide audience, or at least the editors of the Golden Era believed them appealing enough to give them prominent front page space.

These California "Patent Sermons" may have lacked some of the qualities on which Paige's reputation was built as they are generally rather poor; however, for the editors of the Golden Era and their readers, the established reputation of Paige served to make his copy valuable in excess of its intrinsic worth. One of the roads to fame and public recognition is association with people or causes already famous, and Paige's known reputation attracted the editors and their readers in California to a greater degree than the face value of his copy warranted. For more than four and one-half years the "Short Patent Sermons" by Dow, Jr., were regular features of the Golden Era, until finally Paige's proclivity for strong drink brought his writing career and life to a close. A typical "Short Patent Sermon, California Series," may be seen in Appendix B, Part 7.

Besides the features described above, the Golden Era contained a wide variety of original items on any subject imaginable. Generally these items tended to be short, easily read, and quite simple. At times there were gossip columns, ladies' columns, support for the railroad, attacks upon corrupt officials, and always items from the diggings. Certainly the Golden Era was eclectic during these early years, appealing to every taste.

Finally, the Golden Era offered innumerable "selected" items from the many journals available. Generally these were short, often simple anecdotes or jokes, although occasionally long, serious articles were used. While these "selections" were really little more than filler, yet they helped to give balance and variety. If they offered little, they also demanded little of the reader, and hence they were ideally suited to the casual reading and rereading characteristic of the Era subscriber. What one missed or overlooked on Sunday could be read during the week while waiting for the next issue.

Much of the original non-fiction prose in the Golden Era lacks the literary qualities of other historical and travel literature of the period, although some of it does have charm because of its distinctive Western flavor. Daggett and Foard certainly had no quarrel with literary excellence, but they regularly favored locally written copy,

even though mediocre, to more literary selections copied from Eastern journals because they believed that this was the way to develop a strong, distinctively Western literature. The result is an interesting account of the gold rush days, an account which shows what literary talent was available in San Francisco at the time. In addition, this editorial policy helped the Era keep in touch with the common miner and hence avoid a more sophisticated air which would have hindered its success. These miners were ready to support a literary journal, but not one so stylish that they could not feel that it was their own.

CHAPTER VII

Editorial Policy: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

The broad lines of editorial policy which were to guide the Golden Era for over fifteen years were set forth in the first issue. Basically, the editors favored any cause which promoted growth and prosperity in California. They looked for the support of "a discriminating people; but to no particular party, clique, or persons. And being dependent on none of these for either its support or existence, we have none to favor, nor shall we ever debase our pages by making them undeservingly subservient to the interests of any" (I, 11). The editors regularly refused to support any cause which they felt worked against the interests of the people as a whole, with the possible exception of the miners, with whom the Golden Era always sided.

Consistently the editors declined copy expressing political or religious bias or prejudice, and they refused to kowtow to any political party or to depend on one for financial support. They maintained this independence and freedom even when rival journals were finding the tempting

offers of financial support from the various political parties too enticing to resist. This independence enabled the Golden Era to concentrate on the development of literary and cultural interests in California. The only "special interests" served by the Era were the betterment of California, the advancement of morality, literature, education, science, the theatre, and allied fields.

During these early years several topics received repeated editorial attention. The dominant theme was the continued growth of California. The editors had a passion for promoting the development of California and for telling others about the advantages of their adopted state. The discovery of gold in California and the subsequent development and expansion of the state were all a part of divine providence to encourage the exploration and population of the globe. In his quest for gold, man was fulfilling the Creator's plan by spreading civilization all over the world (I, 16). Thus divinely ordained, California would continue to prosper until the millennium, which was to come soon. "We have been chosen by heaven to commence the work, and let it be our aim that the responsibility of the favor shall be turned to a glorious end.--Let the heaven which was planted in the far West, be not neglected until it shall have raised man to his proper condition, and blessed the world with its virtues of equality. Let not our discords blast the hopes of the world by showing them that we are unequal to the task

assigned to us. It is for us to show the world the triumphs of a free government. . ." (I, 29). California will expand and thrive under this divine blessing, and in twenty-five years, the railroad and telegraph will be accomplished facts,[1] and trade from all the world will flow through the port of San Francisco (I, 6), which will "be the third city in size and importance on the Western Continent" (I, 6). Consequently, California needs permanent settlers, not prospectors. Those coming to California should plan to make it their home (II, 34). "There is a need for a feeling of permanence among the citizens, a feeling of pride for their home state--California" (II, 51).

This pride in California, coupled with a nationwide stress on morals, led the editors to defend the reputation of California against those who saw only corruption and wantonness.

> People in the East talk of California as if it were a plague-spot upon the earth, but when every paper that we get from that quarter teems--in fact, is almost exclusively filled, with accounts of rows, riots, assassinations, and a host of minor disturbances, we think it high time for some of our neighbors to remove the beam from their own eyes, and see that the boot is on the right foot hereafter. The truth is, California, for a new country, is and has been since its acquisition by the U. S. government, remarkably free from excitements--more free than any other newly settled country has ever proved under similar circumstances. . . . California has become a well-regulated State,

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[1]The railroad came in sixteen years, the telegraph in eight.

> and San Francisco a quiet and well-conducted city. On Sundays, particularly, it is quieter than most eastern cities of similar size and importance (II, 34).

Such editorials might cause someone unacquainted with San Francisco to wonder if the millennium had not already arrived. Certainly the Golden Era did at times paint in its editorials a glowing picture of morality and progress in California, a picture which was more wishful than factual; yet this point of view is consistent with the preference for romantic poetry and stories. And before one censures the editors for their preoccupation with romantic optimism, he should remember that R. W. Emerson, Theodore Parker, Charles Finney, Andrew Jackson, and a host of others for years had been proclaiming man's innate goodness. This trend, coupled with the desire to help California to excel, was carrying the editors along in a movement which touched most of the country. This was the age when Longfellow's "Excelsior" expressed the feelings of many, even though one might not be quite sure just what was being sought. In addition, the men of California wanted to present their state in the best possible light, a desire which often left part of the story untold. However, this editorial optimism did not always prevail.

At times the editors seemed to contradict themselves as they deplored the evil days, crying out for relief. "Gold! What hardships and perils will not men undergo to obtain it!

It severs the social harmony of the world, breaks the firmest bands of friendship, gives a magnificence to infamy, covers the sins and iniquities of rich men, and enables the tyrant to ride rough-shod over the slave. The miser hoards it up and adores it as a God. . ." (II, 8). The golden fortune dreamed of by the immigrant was rarely amassed (II, 16), with misery and poverty everywhere evident. "No family should come here without first providing means sufficient to place them beyond the reach of want until they have become familiar with the state of affairs in their new home" (I, 38).

Perhaps the best example of this "double vision" is the following pair of quotations taken from successive numbers of the Golden Era. "We are in a progressive age; we are a progressive nation. . . . For proofs of this, look at California--at San Francisco. In its gigantic strides to wealth and greatness, the pages of the world's history record no parallel. . . . It is with feeling of pride that we behold the changes that are daily taking place around us, and it is in sincerity with which we welcome the evidences of stability and prosperity which are rearing themselves on every side. . ." (II, 5). In the next issue the editors stated that "It is useless for the press to attempt to conceal the fact, that at this moment, prospects to the merchant, farmer, and miner, look less cheering than at any period since

the discovery of gold in California. We cannot but look upon it as a sickening mockery and a flagrant attempt at deception, to boast of general prosperity and flattering prospects, when we are actually in the midst of a most disasterous financial crisis. . ." (II, 6). Although there were times when even the most optimistic ones had to yield to the inescapable economic facts of life, the spirit of progress soon revived as the editors took up their beloved theme of progress and prosperity.

On two issues editorials in the Golden Era never varied. The miners could always count on the Golden Era to take their side in any dispute. The miner's rights to his claims were not to be tampered with by the legislature (I, 23), by the greedy creditor (II, 35), or even by the few large, wealthy mine owners (I, 23). Even agricultural rights were to yield to the miner (I, 37). Moreover, the editors regularly demanded reforms and improvements in the state legislature. Deploring legislative corruption, they advocated the election of men of ability and principle (II, 39).

> People of California. . . go to our Capital, where laws are made, and see to whom you have entrusted the public weal. Instead of the statesman, the wise counsellor, and the honorable and profound lawmaker, you will find the knave, the fawning sycophant, the hireling, the speculator and the desperado. . . . We find that the majority of the Legislators were put there for particular purposes by villainous conventions and fradulent votes. . . . So, the shorter the session, the less time will they have to practice their rascalities, and the better it will be for the people (II, 9).

The members of the legislature must be able men (I, 15) devoted to the interests of the state as a whole (I, 5). A great work of reform ought to be done by the legislature (III, 17).

Turning their attention to more local affairs, the editors deplored the lawless conditions in San Francisco. "If there is a police, we never see it.--The authorities are too deeply engaged in speculation to attend to the public affairs, and Judge Lynch is once more coming to vogue among us. . ." (II, 37). There was great need for a stronger police force composed of men "with some character and known to be above corruption. . . . At present men may be robbed or shot down in many of the streets at any hour of the day, and the perpetrator may easily escape. . . . Cut-purses, stabbers and incendiaries are so thickly scattered over these hills that a great many eyes will be required to watch them" (II, 46). The editors indignantly rejected an editorial suggestion in the New York Star and Democrat that prisoners be shipped to California since the $50 passage was cheaper than the cost of maintaining them in New York.[2] "We confidently anticipate the day--and we think it not far distant--when California will be regarded as the model state of the Union" (II, 38). However, law

[2]Among other reasons, San Francisco already had a surplus of criminals (II, 31).

enforcement must be vastly improved before this time will come.

The Golden Era supported several reform causes, even though they were unpopular with many wealthy and influential citizens. Editorials advocated: (1) the suppression of gambling in California by the legislature (II, 4, 11), although the editors expressed sadness when the El Dorado gambling saloon closed, marking the end of an era--"days of wild romance and excitement which can never be forgotten by those who experienced them" (III, 22); (2) the elimination of duelling--"shame, eternal shame on those who have not the will or the courage to face this savage code, and write and preach, and practice it down" (II, 15); (3) the gradual closing of "houses of ill-fame, many of which are now located in the very heart of the city." This reform was to be accompanied by education along moral lines (II, 1); (4) the outlawing of raffles, which took advantage of the citizen and defrauded him (I, 28). The Golden Era also refused to support the San Francisco Gas Company because its exorbitant rates were a "dearly bought luxury" (II, 2).

On the more positive side, the Golden Era advocated the establishment (1) of an "Alms house"; (2) of places where "those who are too poor to purchase lunch may procure something to eat at the public expense"; and (3) of a dispensary where the sick may get medicines without charge (I, 7). A

system was needed so that widows and orphans need not die of starvation (I, 43). When the Board of Supervisors laid plans for establishing a "House of Refuge near San Francisco for the reception of juvenile offenders" (II, 17), the Golden Era observed that "We hope the matter will not rest until something permanent in regard to it has been effected." Civic improvements, such as paving the streets, always received support from the editors, who worked diligently to see that a plaza was set apart in the heart of the city (II, 5). And finally, the fire department received liberal commendation (I, 20).

Reform causes supported by the Golden Era were similar to movements throughout the nation, and like others across the country, these California reformers gradually centered on the slave question by the end of the decade, although the issue was not so inflamed in California as in other sections of the country.

Three problems affecting the entire state were Indians, safety regulations for steamboats, and Oriental (especially Chinese) immigrants, who did not integrate well into the California way of life. All through the country, the Indians and their problems were being discussed as Schoolcraft, Catlin, and others focused attention on them. Even Longfellow's Hiawatha (1855) was part of a general interest in Indians throughout the nation. For the Indians in the

West, the Golden Era advocated a policy "to remove them from their native hills and transplant them in some valley removed from the whites, and there teach them the elements of civilization" (II, 12). This domestication of the Indians could be accomplished in five years with the money being spent on them (II, 36). And the announced government policy to destroy all Indians east of the Rocky mountains was unwarranted and unjust (II, 52). For the Orientals, laws to prevent their immigration were essential to the harmonious development of the state. "We have repeatedly said, and we are more firmly of the opinion now than ever that a calamity more dire in its effect could not befall the future prosperity of our State, than that which will inevitably result from a too rapid increase among us of a people whose every characteristic is so much at variance with our own ideas. . ." (II, 22). Because of their different living standards, the Chinese, who caused real social and economic problems, were strongly resented by many Californians. Concerning steamboats, the editors demanded legislation to establish safety regulations and to hold those in charge responsible for accidents resulting from carelessness (II, 6, 18, 19). During the early fifties, several of the steamboat disasters were clearly the result of negligence and even indifference by owners and operators.

Politically the Golden Era maintained neutrality, although it regularly advocated better government, abler

statesmen, and less corruption. In doing so, the editors probably allowed their political preferences to show, or at least to be implied, to those familiar with all the local crosscurrents of the day. This refusal to support a particular party was probably the result of the editors' conviction that to take sides politically would alienate some of their readers. And after all, Emerson, Longfellow, Thoreau, and other men of literary reputation remained largely aloof from political affairs, preferring literature and art. The editors of the Golden Era may not have had exactly the same reasons as did Emerson, Longfellow, Thoreau, and others for refusing to be active for one political group, but certainly they had plenty of good company in doing so. In national policy, they usually supported the United States government, both in foreign and domestic affairs (see I, 2, 4, 10, 43, 49; II, 10, 15, 49). And there were the usual editorials on Christmas, the Fourth of July, and similar subjects.

In religion, as with politics, the editors refused to support any sect or to print articles indicating their preference, although they regularly published the location of religious meetings. Again, as with politics, they apparently did not wish to risk alienating subscribers by involving the Era in a religious controversy. In this connection, Sunday observance became somewhat of a thorn in the flesh for the editors. The appearance and circulation of the Golden Era on

Sunday caused some reformers to charge the Era with violating the Sabbath. The editors tried to push these objections aside with the explanation that all the work except the distribution of the Era was done before Sunday (I, 27). This would seem to imply support for Sunday legislation, but actually the Era refused to support such legislation.

> For some time past an effort has been making in this city by some of our well-meaning people, to suspend all business on the Sabbath, which has been at length rewarded by the passage of an ordinance to this effect by the City Council. Now, there is none who would hail such a reform with a heartier good will than we would, whenever the majority of our citizens demands it; but at the present time, considering that a large portion of our inhabitants is made up of different religious opinions, such a definite action by this body is premature, and if enforced, will lead to unnatural results (I, 7).

The question of the suppression of amusements on Sunday found the Golden Era divided in opinion. Horse racing for purposes of betting "is at all times of very doubtful morality, . . . but still, its demoralizing effects are never at their height, until the sanctity of the Sabbath is openly encroached upon. . . . Down with the practice" (I, 25). However, the mayor's plan to close the theatres on Sunday met with an editorial rebuff, for such closing would only send men to worse places (I, 50). A year or so later, when the legislature passed a Sunday law, the editors approved, commenting that they hoped those who supported the law would not be the first to break it (III, 22). The editors of the Golden Era

believed that a Sunday law could never be enforced in California. A related problem was the teaching of the Bible in the public schools. Because of the variety of possible interpretations, the editors advocated that no alternative was left "but to withdraw the bone of contention--to exclude religion and religious books from our Public Schools" (III, 22).

Editorial stands on a few unrelated items are interesting. The editors objected to and refused to participate in personal attacks made on one another by rival editors (I, 51). Projected plans for a Pacific Railway received enthusiastic support (I, 41: II, 6). Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin raised a stir in San Francisco, and although the editors did not approve slavery, still they declined to endorse Mrs. Stowe's book either. In their opinion, it served only to stir up hard feelings between the North and South in a time when cooperation and mutual understanding were most desirable (I, 20). In this respect, the editors were more sensible than many who expressed a more passionate feeling in the North.

And finally, the editors dared to speak out against the way the women dressed (II, 41) and in the following issue to condemn strong-minded females advocating equal rights with men. "If something is not done, . . . to curb these frantic females in the disorganizing and the atheistical course they

are pursuing, we shall see our daughters growing up a race of brazen prostitutes and our sons a set of woman haters of the most confirmed description" (II, 42). Campaigns for rights for women may have been popular throughout the nation, but these California editors wanted no part of this national folly.

Although not strictly editorial material, a series of sketches entitled "San Francisco Indoors," which lasted for five numbers, was written in the editorial "we" and nearly involved the editors in several duels. Describing some of the illegal dens of vice in San Francisco, the series asserted that leading citizens holding high offices regularly patronized these lewd places. "It is here that can be seen, practicing those vices to which their nature prompts them, canting hypocrites, who disgrace our council chambers and judiciary. . ." (II, 14). In the next number the editors became even more specific, giving numerous details in the life of "H----," who was described as one of those "canting hypocrites." This "Mr. H----" had caused the ruin of his young cousin, who was "leading a life of infamy." "And where is her destroyer? We will tell you. Finding that gambling did not pay, he turned his attention to politics, and is <u>now a member of the California Legislature</u>!

"The above is not <u>fancy</u>, but a <u>true</u> sketch, as we stand ready to prove" (II, 15).

The next number reported the furor caused by this reference to a member of the state legislature. The editors explained that the letter "H" had been selected because "there are in the Legislature more persons whose names commence with an H than that of any other one letter--consequently, this selection was least liable to be received as personal. . ." (II, 16). However, the members of the legislature apparently did not feel this way, as the editors received a visit

> on Tuesday last from a brace of Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary, from the seventeen "H's" of the California Legislature. . . . Upon receiving them, we inquired of the smaller one (in a tone which we conceived smacked strong of dignity) the object of the visit, when a paper was handed us containing the autographs of the aforementioned "seventeen." Believing them tantamount to as many challenges, we were on the point of craving the indulgence of "one at a time," the preliminaries of such affairs having long been irrevocably determined upon in our mind (time, midnight--weapons, Allen's pepper boxes--distance, three-quarters of a mile, to be extended at the option of the seconds,) when we were informed that the paper could be considered only in the light of a credential, which authorized them to inquire which, if any, of that long list of Legislative "H's" was the H. referred to in the sketch (II, 16).

With each one assured that he was not the person referred to, the delegation left. "With this the conference ended, and the Envoys took their leave, satisfied that they had preserved the honors of the seventeen 'H's,' and we were satisfied, that if they had made it an especial business to San Francisco, their passage should have been half price to have approached any where within the vicinity of 'even.'"

Although editorials in the Golden Era often dealt with non-literary subjects, in a broader sense, they supported the cause of literature as the editors favored improvements which would lead to better living and hence to more time for the arts and for literature.

CHAPTER VIII

Drama Review: December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

The drama in California during the 1850's has been studied in detail by two significant reports. "The Theatre of the Gold Rush Decade"[1] lists 907 plays, 48 operas (in five different languages), 84 extravaganzas, ballets, and pantomines, and 66 minstrels which were presented in the 1850's in San Francisco. George R. MacMinn's The Theater of the Golden Era[2] is a comprehensive study of the history of California drama, important performers, the popularity of Shakespeare, the diversity of non-Shakespearean plays, public reaction and support, the impact of the circus and of child actors, and related items. MacMinn used California journals, including the Golden Era, quite extensively for his sources.

Commenting on the number of plays reported in "The Theatre of the Gold Rush Decade," MacMinn notes that

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[1]Monograph No. 5, California Literary Research, State Emergency Relief Administration Project, edited by Joseph Gaer, published in mimeograph form at San Francisco, 1935.

[2]Caldwell, Idaho, 1941; "Golden Era" in the title refers to the period, not to the Golden Era.

we still have no adequate basis for estimating the taste of the time until we examine a fairly comprehensive selection of the plays that were given with noticeable frequency and outstanding success. Excluding Shakespeare, it should serve our purpose to take thirty such pieces, most of them plays of full length. Here they are, arranged only in such a way as to indicate roughly the order of their earliest prominent appearance on the bills of the day:

The Golden Farmer, by Benjamine Webster
Bonbastes Furioso, by William B. Rhodes
Charles the Second, by John Howard Payne and Washington Irving
Damon and Pythias, by John Banim
(There was also a popular farce of the same title, by John B. Buckstone.)
Box and Cox, by John Maddison Morton
Douglas, by the Rev. John Home
Venice Preserved, by Thomas Otway
A New Way to Pay Old Debts, by Philip Massinger
Don Caesar de Bazan, by G. A. Beckett and Mark Lemon (or the version by Boucicault and Webster)
Putnam, the Iron Son of '76, by Nathaniel H. Bannister
Ingomar, the Barbarian, as adapted by Maria Lovell
Mazeppa, possibly by John Howard Payne
She Stoops to Conquer, by Oliver Goldsmith
The School for Scandal, by R. B. Sheridan
The Rivals, by Sheridan
Pizarro, as adapted by Sheridan
The Stranger, as adapted by Sheridan (or some other version)
The Lady of Lyons, by E. G. Bulwer-Lytton
Richelieu, by Bulwer
Money, by Bulwer
The Hunchback, by Sheridan Knowles
Love, by Knowles
The Wife, by Knowles
London Assurance, by Don Boucicault
The Corsican Brothers, as adapted by Boucicault
Fazio, by the Rev. Henry M. Milman
The Iron Chest, by George Coleman, the Younger
The Honeymoon, by John Tobin
Uncle Tom's Cabin, by George L. Aiken
Camille, as adapted by Jean Davenport (or some other version).[3]

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[3] Ibid., pp. 197-198.

> Within the first decade following the arrival of the forty-niners no fewer than twenty-two of Shakespeare's plays--some of them considerably abridged, but most of them in the customary stage versions--were presented in the theaters of California. These comprised eleven comedies, seven tragedies, and four histories: The Merchant of Venice, The Taming of the Shrew (or its abridgment, Katharine and Petruchio), Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It, The Comedy of Errors, Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Tempest, The Winter's Tale, Cymbeline, and The Merry Wives of Windsor; Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Romeo and Juliet, Julius Caesar, and Coriolanus; Richard III, Henry IV (Part I or a combination of Parts I and II), Henry VIII, and King John.
>
> Scores of Shakespearean performances were given every year from 1850 on, some of them with the maximum of frontier crudity, many of them pretentiously, not a few with distinction. The most inexhaustible favorite was Richard III.[4]

Each week the Golden Era devoted a column to the drama. These reviews aimed to encourage drama on the Pacific Coast, with especial attention to San Francisco. This basic principle was stated in the first issue: "Amid the multifarious duties, which as journalists we must touch upon, we intend to devote some part of our time and space upon the Drama. . . . If Shakespeare is worthy of his immortal fame, the art by which he acquired that fame should not be suffered to sink into ignominy and ruin; and it is not for the press to neglect its duty in promoting. . . the stage." Throughout its first fifteen years, and even longer, the Golden Era conscientiously and effectively reported the drama in San

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[4]Ibid., p. 84.

Francisco, with specific attention to general standards, to reviews of plays produced, and to criticisms of individual performers.

The large number of plays produced in San Francisco indicates that most performances were short-lived, with many running for only an evening or two because they did not draw enough patrons to warrant additional nights. The Era reports confirm the fact that in spite of the large number of performances, San Francisco citizens were often imposed on by plays poorly performed and directed. And MacMinn suggests that the Era drama critic was more favorable in his comments than were critics of other journals, such as the Wide West.

California, according to the drama critic in the Golden Era, offered unlimited opportunity for the dramatic arts. Patrons were ever ready to spend their money for good productions and acting, and in turn, they were willing to overlook many minor flaws in the performances because of their desire to encourage drama. "Then why is it that our playgoing people are so grossly imposed upon by persons who, to an extent, rule the profession in the city? . . . Simply because our theatre-goers have been, and still are, at the mercy of a combination of ingrates. . . who. . . have managed to drive from the stage and the favor of the public, many of the finest artists. . .--by raising the prices over the heads

of their victims. . ." (I, 40). The theatre must be taken out of the hands of those who merely desire to amass a fortune and given to those whose love for good drama will lend them to produce the best plays at a reasonable price. "People should know the difference between a company of high-minded artists, whose aim is the elevation of drama, and a clique of grasping Shylocks, whose sole object is gain."

Surveying two or more years of dramatic productions in San Francisco, the Golden Era felt that too much emphasis had been placed on opera, comedy, and ballet, and not enough on serious drama. "The eye and the ear have been feasted, while the heart and the understanding have been allowed to linger without nourishment. The sweet but senseless warblings of Italian music are listened to with real or affected rapture by thousands, while the lofty sentiment, the pure morality, the speaking nature of Shakespeare drop silently and unregarded on the ear of man" (II, 50).

This paucity of good, serious drama was not due entirely, however, to public lack of interest or taste. In fact, apathy toward serious drama was probably a result of the "scarcity of actors competent to support the characters of the higher ranges of the drama or even to the support of those few able to assume such roles. . . . Give the public a few new faces, some talent coupled with youth and beauty, and the attractions of the drama will be greatly aided" (II, 50).

As a general rule, the Golden Era wanted more plays by Shakespeare, Sheridan, John Morton, and other well-known dramatists (II, 51).

As well as commenting on the general trend of San Francisco drama, the Golden Era reported (1) the opening of new plays, usually with a short evaluation; (2) the opening, closing, or reopening of a theatre; (3) the arrival (and sometimes departure) of new performers, who were customarily puffed quite liberally; and (4) performances in outlying areas. These reviews, tending to view favorably the productions, were apparently written with the same bottle of ink used by the other Era writers who felt obliged to convince the world of the good points of San Francisco, although at times the drama critic appeared to have difficulty in convincing himself.

New actors were generally hailed as welcome additions to the San Francisco stage, and almost any previous acting experience was blown up and used to recommend the new arrival as an experienced Eastern actor. The opening of a new theatre, or the reopening of a closed one, was always regarded as a sure sign of the growing importance of the drama in San Francisco as the reviewer talked himself and his readers into the idea that San Francisco would soon become the drama capital of the world. However, the columns also reported on occasion the rather low state of affairs which existed at times. "The

theatrical profession in California numbers at present one hundred and ten members, among whom might be named some twelve or fifteen passable artists, while the rest are either horrid 'sticks' or conceited 'ninnies'" (I, 48).

> A witty writer in the Boston Transcript says that if Shakespeare could have foreseen what wretched work some of the minor actors would make with their parts, he would have arranged the play so that they would have been dispatched in the first act.
>
> We know of a number in California--who don't class themselves with the "miners," but as full-grown stars --who should, in justice to the memory of the immortal Shakespeare and the feelings of our play-going public, be killed off at rehearsals (I, 30).

On occasion the reviewer would note that little of importance had taken place in the past week, or he would lament the closing of another theatre. However, the reviews usually implied that the dramas were good and that they were going to become better. The San Franciscans, proud of their city, of their culture, of their drama, wanted the best of everything. When they were unable to have the best, they pronounced good what they had and anticipated better things to come.

Individual performers were frequently evaluated. Taking exception to the "sickly and fulsome praise" used to describe Mrs. Sinclair, the Era reviewer reluctantly noted that "as 'Margaret Elmore'. . . she betrayed throughout the entire performance, so great a want of the necessary qualifications of an artist, that, had it not been for other causes of which

it would be improper here to speak, her reception would have been far from flattering" (I, 22). When Miss Laura Keene was cast as Viola in Twelfth Night, the Era observed "Viola is a creation upon which Miss Laura Keen can, profitable to her reputation, bestow much more care and study than the present opportunity has offered" (III, 20). However, the reviewer at times also wrote quite favorably concerning a performer. Speaking of Mr. Edwin Booth as Richard III, the critic affirmed "that his portraiture of the crooked-back Tyrant, by far excelled any former one we have ever witnessed in this country, save and except his lamented sire. Long and severe study will correct any deficiencies in his readings; age will mature his voice, but for a good conception of the character. . . he is now second to none" (I, 19).

The first night of a play was often reviewed in the Era, with the comments varying from short notices to detailed criticisms of both performance and performers. "The brilliant benefit of that excellent actress and accomplished lady, Mrs. Judah, on Tuesday evening, and the unexceptionable manner in which Shakespeare's great play of the 'Comedy of Errors' was produced proved to be the leading events at the Adelphi during the past week. We do not remember ever having seen the comedy more eminently cast. . ." (I, 19). A performance of Richard III at the Metropolitan evoked the following review:

> On Thursday evening, the tragedy of "Richard the Third" (alas, poor William Shakespeare! to what a base use has your greatest creation come!) was produced to a slim audience. To "a man up a tree," the performance might have appeared all right, but many who had seen the "Richard" as performed by the elder Booth and Charles Kean, were not altogether satisfied as to whose Richard it was, whether Shakespeare's or whether it was "got up" expressly for that occasion by some aspiring "supe." According to William Shakespeare's version, but one of the great contending armies is vanquished, while in the Richard of Tuesday evening, an indiscriminate slaughtering took place, in which "all hands and the cook to boot" were murdered outright--nary one left to tell the piteous tale. During the performance, a wag at our elbow suggested that Richard "was not himself"--but somebody else. The Queen, however, (Mrs. Woodward,) who was not around when the fighting came off, fared rather better than the rest.--To speak plainly, with the single exception of Mrs. Woodward's "Queen," the tragedy was extremely farcical (II, 6).

The reviewer seems to have been torn between a conviction that he dare not label mediocrity good and a desire to present the best possible review of the drama for the readers back East. Inevitably there had to be a compromise between these two objectives, as one cannot maintain his integrity as a drama critic and at the same time write puffs. The drama columns of the Golden Era tended to strike a balance between these two objectives. A general tone of optimism prevailed throughout the columns, which faithfully supported quality and excellence; yet at the same time, the reviewer did not hesitate to decry the poor acting or to protest shoddy performances. Wanting to keep alive and to augment the interest in the drama, the Era assumed that no enduring

public support could be won unless excellence was achieved. To accomplish this end it (1) tried to establish standards of excellence and (2) tried to point out weaknesses in current practices. Without doubt San Francisco drama gained from the support of the Golden Era.

PART III

The Golden Era: September 23, 1855, to April 15, 1860

The Quarto Period

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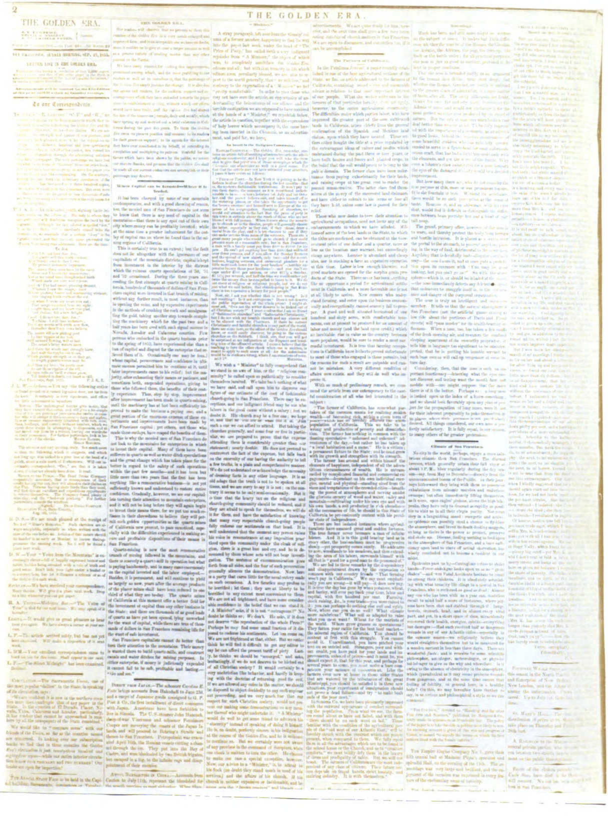

THE GOLDEN ERA.

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Our readers will observe that we present to them this number of the *Golden Era* in a very much enlarged and improved form; and it is an acceptable one we have no doubt, since it enables us to give at once a larger amount as well as a greater variety of reading matter than any other journal on the Pacific.

We have many reasons for making this improvement, prominent among which, and the most gratifying to our readers as well as to ourselves, is, that the patronage of the *Golden Era* amply justifies the change. It is also due our agents and readers, for the uniform support and encouragement which they have extended towards the paper since its establishment in 1852, without which our efforts would have been futile, and the *Golden Era* had shared the fate of the numerous journals, daily and weekly, which have sprung up and enjoyed but a brief existence in California during the past five years. To them the *Golden Era* owes its present position and success; to its readers for their generous support; to its agents for the interest they have ever manifested in its behalf, in extending its circulation and multiplying its patrons. Grateful for the favors which have been shown by the public, we return our sincere thanks, and promise that the *Golden Era* shall be made all our earnest endeavors can accomplish or their patronage may deserve.

Where Capital can be Invested—Where it is Needed.

It has been charged by some of our mountain contemporaries, and with a good showing of reason, too, the monied men of San Francisco do not seem to know that there is any need of capital in the mountains—that there is any spot out of their own city where money can be profitably invested; while at the same time a greater inducement for the outlay of capital can no where be found than in the mining regions of California.

This is certainly true to an extent; but the fault does not lie altogether with the ignorance of our capitalists of the mountain districts; capital is kept from investment in the interior by the distrust which the ruinous quartz speculations of '50, '51 and '52 occasioned. During the three years succeeding the first attempts at quartz mining in California, hundreds of thousands of dollars of San Francisco capital were invested in that branch of mining, without any further result, in most instances, than in opening the veins, and by expensive experiments in the methods of crushing the rock and amalgamating the gold, taking another step towards completing the machinery which for the past two and a half years has been used with such signal success in Nevada, Amador and Calaveras counties. Few persons who embarked in the quartz business prior to the spring of 1852, have experienced else than a loss of capital and disgust for the enterprise that relieved them of it. Occasionally one may be found whose capital, perseverance and confidence in ultimate success permitted him to continue at it, until later improvements came to his relief; but the majority, after exhausting their means or patience, and sometimes both, suspended operations, giving to those who followed them, the benefits of their costly experience. Thus, step by step, improvement after improvement has been made in quartz-mining, until the machinery has at last been sufficiently improved to make the business a paying one, and a great portion of the enormous expense of these experiments and improvements have been made by San Francisco capital; yet others, not those who made those outlays, have reaped the benefits of them.

This is why the monied men of San Francisco do not look to the mountains for enterprises in which to invest their capital. Many of them have been sufferers in quartz as well as water ditch speculations and the great change which has taken place for the better in regard to the safety of such operations within the past few months—and it has been but little more than two years that the first has been anything like a remunerative business—is not yet sufficiently known and understood to restore entire confidence. Gradually, however, we see our capitalists turning their attention to mountain enterprises, and it will not be long before they will again begin to invest their means there, for we put too much reliance in their shrewdness to believe they will permit such golden opportunities as the quartz mines of California now present, to pass unnoticed, especially with the difficulties experienced in making secure and profitable dispositions of their means in San Francisco.

Quartz-mining is now the most remunerative branch of mining followed in the mountains, and there is scarcely a quartz-mill in operation but what is paying handsomely, and in many cases enormously on the capital invested and the labor employed.—Besides, it is permanent, and will continue to yield as largely as now, years after the average products of the placer mines shall have been reduced to one third of what they are to-day. The quartz mines of California at this moment offer a better field for the investment of capital than any other business in the State; and there are thousands of as good leads of quartz as have yet been opened, lying unworked for the want of capital, while there are tens of thousands of dollars in San Francisco remaining idle for the want of safe investment.

San Francisco capitalists cannot do better than turn their attention to the mountains. Their money is wanted there to build quartz-mills, and construct canals and water ditches for mining purposes. In either enterprise, if money is judiciously expended it cannot fail to be safe, profitable and lasting.—"Go and see."

DIRECT FROM JAPAN.—The schooner *Caroline E. Foote* brings accounts from Hakodadi to June 23d, and a cargo of Japanese goods consigned to G. P. Post & Co., the first installment of direct commerce with Japan. Americans have been forbidden to live in Simoda. The U. S. steamer John Hancock, sloop-of-war Vincennes and schooner Fenimore Cooper are surveying the coasts of the Japan Islands, and will proceed to Behring's Straits and thence to San Francisco. Petropaulski was evacuated April 16th, the Russian vessels cutting a channel through the ice. They put into the Bay of Castre, and were blockaded by two British frigates, but escaped in a fog, to the infinite rage and disappointment of their enemies.

AWFUL BARBARITIES IN CHINA.—Accounts from Canton to July 11th, represent the bloodshed for [illegible]

"Minister."

A stray paragraph, left over from the 'Gossip' column of a former number, happening to find its way into the paper last week, under the head of "The Price of Piety," has called forth a very indignant rejoinder from "A Minister," the object of which was, to completely annihilate the *Golden Era*, editors and all; but with that tenacity to life which editors seem peculiarly blessed, we are able to report to the world generally, that "we still live," and contrary to the expectation of a "Minister" we feel "pretty comfortable." In order to give those who may not have seen the article, an opportunity of understanding the heinousness of our offence, and the terrible castigation we are supposed to have received at the hands of a "Minister," we republish below, the article in question, together with the expressions of holy horror which accompany it, the same having been inserted in the *Chronicle*, as an advertisement, and paid for, we hope.

An Insult to the Religious Community.

EDITORS CHRONICLE:—The *Golden Era*, yesterday, contains an article full of insulting allusions towards the whole religious community, and I hope you will take the occasion to give that paper one of those scourgings which the *Chronicle* can administer so well in a good cause. For fear that the article may not have attracted your attention, I paste it here entire as follows:

"PRICE OF PIETY.—In New York it is getting to be the fashion to close the churches during the hot months—that is, the up-town fashionable institutions. It won't pay to run them during the summer, as it is considered unfashionable to be seen in town between 1st July and 1st October, and the pastor follows suit, and takes himself off to the watering places, or else takes the opportunity to get the 'brown creature' and himself sent to Europe at the expense of his congregation. Speaking of churches, we would call attention to the fact that the price of piety in this town is entirely above the reach of those who are not blessed with full purses. When it costs about the same to go to church as to the theatre, people will generally choose the latter, especially as they can, if they please, draw a moral from the play, and it is ten chances to one if they can make out one from some of the sermons. There are a great many people who would go to church if they could procure seats at a reasonable rate; but in San Francisco, a man with a family must pay from [illegible] to [illegible] for his pew. He can't get anything less than [illegible] that will hold over three persons, and if you allow for Sunday licenses and the spread of new starch, only two—add the contributions, begging sermons, and occasional pleaders for a little more cash down for the 'poor heathen'—(terribly expensive luxury those poor heathens!)—and you can't escape under [illegible] per annum, or over [illegible] a Sunday, [illegible] per sermon, and half the time we would rather pay twice the money than be compelled to listen to it. We do not sneer at religion or religious people, but we do say just what we said before, that church-going in San Francisco is too expensive a luxury for poor people."

Now, sir, I ask you whether that is not wrong? Is it not insulting? Is it not outrageous? Does it not deserve the public reprobation of the whole press? I might almost ask, "does not the writer deserve to be kicked out of all Christian society?" I must confess that I am no friend of "fashionable churches" and "fashionable Christianity," but I do not wish my humble church and my sincere self to be classed with the Pharisees. If there be earnest Christianity and faithful churches in any part of the world, there are some here, as the editor of the *Golden Era* should know, or could easily discover, by going to the various churches on the Sabbath. I think, sir, that you will not be surprised at my indignation at the flippant and insulting tone of the offensive article. I cannot believe that the teaching to turn the other cheek when one is smitten, is meant to apply to such cases at all—for the submission would be to confess a wrong, where I am conscious of none.

MINISTER.

We wish a "Minister" to fully comprehend that we stand in no awe of him, or the "religious community" he called upon so pathetically to consider themselves insulted. We take back nothing of what we have said, and call upon him to disprove one figure of our estimate of the cost of fashionable church-going in San Francisco. There may be exceptions, and our indignant friend may be one who labors in the good cause without a salary; but we doubt it. His church may be a free one; we hope so, and that he will tell us where one it is. Just such a one we can afford to attend. But taking the churches generally, and some four or five in particular, we are prepared to prove that the expense attending them is considerably greater than our statement; nearly double. He does not pretend to controvert the fact of the expense, but falls back on the enormity of our having the audacity to tell a few truths, in a plain and comprehensive manner. We do not understand or acknowledge the necessity of dressing facts in any other language. It is an old adage that the truth is not to be spoken at all times, and we are sorry to say it is not; on the contrary it seems to be only semi-occasionally. But it is time that the heavy tax on the religious and church-going community should be reduced, and if they are afraid to speak for themselves, we will do it for them, and have the satisfaction of knowing that many very respectable church-going people fully endorse our sentiments on that head. It is well understood that the moment any person raises his voice in remonstrance at any imposition practiced upon the community under the cloak of religion, there is a great hue and cry, and he is denounced by those whose acts will not bear investigation. The sentence of excommunication goes forth from all sides, and the fear of such persecution generally silences the demonstration. Now, here is a party that cares little for the usual outcry made on such occasions. A few fanatics may profess to be horrified; let them; they are at liberty to be horrified to any extent most convenient to them. We are not all frightened, and have some considerable confidence in the belief that we can stand it. "A Minister" asks, if it is not "outrageous?" No doubt he thinks so; We don't. He asks, if it does not deserve "the reprobation of the whole Press?" Perhaps he may find some small fraction of it disposed to endorse his sentiments. Let 'em come on. We are not frightened at that, either. But we rather think he will find it difficult to get any editor to say he can afford the present tariff of piety. Lastly, he thinks we should be "scourged," and asks, hesitatingly, if we do not deserve to be kicked out of all Christian society? It would certainly be a very unchristian like behavior, and hardly in keeping with the doctrine of returning good for evil. If we are allowed any voice in the matter, we should be disposed to object decidedly to any such unpleasant proceeding, and we very much fear that our respect for such Christian society, would not prevent our making some demonstrations on any member thereof who might undertake it. "A Minister" would do well to get some friend to advocate his "sincerity" instead of speaking of doing it himself. He is, no doubt, perfectly sincere in his indignation at the course of the *Golden Era*, and he is welcome to continue so. But we certainly were not aware of any proviso in the command of Scripture, when one cheek is smitten to turn the other. He chooses to make our case a special exception, however. Now, our advice to a "Minister," is, to attend to his flock (no doubt they stand much in need of his services) and the affairs of his church. If his church is neither expensive or fashionable, and he [illegible] the "brown creature" and himself [illegible] advertisements. We are quite ready for him, however, and the next time shall give a few very interesting statistics of church matters in San Francisco. We are open to discussion, and can stifle too, if it can be accomplished.

The Farmers of California.

In the Petaluma *Journal*, a paper recently established in one of the best agricultural sections of the State, we find an article addressed to the farmers of California, containing sound views and reasonable advice in relation to that most important interest of our people. What the writer addresses to the farmers of that particular locality, does not apply, however, to the entire agricultural community. The difficulties under which parties labor, who have improved the greater part of the now cultivated lands in California, arises chiefly from the general confirmation of the Spanish and Mexican land claims, upon which they have located. These settlers either bought the title at a price regulated by the extravagant ideas of values and profits which maintained during the past three or four years, or have built houses and fences and planted crops, in the belief that the soil would prove to belong to the public domain. The former class have been unfortunate from paying exorbitantly for their lands, and raising crops at too great cost to render the pursuit remunerative. The latter class find themselves at the mercy of the successful land claimants and have either to submit to his terms or lose all they have held, unless some law is passed for their relief.

Those who now desire to turn their attention to agricultural occupations, need not incur any of the embarrassments to which we have alluded. Millions of acres of the best lands in the State, to which the titles are confirmed, can be obtained at the Government price of one dollar and a quarter, more or less as the location may warrant, but exceedingly cheap anywhere. Lumber is abundant and cheap also, nor is stocking a farm an expensive operation at this time. Labor is low enough likewise, and good markets are opened for the surplus grain products of the State. There never has been anything like so opportune a period for agricultural settlement in California, and a more favorable one is not at all likely to arrive. New comers who understand farming, and enter upon the business economically and energetically, cannot scarcely fail to prosper. A good and well situated homestead of one hundred and sixty acres, with comfortable tenements, can at present be procured for an amount of labor and money (and the land upon credit,) which an inevitable rise in value as the country becomes more populous, would be sure to render a most successful investment. It is true that farming occupations in California have hitherto proved unfortunate to most of those who engaged in those pursuits, but the reasons for such a result are palpable and cannot be mistaken. A very different condition of affairs now exists, and they will do well who improve it.

With so much of preliminary remark, we commend the article from our cotemporary to the careful consideration of all who feel interested in the subject:

"The farmer of California, has somewhat partaken of the common mania for realizing sudden wealth—of becoming rich, within a given term of years—which has so terribly affected the whole population of California. This we take to be wrong and productive of poverty and dissatisfaction. The farmer has nothing in common with the floating speculative "unhoused and unhomed" adventurers of the day,—but rather he has taken up "a local habitation and a name." He is a citizen; a permanent fixture to the State; and he must grow with its growth and strengthen with its strength.

The farmer has around and within himself the elements of happiness, independent of all the adventitious circumstances of wealth. He is untrammelled by complicated financial and commercial engagements—dependant on his own individual energies, mental and physical—standing aloof from the vices and temptations of the crowded cities—breathing the purest of atmospheres and moving amidst the glorious scenery of wood and water, valley and mountain—cultivating under his own eye and with his own hands, a soil producing in rich abundance all the necessaries of life, he should in this State of California be pre-eminently content with his peculiar state of independence.

There are but isolated instances where agriculturalists have amassed great and sudden fortunes. The true farmer never becomes a man of infinite leisure. And it is in this gold bearing land as in every other, the husbandman must be progressive slowly—yet prosperity comes surely. He adds acre to acre, woodlands to his meadows, and thus extending the area of his labors, surrounds himself with all that is "good for a good man to be possessed of."

We are led to these remarks by the despondency and disappointment drawn by the expression so common with our country friends "That farming won't pay in California." We say most emphatically you are wrong—it will pay—it does now pay. It is true the day has gone by when potatoes, wheat, and barley, will ever pay back your time, labor and capital, with five hundred per cent. Farming, stock raising, &c., is your trade—you were raised to it; you can perhaps do nothing else well and safely. Now, where can you do so well? What climate more salubrious? What soil so adapted to raise what you most want? Wheat for the markets of the world. Where grow grasses so spontaneous? They fatten your cattle for the best beef market—the mineral region of California. You should be content at first with this struggle. You cannot avoid it. Unacclimated, you have pitched your tent on an untried soil. Strangers, poor and without credit, you have paid for your lands and improvements, unheard of prices—and it must be, you should expect it, that for this year, and perhaps for several years to come, you must make a bare competence your measure of contentment. Like the farmers even now at home in those older States that are watered by the tributaries of the great Mississippi, you should be satisfied if in these new situations, your experiment of immigration should not prove a dead failure—and try "to make both ends of the year meet."

In Sonoma Co. we have been pleasantly impressed with the outward appearance of comfort surrounding the population. From what we see, the farmers round about us have not failed, and with them "there should be no such word as fail." Those familiar with the condition of the agricultural people of the "old west of our Atlantic East," will be forcibly struck with the contrast which our people present, when compared to them. We fully equal them in all the advantages which are to be found in the school house or the Church, and as to "creature comforts," we most boldly defy them in the luxury of dress and prodigality of table. But we will not boast. The farmers of California are the most independent of any class of citizens. Their future success depends on frugal habits, strict honesty, and untiring industry. It is with themselves."

Noses.

Much has been, and still more might be written on the subject of noses. It makes but little difference whether the nose be of the Roman, the Grecian, the Asiatic, the African, the pug, the turn-up, the hook or the bottle order; for all practical purposes, one nose is just as good as another, provided it be kept in proper condition.

That the nose is intended partly as an ornament to the human face divine, none need deny. But whether the Roman, Grecian, or [illegible] is entitled to the greater share of admiration, is a mere matter of taste after all. The sooty Althiopian, no doubt, thinks his own flat and oily [illegible] the Adonis of noses and would not exchange it for the most perfect aquiline ever produced by the chisel of nature. But the ugliest nose ever worn looks a vast deal better than no nose at all. To be fully impressed with the importance of a proboscis, as an adjunct to good looks, behold the woeful countenance of some beautiful goddess, who has unluckily condescended to serve as a figure-head for some unfortunate ocean craft, that has had a tight tug and tussle with the elements, and got the worst of the battle. Why even a lobster's claw substituted for a nose beneath the eyes of the damaged divinity would be a decided improvement.

But how many there are, who do not consider the true purpose of this, more or less prominent feature. It is the fountain of taste. Without its assistance, there would be no such perception as the sense of taste. Remove it, and an alderman with his eyes shut, would find it difficult to distinguish the difference between bean porridge hot and a bowl of ox-tail soup.

The grand, primary office, however, of the nose is to warn, and thereby protect the body from foreign and hostile intrusion. It is placed as a sentry over the portal to the stomach, to prevent anything passing, in the way of food, detrimental to the inner man. Anything that is decidedly bad—disguise it as it will—the nose knows it, and at once puts a prohibition upon its entrance with "You may be good looking, but you can't go in!" So with the atmosphere—which is, or should be inhaled at the nostrils—the nose immediately detects any deleterious vapor that endeavors to smuggle itself in, to the annoyance and danger of the corporeal organization.

The nose is truly an intelligent and discreet member. It tells us that the natural atmosphere of San Francisco (not the artificial gases arising at low tide about the portions of Davis and Front streets) will "pass muster" for its health-bearing influences. When a nose, too, has taken a few snuffs of the fresh morning air, and re-enters the confined sleeping apartment of its unworthy proprietor, it tells him in language too significant to be misinterpreted, that he is putting his humble servant to such base uses as will call up vengeance at some future day.

Considering, then, that the nose is such an important functionary—detecting what the eyes cannot discover, and testing what the mouth dare not meddle with—one might suppose that the more there is of it the better. Perhaps so. A long nose is looked upon as the index of a know-something; and we should look favorably upon any plan or project for the propagation of long noses, were it not for their inherent propensity to poke themselves into places where their presence is not particularly desired. All things considered, our own nose is perfectly satisfactory. It is fully equal, in our opinion, to many others of far greater pretensions.

Climate of San Francisco.

No city in the world, perhaps, enjoys a more salubrious climate than San Francisco. The diurnal breezes, which generally attain their full vigor at about 3 P. M., blow regularly during the dry season—say, from May to December—directly from the uncontaminated bosom of the Pacific. In their journeys hitherward they bring with them no poisonous exhalations from miasmic marshes and malarious swamps; but often immediately lifting themselves, as it were, upon eagles' pinions, above the high hill-peaks, they have only to descend as rapidly as possible to visit us in all their virgin purity. Nor come they in a languishing mood: energetic and active, no epidemic can possibly steal a chance to fly-blow the atmosphere, and brood its death-feeding maggots, so long as theirs is the power to protect, preserve and shake up. Disease, finding nothing to feed upon in the atmosphere of San Francisco, and a bare sufficiency upon land to stave off actual starvation, has wisely concluded not to become a resident in our midst.

Epidemics pass us by—Contagions refuse to shake hands—Fever-and-Ague looks upon us as no "great shakes"—and even Fatal Accidents hesitate to count us among their chickens. It is absolutely astonishing with what tenacity life clings to a mortal in San Francisco, who is reckoned as *good as dead!* Almost any one who has been with us a year can, doubtless recall to mind half a score of instances, where persons have been shot and stabbed through the lungs, bowels, stomach, head, and in almost every vital part, and yet, in a short space of time, miraculously recovered their health, energies, spirits—everything but damages:—Had such received half as dangerous wounds in any of our Atlantic cities—especially in the summer season—we religiously believe they would straighten themselves but to be measured for a wooden surtout in less than three days. These are wonderful *facts*; and it remains for some scientific philosopher, astrologer, meteorologer, or physio-tol-lol-oger to give us the why and wherefore. Is it owing to the absence of electricity in the atmosphere, which (paradoxical as it may seem) protects wounds from gangrene, and at the same time causes that feeling of debility, so general here, in a healthy body? On this, we may hereafter have further to say, in as serious and philosophical a style as we can command.

THE EMPIRE ENGINE COMPANY No. 1, gave their fifth annual ball at Madame Pique's spacious and splendid Hall, on the evening of the 19th. The assemblage was very large and brilliant, and the enjoyment of the occasion was expressed in every feature of the enchanting scene of festivity.

Plate 40

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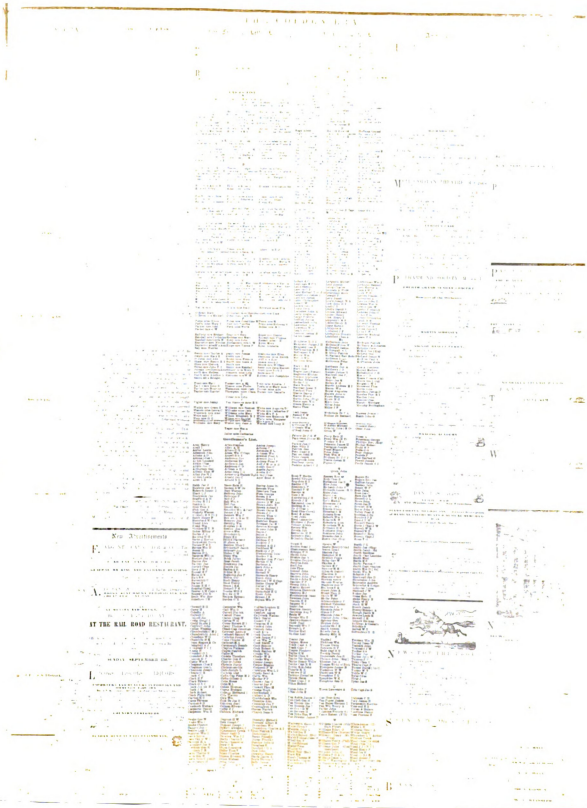

New Advertisements

AT THE RAIL ROAD RESTAURANT.

Plate 41

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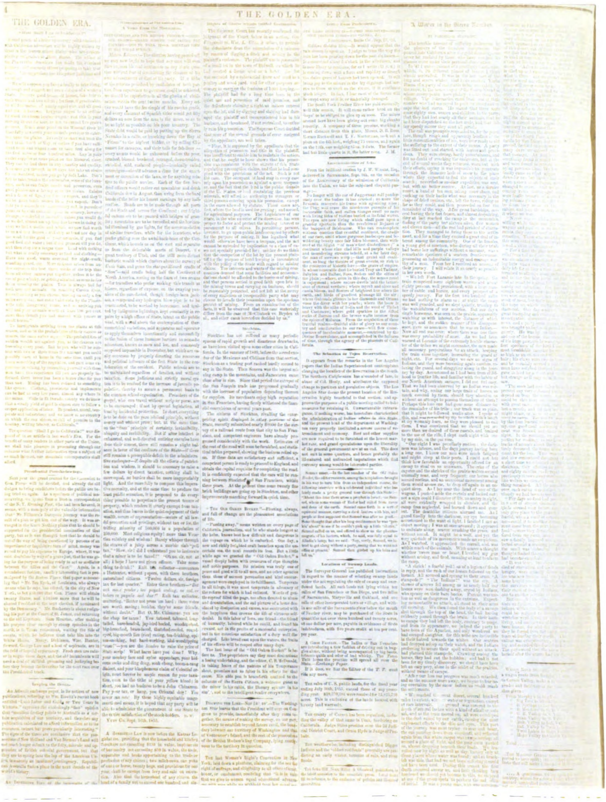

4 THE GOLDEN ERA.

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Plate 42

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Plate 43

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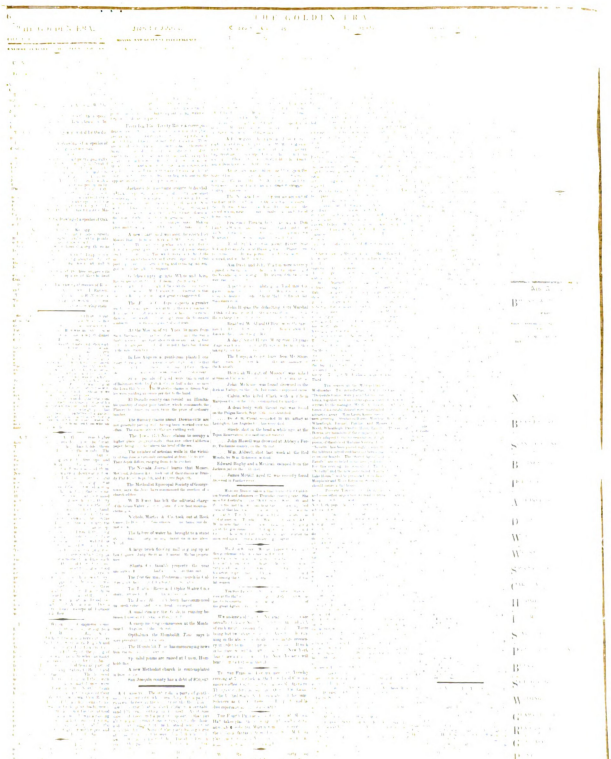

Plate 44

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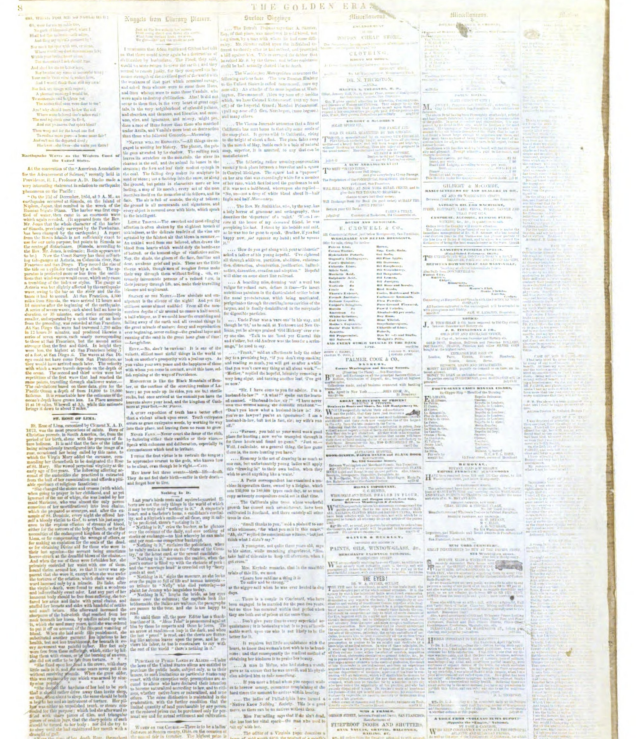

Plate 45

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OH, WHY FOR ME SO [illegible]

Oh, were for me no sable ties,
No garb of [illegible] grief, when I
Shall [illegible],
And fling my spirit's garment by!
Nor mark the spot with urn, or stone,
Where [illegible] dust [illegible] life;
Within your loving heart alone,
The monument I ask should rise.
And shed [illegible] bitter tears,
Nor breathe my name in mournful tone;
Your smile [illegible] wake love,
And I would think thee still my own!
Nor look my image with regret;
A pleasant memory I would be,
To [illegible] and brighten yet
The scenes that once were dear to me!
Ah! why should tears bedew the sod
Where some beloved one's ashes rest?
The soul rejoiceth near its God,
And can ye mourn that spirit blest?
Then weep not for the loved one fled
To realms more pure—a home more fair!
And call not the departed dead;
She lives—she lives—she waits you there!

Earthquake Waves on the Western Coast of the United States.

At the convention of the "American Association for the Advancement of Science," recently held in Providence, R. I., Professor A. D. Bache made a very interesting statement in relation to earthquake phenomena on the Pacific:

"On the 23d of December, 1854, at 9 A. M. an earthquake occurred at Simoda, on the Island of Niphon, Japan, that resulted in the wreck of the Russian frigate Diana. The harbor was first emptied of water, then came in an enormous wave which again receded. (It appeared from the Rev. Mr. Jones that the whole character of the harbor of Simoda, previously surveyed by the Powhattan, has been changed by the earthquake.) A report from the Bonin Islands is not sufficiently exact to use for our main purpose, but points to Simoda as the centre of disturbance. (Simoda, according to the Rev. Mr. Jones, is volcanic; Bonin appears not to be.) Now the Coast Survey has three self-acting tide-gauges at Astoria, on Columbia river, San Francisco and San Diego. They record the rise of the tide on a cylinder turned by a clock. The apparatus is protected more or less from the oscillations that wind-waves would cause, which only cause a trembling of the index or stylus. The gauge at Astoria was but slightly affected by the earthquake wave, owing to the bar on the river and the distance it had to ascend. At San Francisco, 4,800 miles from Simoda, the wave arrived 12 hours and 16 minutes after the beginning of the earthquake. A series of seven waves, each about half an hour in duration, or 30 minutes, each series successively smaller, and separated by a quiet time of an hour from the preceding, was recorded at San Francisco. At San Diego the wave had traversed 5,200 miles in 12 hours 38 minutes, and produced likewise a series of seven waves, each nearly corresponding to those at San Francisco, but the second series stronger than the first and third. In height they were low, the highest at San Francisco being .7 of a foot, at San Diego .6. The waves at San Diego could not have come from San Francisco, as they would have arrived much later. The velocity with which a wave travels depends on the depth of the ocean. The second and third series were but repetitions of the first wave that had reached the same points, travelling through shallower water.—The calculations based on these data, give for the Pacific Ocean a depth of from 14,000 to 18,000 fathoms. It is remarkable how the estimates of the ocean's depth have grown less. La Place assumed it at 10 miles, Whewell at 3.5, while this estimate brings it down to about 2 miles."

ST. ROSE OF LIMA.

St. Rose of Lima, canonized by Clement X, A. D. 1673, was the most precocious of saints. Born of Christian parents, in South America, she, from the period of her birth, shone with the presages of future holiness. It is said that the face of the infant being miraculously transfigured into the image of a rose, occasioned her being called by this name, to which the Virgin Mary added the surname, commanding her thenceforth to be designated the Rose of St. Mary. She vowed perpetual virginity at the early age of five years. The following affecting account of the austerities she practiced is extracted from the bull of her canonization, and affords a pitiable specimen of religious fanaticism:

"She changed the stones and crosses (with which, when going to prayer in her childhood, and as yet ignorant of the use of whips, she was loaded by her maid Marianne, who was almost the only person conscious of her mortifications) into iron chains, which she prepared as scourges, and, after the example of St. Dominic, every night she offered herself a bloody victim to God, to avert his just anger, even to the copious effusion of streams of blood, either for the sorrows of the holy Church, or for the necessities of the endangered kingdom of the city of Lima, or for compensating the wrongs of others, or for making an expiation for the souls of the dead, or for obtaining Divine aid for those who were in their last agonies—the servant being sometimes horror-struck at the dreadful blows of the chains.—And when the use of these were forbidden her, she privately encircled her waist with one of them, bound thrice around her, so that it never was apparent that she wore it, except when she was under the tortures of the sciatica, which chain was afterward loosened only by a miracle. Its links, after the virgin's death, were found to emit a wondrous and indescribably sweet odor. Lest any part of her innocent body should be free from suffering, she tortured her arms and limbs with penal chains, and stuffed her breasts and sides with handsful of nettles and small briars. She afterward increased the sharpness of the hair-cloth that reached from her neck beneath her knees, by needles mixed up with it, which she used many years, until she was ordered to put it off on account of the frequent vomiting of blood. When she laid aside this punishment, she substituted another garment less injurious to her health, but not less troublesome, for beneath it every movement was painful to her. Her feet only were free from these sufferings, which, either by hitting them with stones, or by the burning of an oven, she did not suffer to be free from torture. * * *

"She fixed upon her head a tin crown, with sharp little nails in it, and for some years never put it on without receiving wounds. When she grew older, this was replaced by one which was armed by ninety-nine points. * * * * * *

"She desired the hardness of her bed to be such that it should rather drive away than invite sleep, so that, when about to sleep, the same should be both a bed to her and an instrument of torture. Her pillow was either an unpolished trunk, or stones concealed for this purpose; which bed she afterward so filled with sharp pieces of tiles, and triangular pieces of broken jugs, that the sharp points of each should be turned to her body; nor did she try to sleep until she had embittered her mouth with a draught of gall.

"Near the time of her death, Rose, throughout Lent, alternately sang the canticles and praises of God every day for a whole hour."

…. Extravagance in eating ruins more pockets and digestive organs than bad rum, hard work, or any other arrangement up town or down. If you desire to last as long as you live, and feel like a two spot of fresh roses, [illegible]

Nuggets from Literary Placers.

[illegible]

I remember that Adam Smith and Gibbon had told us that there would never again be a destruction of civilization by barbarians. The Flood, they said, would no more return to cover the earth; and they seemed to reason justly, for they compared the immense strength of the civilized part of the world with the weakness of that part which remained savage, and asked from whence were to come those Huns, and from whence were to come those Vandals, who were again to destroy civilization. Alas! it did not occur to them that, in the very heart of great capitals, in the very neighborhood of splendid palaces, and churches, and theatres, and libraries, and museums, vice, and ignorance, and misery, might produce a race of Huns fiercer than those who marched under Attila, and Vandals more bent on destruction than those who followed Genseric.—*Macaulay.*

"Nature will be Reported."—All things are engaged in writing her history. The planet, the pebble goes attended by its shadow. The rolling rock leaves its scratches on the mountain, the river its channel in the soil, and the animal its bones in the stratum; the fern and leaf their modest epitaph in the coal. The falling drop makes its sculpture in sand or stone; not a footstep into the snow, or along the ground, but prints in characters more or less lasting, a map of its march; every act of the man inscribes itself on the memories of its fellows, and its face. The air is full of sounds, the sky of tokens; the ground is all memoranda and signatures, and every object is covered over with hints, which speak to the intelligent.

Little Thorns.—The sweetest and most clinging affection is often shaken by the slightest breath of unkindness, as the delicate tendrils of the vine are agitated by the faintest air that blows in summer.—An unkind word from one beloved, often draws the blood from hearts which would defy the battle-axe of hatred, or the keenest edge of vindictive satire. Nay, the shade, the gloom of the face, familiar and dear, awakens grief and pain. These are the little thorns which, though men of rougher forms make their way through them without feeling, oh, extremely incommode persons of a refined form, in their journey through life, and make their travelling irksome and unpleasant.

Silence of the Night.—How absolute and omnipotent is the silence of the night! And yet the stillness seems almost audible! From all the measureless depths of air around us comes a half-sound, a half-whisper, as if we could hear the crumbling and falling away of the earth and all created things in the great miracle of nature; decay and reproduction ever beginning, never ending—the gradual lapse and running of the sand in the great hour-glass of time!—*Longfellow.*

Envy.—No, *don't* be envious! It is one of the vainest, silliest most sinful things in the world to look on another's prosperity with a jealous eye. As you value your own peace and the happiness of those with whom you come in contact, avoid this base, selfish repining at the ways of Providence.

Misfortune is like the Black Mountain of Bember, on the confines of the scorching realms of Lahore; as you scale up its sides, you see but sterile rocks, but once arrived at the summit you have the heavens above your head, and the kingdom of Cashmere at your feet.—*St. Pierre.*

A quiet exposition of truth has a better effect than a violent attack upon error. Truth extirpates errors as grass extirpates weeds, by working its way into their place, and leaving them no room to grow.

Never Fawn.—Never court the favor of the rich, by flattering either their vanities or their vices.—Speak with calmness and deliberation, especially in circumstances which tend to irritate.

I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue; he approaches nearest to the gods, who knows how to be silent, even though he is right.—Cato.

Men know but three events—birth—life—death. They do not feel their birth—suffer in their death—and forget how to live.

Nothing In It.

Last year's birds nests and squirrel-quarried filberts are not the only things in the world of which it may be truly said "nothing in it." A coquette's heart, and a bachelor's home, a candidate's cordiality, and a Shylock's smile—of all these, may it safely be predicted, there's "nothing in it."

"Nothing in it," cries the banker, as he glances over the columns of the daily, and sees nothing of stocks or exchange—no hint whereby he can make cent per cent—no competitor bankrupt.

"Nothing in it," exclaims the politician, when he vainly seeks a leader on the "State of the Country," or the latest card, or the newest candidate.

"Nothing in it," murmurs the maiden, when the poet's corner is filled up with the rhetoric of pork; and the "marriage head" is crowded out by "fancy goods at cost."

"Nothing in it," sighs the mourner, as she looks over the pages so full of life and human interests—no tribute to "Nelly" who died yesterday—no plaint for Jenny who languishes to-day.

"Nothing in it," laughs the bride, as her eyes dance over the columns; the capitals look like bridesmaids, the italics are waltzers, the paragraphs are pauses in the tune, and she is too happy to read.

So amid them all, the poor Editor has a thankless time of it. "*Mene Tekel*" is pronounced against him by those he respects and those he loves. 'Tis an arrow at random—a leap in the dark, and when the last "proof" is read, and the sheets are fluttering like autumn leaves upon the press, and he reviews his labor, *he* too is constrained to say with the rest of the world "there's nothing in it."

Purchase of Public Lands by Aliens.—Under the laws of the United States aliens are entitled to purchase the public lands, subject only, as to their tenure, to such limitations as particular States may enact, with this exception only, preemptions are secured to aliens who have declared their intention to become naturalized according to law, and to citizens, whether native-born or naturalized, and none others. The same distinction is maintained in the graduation, with the further condition that the limited quantity of land purchasable by any person at the reduced prices can be purchased only for personal use and for actual settlement and cultivation.

Women on the Course.—There is to be a ladies' foot-race at Seneca county, Ohio, on the occasion of the annual fair in October. The highest prize is $25. A Miss Bentley, who walked 39 miles on a wager, this autumn ran six times around the City Hall in Cincinnati, and afterwards finished up her work by singing a half-dozen songs, will, it is expected, take the prize at the fair. Running after the girls is common enough; to see them in the "ring," however, and running against each other, will be a novelty. Hasty women, these, for home consumption.

Surface Diggings.

…. The Detroit *Tribune* says that A. Shorter, Esq., of that place, was murdered in cold blood, not long since, by a man with whom he had some difficulty. Mr. Shorter called upon the individual referred to shortly after he had retired, and presented a bill against him. This so enraged the debtor that he seized Mr. S. by the throat, and before assistance could be had, actually choked him to death.

…. The Washington *Metropolitan* announces the following curious facts: "The new Russian Minister to the United States is called [illegible], (saw my nose off.) An attache of the same legation at Washington, Blowmenoseoff, (blow my nose off;) besides which, we have Colonel Kutmenoseoff, (cut my nose off,) of the Imperial Guard; Marshal Pulmenoseoff, (pull my nose off;) Gen. Noseboges, (nose begone,) and many others.

…. The Vienna Journals announce that a firm of California has sent home to that city some seeds of the soap-plant. It grows wild in California, rising to the height of about a foot. The plant fades away in the month of May, inside each is a ball of natural soap, superior, it is asserted, to any that can be manufactured.

…. The following rather amusing conversation recently took place between a traveller and a squaw in Central Michigan. The squaw had a "papoose" on her arm that was exceedingly white for a member of her race, which fact induced the gentleman to ask if it was not a half-breed, whereupon she replied—"No, no—not a drop of white blood about it—half Ingin and half *Missionary*."

…. The Rev. Mr. Smithkins, who, by the way, has a holy horror of grammar and orthography, thus describes the 'departure' of a 'saint.' 'When I *arrove* at the house of my *deceased* friend, he was *perspiring* his last. I stood by his bedside and said, as he was too far gone to speak, 'Brother, if you feel happy now, *just squeeze my hand*; and he *squoze* it."

…. 'How do you get along with your arithmetic?' asked a father of his young hopeful. 'I've ciphered all through addition, partition, abolition, extraction, distraction, abomination, justification, hallucination, damnation, creation and adoption.' Hopeful will shine on some short line railroad.

…. A boarding miss, deeming 'eat' a word too vulgar for refined ears, defines it thus—'To insert nutritious pabulum in the denticulated orifice below the nasal protuberance, which being masticated, peregrinates through the cartilaginous cavities of the larynx, and is finally domiciliated in the receptacle for digestible particles.

…. Uncle Peter was a 'rare one' in his way, and though he 'fit,' as he said, at Yorktown and New Orleans, yet he always praised 'Old Hickory' over every one else. "Talk to me 'bout yer Gineral this and t'other, but old Andrew was the hoss for a scrimmage," he used to say.

…. "Frank," said an affectionate lady the other day to a promising boy, "if you don't stop smoking and reading so much, you will get so after a while that you won't care any thing at all about work."—"Mother," replied the hopeful, leisurely removing a very long cigar, and turning another leaf, "I've got so now."

…. "Sir, I have come to you for advice. I'm a husband-in-law!" "A what?" spoke out the learned counsel. "Husband-in-law, sir!" "I have never seen that termed among the domestic relations."—"Don't you know what a husband-in-law is? Sir, you're no lawyer! you're an ignoramus! I am a husband-in-law, but not in fact, sir; my wife's run off."

…. "Farmer, you told us your wood was a good place for hunting; now we've trampled through it for three hours and found no game." "Just so.—Well, I calculate, as a general thing, the less game there is, the more hunting you have."

…. Economy is the art of drawing in as much as one can, but unfortunately young ladies will apply this "drawing in" to their own bodies, when they wish to avoid anything like a 'waist.'

…. A Paris correspondent has examined a machine in operation there, owned by a Belgian, which sets 150,000 to 180,000 types each day, or as much copy as twenty compositors could set in that time.

…. The California pine trees whose wonderful growth has caused such astonishment, have been cultivated in Scotland, and there outstrip all other trees in size.

…. "Small thanks to you," said a plaintiff to one of his witnesses, "for what you said in this case." "Ah, sir," replied the conscientious witness, "but just think what I *didn't* say."

…. A youngster, not quite three years old, says to his sister, while munching gingerbread, "Sis, take half of this cake to keep till afternoon, when I get cross."

…. Mrs. Keybole remarks, that in the manifold trials of this life, we must

"Learn how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong,"

as the nigger said when he was over heated in dog days.

…. There is a couple in Cincinnati, who have been engaged to be married for the past two years, but no time has occurred within that period when they are both out of prison at the same time.

…. Don't give your time to every superficial acquaintance; it is bestowing what is to you of inestimable worth upon one who is not likely to be the better for it.

…. It requires but little acquaintance with the heart, to know that woman's first wish is to be handsome; and that consequently the readiest method of obtaining her kindness is to praise her beauty.

…. A man in Maine, who had stolen a watch, gave as an excuse that he was unwell, and his physician advised him to take something.

…. If you meet a friend whom you suspect wishes to borrow money, commence complaining of the hard times the moment he arrives within hearing.

…. The ladies of Philadelphia have formed a "Native Know Nothing" Society. This is a good move, as there can be no natives without them.

…. Miss Fan'adling says that if she ain't dead, she has lost her vital spark—the man who used to 'sit up' with her.

…. The editor of a Virginia paper describes a lump of gold worth $450, the product of a month's labor in the Slate Hill Gold mines in Louisa county.

…. There is a coffee-making machine at the Paris Exhibition, which can make 500 cups of coffee in a quarter of an hour.

…. New York must have the temperance [illegible]. Out of a population of 700,000, there are only forty drunken persons per day arrested.

Miscellaneous.

Miscellaneous.

Plate 46

Vol. V, no. 1, page 1

THE GOLDEN ERA

A California Family Newspaper—Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign Intelligence, Commerce, Education, Science and the Fine Arts

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 14, 1856.

Poetry.

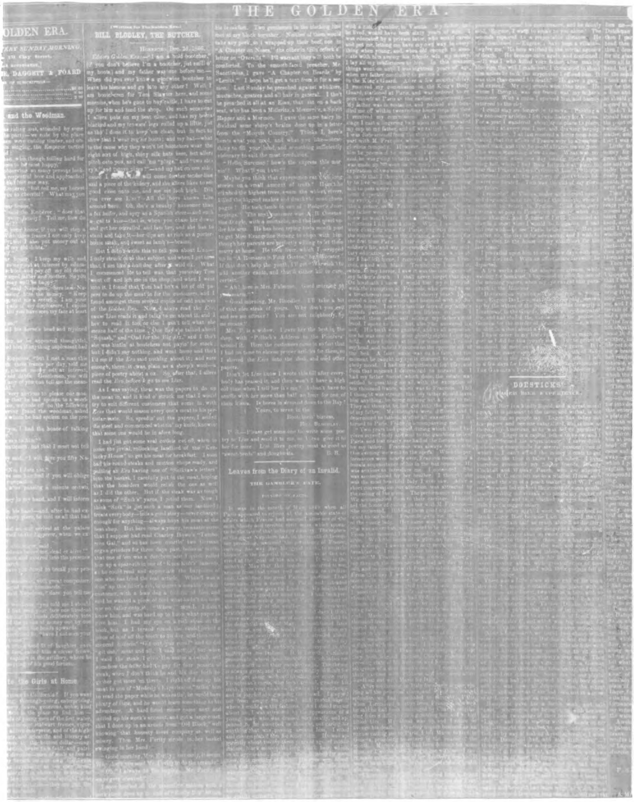
A SHORT PATENT SERMON.

Scientific.

The Chemistry of Every Day Life

Plate 47

Vol. V, no. 1, page 2



THE GOLDEN ERA.

(Written for The Golden Era.)

BILL BLODLEY, THE BUTCHER.

Hornitos, Dec. 24, 1856.

Editors Golden Era:—"I am a bold boutcher," (if you don't believe I'm a boutcher, just smell o' my boots,) and my father was one before me.—When did you ever know a genewine boutcher to leave his bisness and go into any other? Well I am boutcheren for Tom Slawter here, and some mornins, when he's gone to buy cattle, I have to cut up for him and tend the shop. On such occasions I allers puts on my best close, and has my boots blacked and my trowsers' legs rolled up a little, just as tho' I done it to keep 'em clean, but in fact to show that I wear reg'lar boots; and my hat—what is the cause why they won't let boutchers wear the right sort of high, shiny silk hats here, but allers pitch onto you, and call 'em "plugs," and "two story's," and "stove pipes"?—and my hat on one side, cause I knows Lize will come for her tender-line and a piece of the kidney, and she allers likes to see good close onto me, and see me look high. Did you ever see Lize? All the boys knows Lize around here. Oh, she's a beauty! hansomer than a fat heifer, and spry as a Spanish steer—and such a gal to kiss—that is, when you chase her down and get her corralled, and lass her, and she has to stand and take it—her lips are as rich as a porter-house steak, and sweet as lamb's—brains.

But I didn't write this to tell you about Lize—I only struck onto that subject, and when I get onto that, I am like a bull dog after a wild ox. What I commenced for to tell was, that yesterday Tom went off and left me in the shop, and when I went into it, I found that Tom had bo't a lot of old papers to do up the meat in for the customers, and I found amongst them several copies of odd numbers of the *Golden Era*. Now, I allers read the *Era*, cause Lize reads it and talks to me about it, and I hev to read it too, or else I can't tell what she means half of the time. One day she talked about "Squash," and "Oad for the Big Ox," and I tho't she was hintin' at boutchers not payin' for stock; but I didn't say nothing, and went home and tho't I'd see if the *Era* said nothing about it; and sure enough, there it was, plain as a sheep's wool—a piece of poetry about a ox. So, after that, I allers read the *Era* before I go to see Lize.

As I was saying, there was the papers to do up the meat in, and it kind o' struck me that I would try to suit different customers that come in, with *Eras* that would season every one's meat to his particular taste. So, spredin' out the papers, I seized the steel and commenced whettin' my knife, knowin' that some one would be in afore long.

I had jist got some veal cutlets cut off, when in come the jovial, rollicking landlord of the "Kentucky House" to get his meat for breakfast. I soon had his round-steaks and mutton chops ready, and putting an *Era* having one of "Sniktaw's letters" into the basket, I carefully put in the meat, hoping that the boarders would relish the one as well as I did the other. But if the steak was as tough as some of "Snik's" yarns, I pitied them. Now, I think "Snik" is jist such a man as our landlord; treats everybody—tells a good story—never charges enough for anything—always buys his meat at the best shop. But here come a young, romantic cove that I suppose had read Charley Howe's "Tennessee Gal," and so has been courtin' two German organ grinders for three days past, believin' [illegible] that one of 'em was a dutchess; and I quick rolled him up a spare-rib in one of "[illegible]" [illegible], so he could read and appreciate the happiness of one who has tried the real article. While I was a doin' up this feller's rib, in comes a sneaky looking customer, with a bull dog a follerin' of him, and said he wanted a piece of beef what hadn't no bone nor no taller onto it. "Where?" says I. I didn't know him, and was hard up to know what paper to give him. I had my eye on a roll steak on the block, but as I turned round, the [illegible] jerked a piece of beef off the block to his dog, and then commenced hollerin' "Git out, you cuss!" and the dog did "git out," meat and all. I said nothin', but when I weighed the steak I give the scales a twitch, and somehow the feller had to pay for four pounds of steak, when I don't think he and his dog both together got more 'en three. I right off done up his meat in one of "Modesty's Experiences," tellin' him to read the paper while he was eatin', he would have plenty of time, and he would learn something to his advantage. A hard fisted miner came next and settled up his week's account, and got a large roast, that I done up in an article from "Old Block," well knowing that honesty loves company as well as misery. Then Mrs. Purity strode in, her basket swinging in her hand.

"Good morning, Mrs. Purity; out early, it seems. Why don't you send Mr. Purity to do the errands?"

"Oh," I always [illegible] Mr. Purity [illegible]

[illegible] his breakfast. Two gentlemen in the clothing line met at my block together. Neither of them would take any pork, so I wrapped up their beef, one in "A Chapter on Noses," the other in "[illegible]" letter on "Overalls." I'll warrant they will both be comforted. To the smooth-faced preacher, Mr. Sanctimius, I gave "A Chapter on Beards," by "Lenis." I hope he'll get a text from it for a sermon. Last Sunday he preached against whiskers, mustaches, goatees and all hair in general. I tho't he preached it all at an Esau, that sat on a back seat, who has been a Millerite, a Mesmerite, a Spirit Rapper and a Mormon. I gave the same hairy individual some sheep's brains done up in a letter from the "Moquis Country." Thinks I, here's here's what you need, and what you like—something to fill your head, and something sufficiently visionary to suit the most credulous.

"Hello, [illegible]! how's the express this mornin'? What'll you have?"

Maybe you think that expressmen can't tell long stories on a small amount of truth? Hasn't he climbed the highest trees, swum the widest rivers, killed the biggest snakes and [illegible] pages? He took lamb in one of "[illegible] Journeyings." The next customer was A. B. [illegible], with a mustache, and the last novel under his arm. He has been trying for a month past to get Miss Evangeline Strong to elope with him though her parents are perfectly willing to let them marry at home. He took liver, which I wrapped up in "A Romance in Four Cantos," by Wooster. If that don't help the youth, I'll get "Warwick" to add another canto, and that'll either kill or cure, certain.

"Ah! here is Mrs. Fulsome. Good morning to you, marm."

"Good morning, Mr. Blodley. I'll take a bit of that nice steak of yours. Why don't you call and see me oftener? You are not neighborly, by no means."

Mrs. F. is a widow. I gave her the best in the shop, with "Pollock's Address to the Pioneers" around it. Here the customers came in so fast that I had no time to choose proper articles for them, so I shoved the *Eras* into the desk, and used other papers.

Don't let Lize know I wrote this till after everybody has praised it, and then won't I have a high old time when I tell her it's me? I shan't have to scuffle with her more than half an hour for one of them kisses. Is horns in demand down to the Bay?

Yours, to serve in the
Boutcherin' bisness,
Bill Blodley.

P. S.—Please get some one to write some poetry to Lize and send it to me, so I can give it to her for mine. Lize likes poetry most as good as "sweet-breds" and doughnuts. B. B.

Leaves from the Diary of an Invalid.

THE GAMBLER'S FATE.

DOESTICKS'

Plate 48

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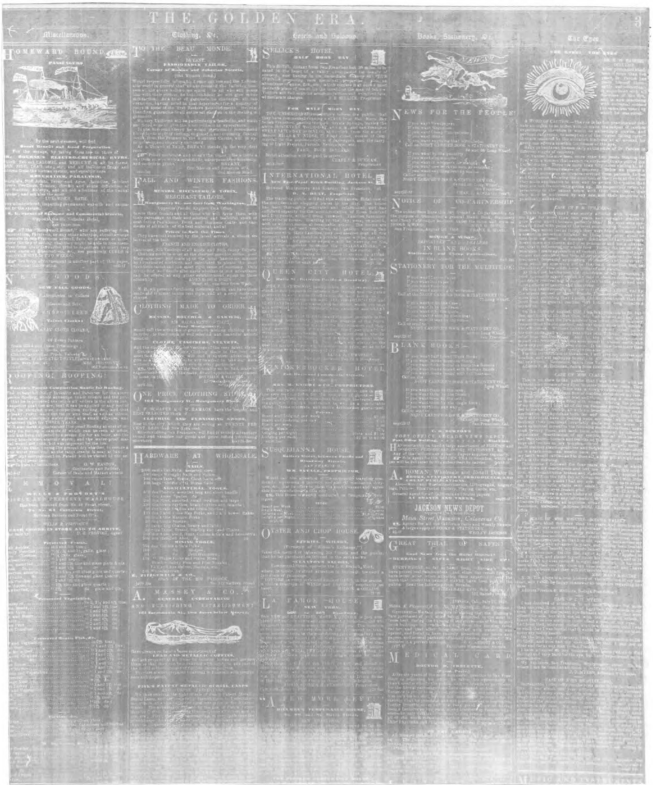

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Miscellaneous. | Clothing, &c. | Crockery and Glassware | Books, Stationery, &c. | Fancy Goods

HOMEWARD BOUND

THE BEAU MONDE

SELLICK'S HOTEL

NEWS FOR THE PEOPLE

FAIR AND WINTER FASHIONS

INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

NOTICE OF CONSIGNMENTS

NEW GOODS

CLOTHING MADE TO ORDER

QUEEN CITY HOTEL

STATIONERY OUR SPECIALTY

BLANK BOOKS

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SOUTHERN HOTEL

JACKSON NEWS DEPOT

OYSTER AND CHOP HOUSE

LA PANON HOUSE

A. MASSEY & CO.

MEDICAL CARD

THE GOLDEN ERA.

SECOND EDITION.

SUNDAY MORNING DECEMBER 13, 1868

SAN FRANCISCO LETTER LIST, FOR 1868.

THE GOLDEN ERA.

NEW YORK.

THE ORGANIZATION.

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Special Notices.

Special Notices.

New Advertisements.

Boarders.

Information Wanted.

Special Notices.

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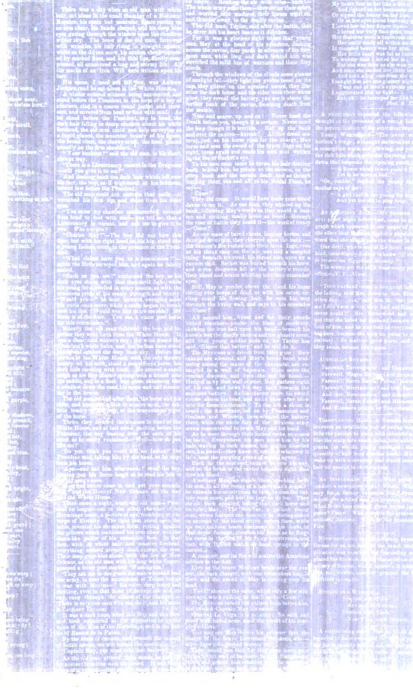

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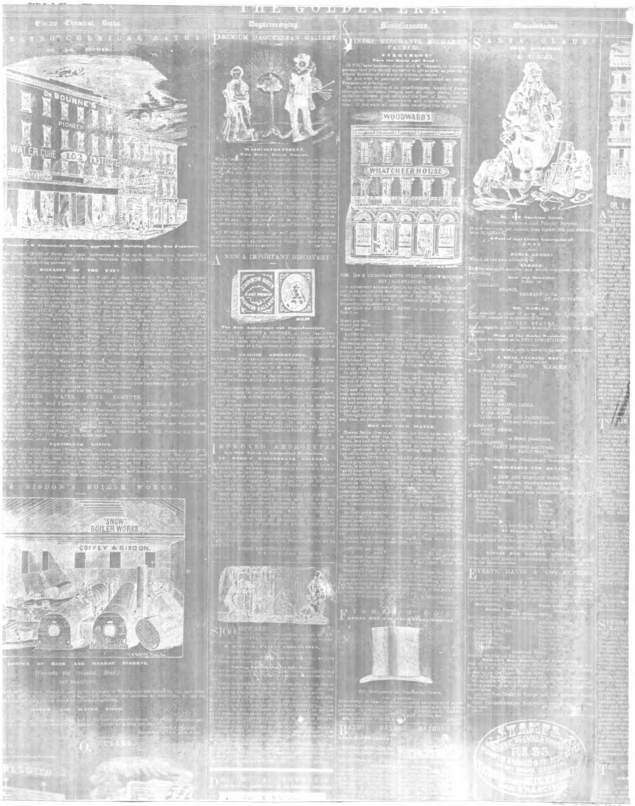

Plate 53

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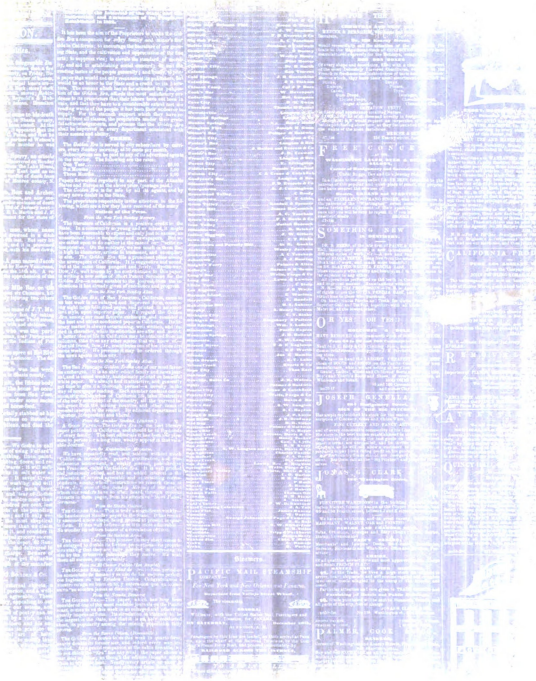

Plate 54

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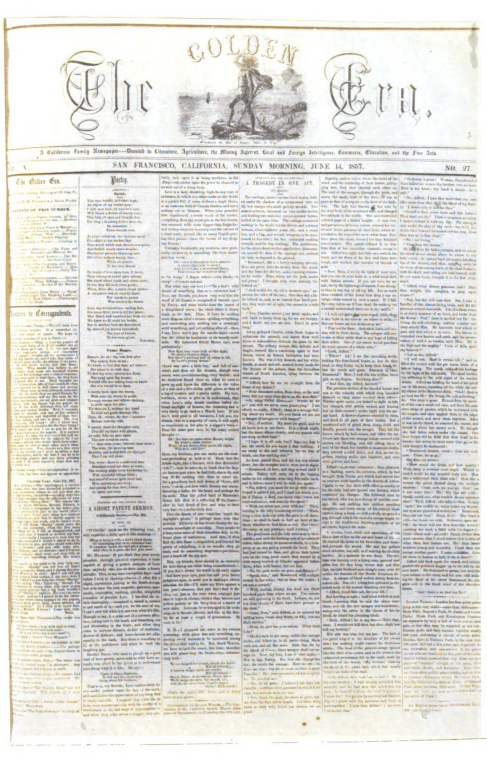

The Golden Era.

A California Family Newspaper—Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign Intelligence, Commerce, Education, and the Fine Arts.

VOL. V. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 14, 1857. NO. 27.

The Golden Era.

A. K. P. TRUESDALE, A. BRUCE PRINGLE, Editors and Proprietors.

TERMS OF THE PAPER.

Single copies, Five Cents. Subscription, Two Dollars per annum, payable invariably in advance. Two copies, Three Dollars. Five copies, Five Dollars. Ten copies, Ten Dollars. Twenty copies, Twenty Dollars. Fifty copies, Fifty Dollars. Hundred copies, Two Hundred Dollars. Single copies, Five Cents. Subscription, Two Dollars per annum, payable invariably in advance. Two copies, Three Dollars. Five copies, Five Dollars. Ten copies, Ten Dollars. Twenty copies, Twenty Dollars. Fifty copies, Fifty Dollars. Hundred copies, Two Hundred Dollars.

Address to Correspondents.

[illegible]

Poetry.

[illegible]

A TRIBUTE TO SOUTHERN CHARITY.

[illegible]

Correspondence.

[illegible]

A DISMAL PLEASANTRY ABROAD.

[illegible]

A TRIBUTE TO SOUTHERN CHARITY.

[illegible]

Poetry.

[illegible]

Correspondence.

[illegible]

A DISMAL PLEASANTRY ABROAD.

[illegible]

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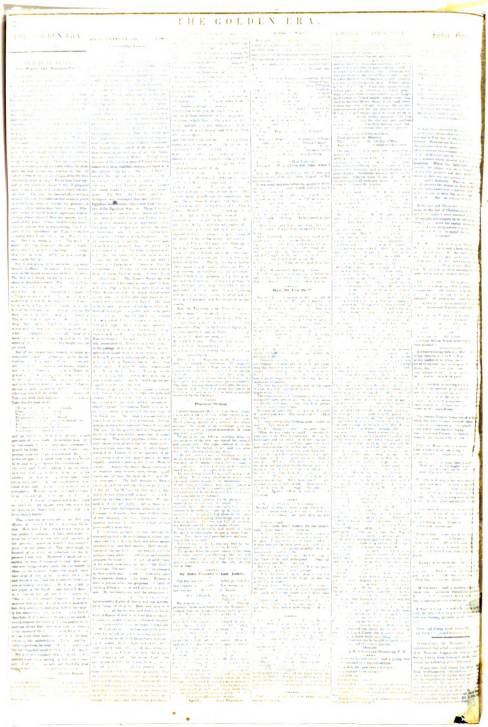

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Plate 56

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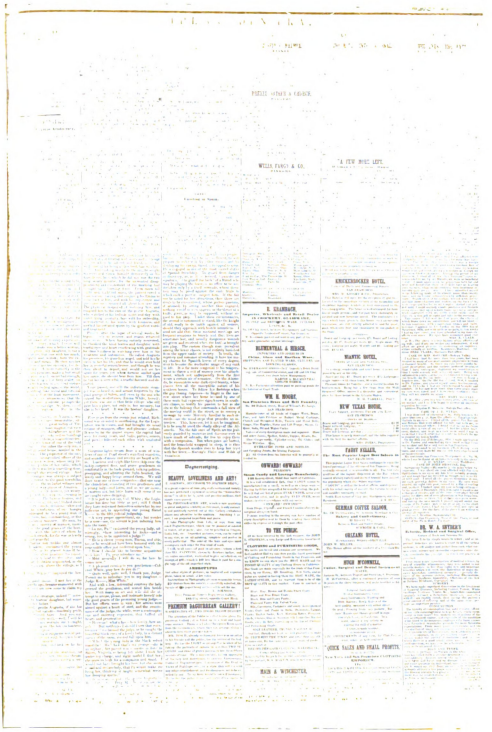

Plate 57

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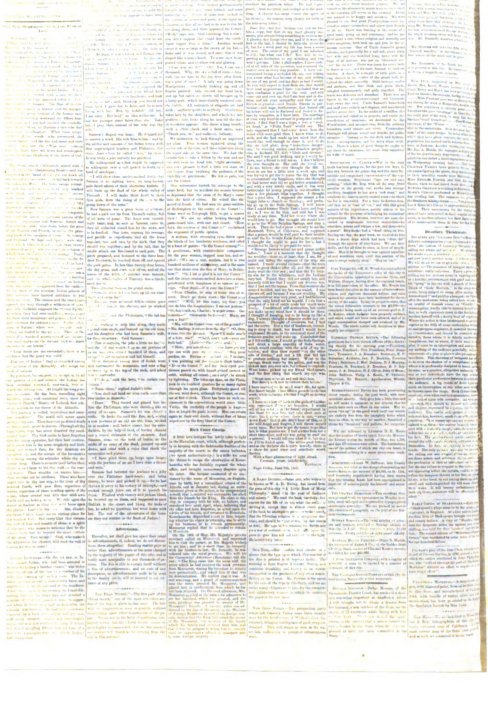

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Golden Era. SAN FRANCISCO.

A SINGLE WAITER WITH.

City Facts and Fancies

Romance and Re

Plate 58

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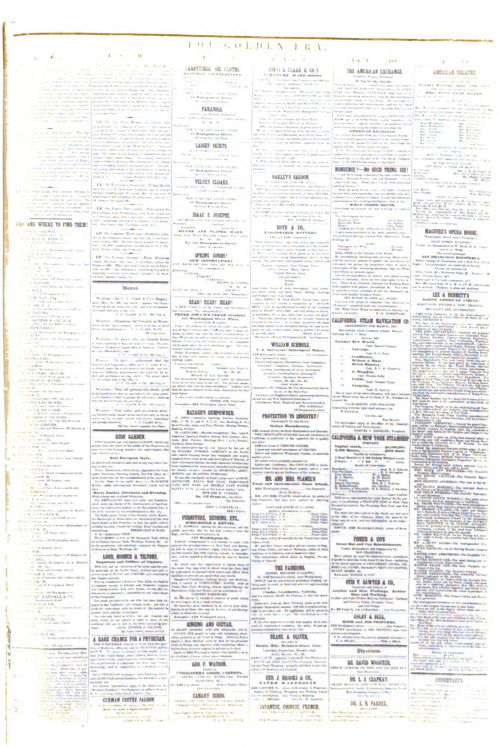

THE GOLDEN ERA.

WHO, AND WHERE TO FIND THEM!

Wanted.

RUSS' GARDEN.

LOUD, HOSMER & TILTONS,

A RARE CHANCE FOR A PHYSICIAN.

GERMAN COFFEE SALOON.

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PARASOLS,

LADIES' SKIRTS,

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ISAAC S. JOSEPH,

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NONSENSE?—NO SUCH THING, SIR!

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DR. E. B. PARDEE.

AMERICAN THEATRE.

MAGUIRE'S OPERA HOUSE,

LEE & BENNETT'S

UNDERTAKER

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THE GOLDEN ERA.

THE DEAD SECRET.

THE SILVERSMITH OF ACRE.

Plate 60

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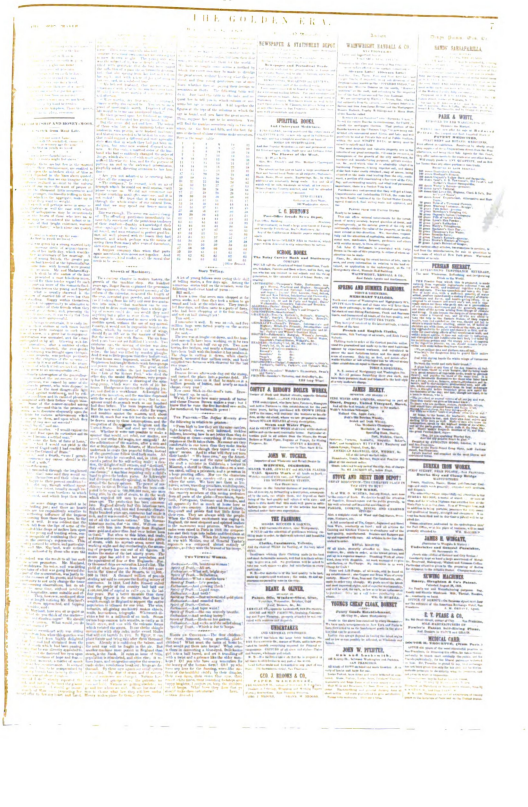

THE GOLDEN ERA.

7

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E. S. PEARE & CO.

MEDICAL FAIR.

GEORGE GRAY.

Plate 61

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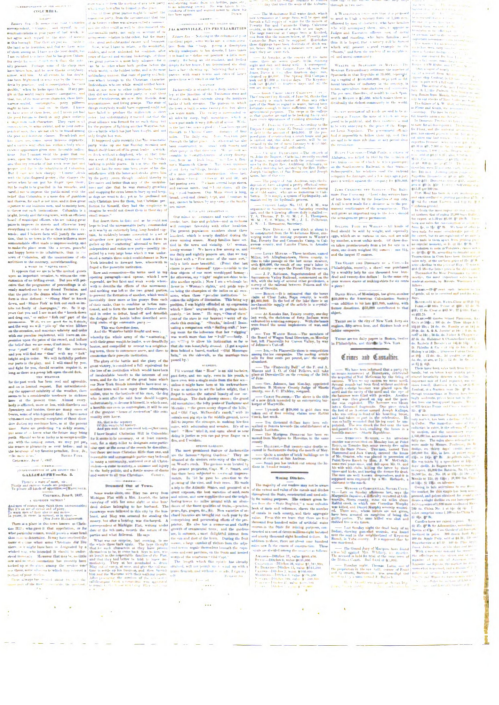

THE GOLDEN ERA.

Correspondence.

Crimes and Casualties.

Plate 62

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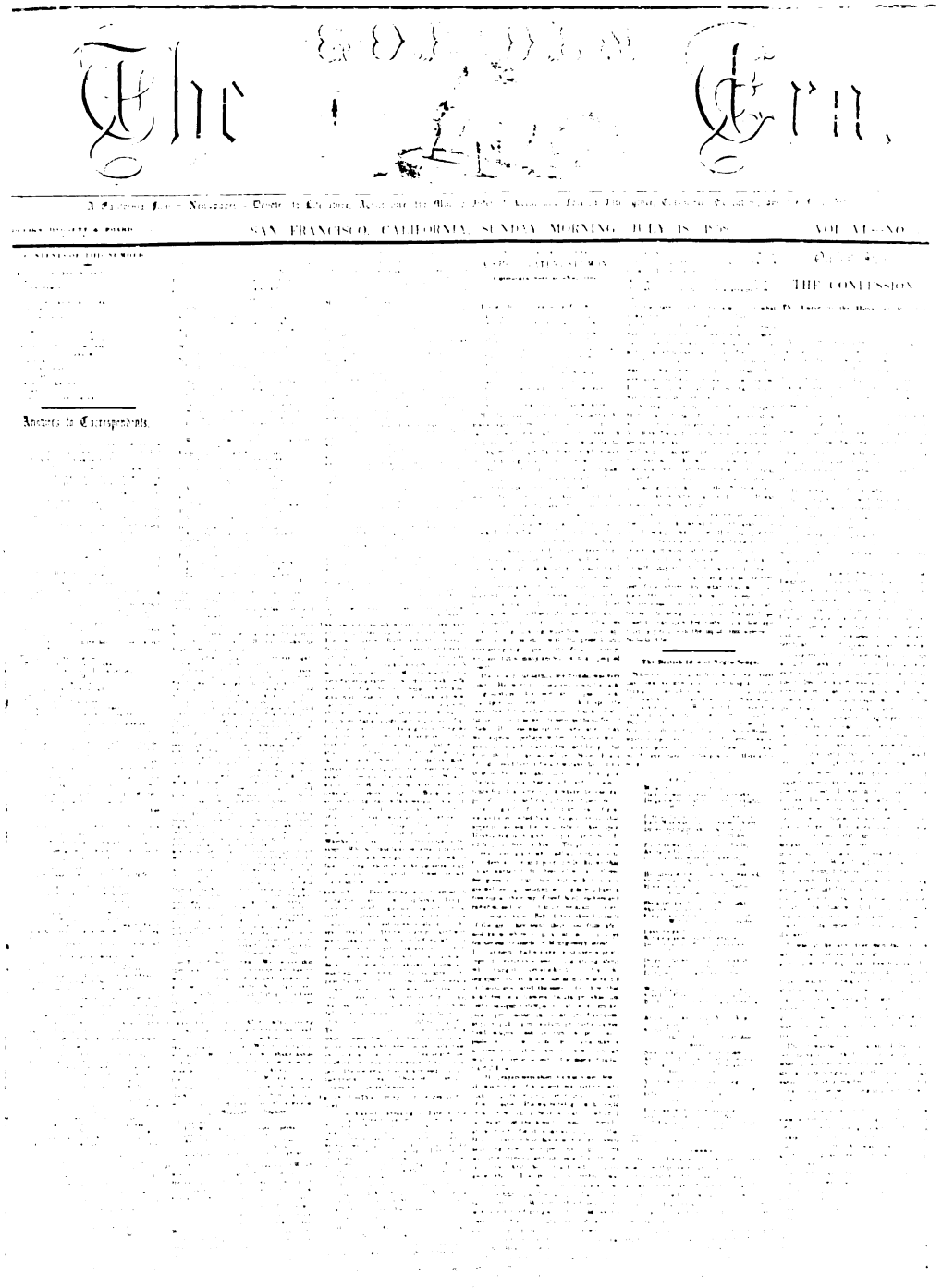

The Gem.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 18, 1858

VOL. VI—NO.

THE CONFESSION

Answers to Correspondents.

Plate 53

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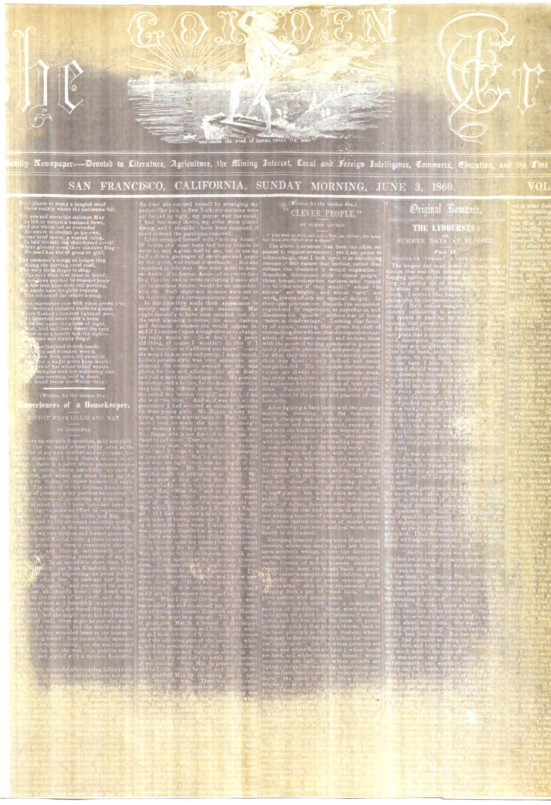


GOLDEN ERA

Weekly Newspaper—Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign Intelligence, Commerce, Education, and the Fine A

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 3, 1860. VOL.

"CLEVER PEOPLE."

Original Sonnet.

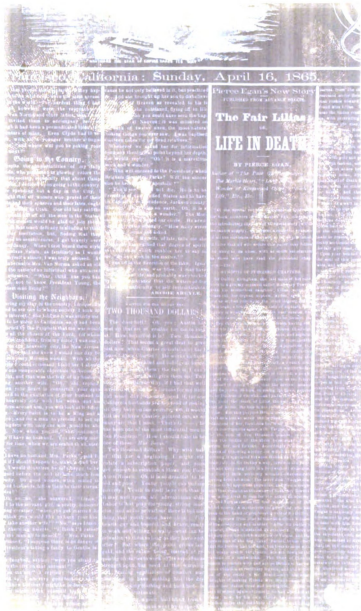
THE LYDIURSTS:

SUMMER DAYS AT SCHODT.

Experiences of a Bookkeeper.

Plate 64

Vol. XIII, no. 20, page 1, of issue accouncing death of Lincoln



San Francisco, California: Sunday, April 16, 1865.

Pierce Egan's New Story

The Fair Lilies;

LIFE IN DEATH

BY PIERCE EGAN.

Doing the Neighbors.

TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS.

CHAPTER I

Production, Circulation, and Editions: September 23, 1855, April 15, 1860

The September 23, 1855, enlargement of the Golden Era with III, 41, indicated that the difficulties of the first few years had been successfully overcome. By the fall of 1855, the editors had increased their circulation to over 7,000, with agents scattered throughout California. In the first enlarged number Daggett and Foard wrote:

> We have many reasons for making this improvement, prominent among which, and the most gratifying to our readers as well as to ourselves, is that the patronage of the Golden Era amply justifies the change. It is also due our agents and readers, for the uniform support and encouragement which they have extended towards the paper since its establishment in 1852, without which our efforts would have been futile, and the Golden Era had shared the fate of the numerous journals, daily and weekly, which have sprung up and worried out a brief existence in California during the past five years.

With the years of difficult financial struggle past, the editors felt secure in enlarging their paper.

Originally the Golden Era was printed on a 28 x 42 inch sheet, which was folded once to make four 21 x 28 inch pages,

with seven columns of type per page. Including advertisements, the folio editions had 672 column inches of copy. The enlarged edition was printed on one large 33 x 47 inch sheet, which was folded twice (but not trimmed), quarto style, to make eight $16\frac{1}{2}$ x $23\frac{1}{2}$ inch pages, with six columns of type per page instead of the seven used in the folio editions (see plates 38 to 45). Including advertising, the quarto editions had 1072 column inches of copy, or 354 more than the folio editions.

Although the enlarged paper had twice as many pages as before, the pages were smaller with the result that the quarto editions carried about half again as much copy as the folio editions. However, after the enlargement, the Golden Era had more advertising so that the actual gain in copy exclusive of advertising was about 200 column inches, or the equivalent of one and one-seventh pages of the folio size; in other words, during the folio period there were 372 column inches of copy, which increased to 575 column inches in the quarto period. This ratio of copy to advertising gradually shifted until by the end of volume IV (see plates 46 to 53) the Golden Era was printing almost as much advertising as regular copy.

An important change in the management of the Golden Era came with V, 27 (see plates 54 to 61), when the editors added as an editor-proprietor Mr. James Brooks, who had come to

California in 1849 with Foard "in the arduous and perilous passage around Cape Horn, in the ship 'Susan G. Owens,' of Philadelphia" (I, 44). Brooks replaced Lawrence, who had left the Era with V, 8, to edit the Wide West.[1] With V, 27, the Golden Era began to serialize stories and carried a new name plate. At the same time Science was deleted from the heading, which then remained unchanged, except for one minor alteration with VI, 32 (see plate 54), throughout the editorship of Daggett and Foard.

The new name plate featured an Indian looking across the Pacific. In a long editorial, editors Brooks, Daggett, and Foard explained their heading. Detailing the inroads of civilization on the Indian, they concluded:

> Fear not, O Indian! they [deeds of infamy against the Indian] are recorded among the archives of the Almighty, who keeps the books of nations. . . .
>
> Thy journey is ended, mysterious and tameless wanderer! The world will never again produce thy like. Thou hast ever preferred death to chains, and a grave to slavery. Through all thy long travel, hope has never deserted thy uneducated heart. Thy God seems to have forgotten thee for many centuries, but thou hast continued to adore him in the same simplicity and faith. Look not behind thee, for thy footsteps are ploughed up, and the scream of the locomotive is echoing among the solitudes where thy ancestors sleep. There is no more land behind thee. . . . Look till thy eyes are dim, illustrious brave! thou shalt see no resting-place for thy wearied feet. But every blast that streams thy tuft of hair and mantle of skin, is a spirit of thy race, who

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[1]Lawrence returned to the Era when Daggett and Foard sold out in the spring of 1860.

> comes to welcome thee to the unseen fields that lie beyond the azure curtain of the skies. Poor savage! God, who maketh the whirlwind his chariot, will rend the veil of heaven for thee to enter!

For years to come the harried and desolate Indian looking over the Pacific was the emblem of the Golden Era.

Advertising copy in the Golden Era was markedly reduced at this time. Previously the Golden Era had gradually acquired more and more advertising from the many physicians and health centers in San Francisco until a major portion of the advertising copy came from quack doctors and patent medicines which promised to cure any and all ills, even by mail if the sick could not travel to San Francisco (see plates 51, 52). However, competition among San Francisco newspapers forced the advertising rates down so low (see V, 1) that the editors decided to give less space to advertising, if not to discontinue it entirely. "Reading matter pays us better than advertisements at the rates charged by the majority of the papers of this city, and is vastly more acceptable to our thousands of patrons. The Era is able to sustain itself without a line of advertisements; and no cuts of any description, or advertisement unfit to be read in the family circle, will be inserted in our columns at any price" (V, 28). From this time on, the Golden Era, having discarded all the old boilerplates for various quack cures, carried only limited advertising (compare plates 46 to 53 with 54 to 61).

The methods initiated during the folio period to distribute the Golden Era throughout the state by special agents continued during the quarto period, with 230 agents listed by the end of volume VII. Problems with traveling agents who embezzled Era funds continued, and Daggett made at least one more trip to solicit subscriptions and agents (see IV, 3, 12, 38, 48). The list of uncalled-for letters in the San Francisco post office continued to be awarded to the Golden Era until 1858, when Postmaster Weller decided against the Era because only one-fifth of its subscribers lived in San Francisco. The editors continued for a while to print the list, however, because their subscribers wanted it (see IV, 5; V, 6; and VI, 5). Losing the list did not result in much reduction of revenue, though, for the government paid "a trifle over one hundred dollars per annum for the job--one-fifth of what it should be, and a losing operation to any newspaper" (VI, 5).

Production problems apparently had been pretty well solved during the folio period, as no references to serious difficulties were made in subsequent years. Early in volume IV when the supply of paper gave out, the editors had to use two sheets for one issue, but they did not feel like complaining, because the cause of their problem was increased circulation (see IV, 13). On another occasion, while Daggett was in the interior, two forms of type all ready for the press

"slipped from the car, and were precipitated down the gangway into the basement, a distance of 25 feet" (IV, 48). However, in spite of the damage, the edition came out on time. When the office of the Golden Era was moved once again, this time just up the street to 151 Clay Street (see IV, 41), the editors commented, "The first thing we know, some one will be raising the rent over us, and we shall again be compelled to move."

About the cost of production, the editors revealed almost nothing. In IV, 21, they said that the average cost of the forty-five weeklies in San Francisco was $200, or slightly less than the $220 estimated in Part I, Chapter II, although production expenses of the Golden Era after the enlargement exceeded those of the average weekly in San Francisco. In VII, 34, the Era listed wages current in San Francisco. Printers were receiving 75¢ per 1000 ems, or just half the price paid when the Golden Era was founded, but of course the Era had more copy to be set by volume VII too. Whatever the total cost of production, the editors reported that they were able to pay their bills and still have money left, something they had not been able to do during the early years (see VIII, 1, 26). Subscriptions, which continued at $5, numbered by the spring of 1860 about 9,000, but still short of the 20,000 hoped for when the Era took over the subscription list of the Wide West in July, 1858.

However, the 9,000 subscribers gave the Era sufficient income so that the editors no longer had acute financial problems.

Evidence about special editions after the summer of 1854 is very scanty. No notices of any illustrated editions, such as the one published in July, 1854, appeared in the Golden Era, and apparently none were published. Advertisements occasionally appeared for Steamer editions, although no copies of Steamer editions for the period have been located. Beginning with IV, 22, the editors published a first and a second edition, a practice which continued for the rest of the quarto period under Daggett and Foard. Differences between the two editions were slight. Pages 2, 3, 6, and 7 (the inside form) were always the same, as they were apparently printed first and in sufficient numbers to supply both editions. The outside form, consisting of pages 1, 4, 5, and 8 printed together on the reverse side of the one large sheet, contained minor differences between the first and second editions. Page one was almost always identical; pages 4 and 5 frequently had minor changes in copy, with the second edition carrying late news or advertisements not in the first. To make room for this new copy, the editors shortened or removed entirely the list of letters, the list of agents, or the regular advertisement for the Era itself. Similar minor changes were made on page 8. The

second edition then gave the editors a later deadline. Any significant copy inserted in the second edition was also printed in the first edition of the next issue so that a reader of either edition would not miss important items. Since the first edition was sent to outlying areas, the editors could ship it out early enough to reach distant subscribers on Sunday. They could then hold the second edition open for a later deadline and still have it ready for local Sunday circulation.

By the spring of 1860 the Golden Era was a successful journal well supported by over 230 agents and 9,000 subscribers. Brooks and Lawrence, the new editors, were not hampered by the problems which nearly killed the Era off in its infancy.

CHAPTER II

Poetry: September 23, 1855, to April 15, 1860

The enlargement of the Golden Era to eight pages had no immediate effect on the poetry column, although one might have expected additional poems as more space became available. Actually, the editors were using proportionately less poetry in the quarto edition because they continued with the same amount, giving the increased space to prose. Poetry was declining, then, especially original poetry about the lonesome miner or rugged living conditions. In this respect the Golden Era was becoming less distinctive and more like the other literary journals, although it may have gained slightly in literary quality.

As had been their practice, the editors began the quarto period by devoting column one, page one, to poetry and by encouraging original contributions. Mediocrity continued to prevail in both selected and original poetry. During the period, however, from September 23, 1855, to April 15, 1860, when Daggett and Foard sold their interest in the Era, the use of poetry changed so that by 1860 what poems the Era used

were scattered throughout the paper instead of being placed in one column. Curiously enough, Brooks and Lawrence restored the poetry column to column one, page one, when they assumed control.

The first change, although slight, came with IV, 38, when poetry was moved over one column to make room for "To Our Correspondents," which received more emphasis and space. These two items continued side by side on page one, although a gradual expansion of "To Our Correspondents" slowly forced the poetry over, until in VI, 17 a major enlargement of the "To Our Correspondents" column crowded poetry off page one completely. The poetry column then had no definite place until VI, 33, when the editors assigned it to column one, page three, where it continued until VII, 13, when the poetry column was abandoned.

After this time, poems appeared in the Golden Era about as often as before, not in one poetry column but throughout the Era. The change, then, was more one of emphasis or position, rather than one of quantity. In a sense, poems still appeared on page one because the "To Our Correspondents" column often printed snatches of poetry,[1] but usually these were poems which the editors declined for regular columns. The editors obviously had decided that they had more

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[1]Bret Harte's "Fantagonian Lyric" (VI, 46) was printed in the "To Our Correspondents" column, for example.

attractive features for their readers than a poetry column, whether it was on page one or elsewhere.

In line with the general reduction in poetry, there were fewer poems about the West, although the ratio between original and selected poems remained about constant. During the folio years, approximately 28% of the poems, both original and selected, showed Western influence; but from September 21, 1855, to April 15, 1860, this percentage gradually dropped to about 10%. This change was part of the general shift in subject matter as the Golden Era began to address itself to a more sophisticated audience. Writers who in 1850 were preoccupied with mining and primitive living conditions were able by 1860 to focus their attention on other subjects, a change which is evident in the contents of the Golden Era for these years.

The editors also began to use poems by established poets more frequently than they had done previously. During the folio period less than 3% of all the poems were from established or known poets, but during the next period this number climbed to almost 8%, not a lot, of course, but a significant increase over the earlier period. Favorites included Longfellow, Bryant, Tennyson, Holmes, Bayard Taylor, and others. Also during this period the first poems of Bret Harte appeared, although most of them had little genuine poetic fire.

In prosody, the poems of the second period generally continued the pattern established during the folio period.

Sentimental poems about simple people or ways of life continued to please the editors, who still regarded rhyme and meter as essential; in fact, some of the poems had little else to offer except rhyme and meter. However, as the years passed, fewer and fewer poems about the West, mining, living conditions, and other local matters appeared in the Golden Era. In their place, the editors used moody, melancholy, sentimental poetry about night, death, and the graveyard. The poets writing for the Golden Era appear to have used up or tired of their native subjects, and in casting around for new material and moods, they found death and melancholy most to their liking. This observation is not to suggest that the Golden Era had completely given itself over to melancholy poetry, but rather that melancholy poems often replaced poems on Western subjects used in the folio period. Otherwise the general subject matter of poems remained about the same as during the earlier years.

Many poems appear affected. That is, they seem to have been written more because the author wanted to write poetry than because he felt poetry to be the most effective way of expressing his ideas. Poetry in the Era at this time appears to be ornamental, with prose used for serious business. The editors' attitude toward prose and poetry supports this view. After 1856, Daggett and Foard began to prefer the serialized romance. This choice represented a shift in policy from the

folio years, when they declined continued novels. To encourage local talent to produce these stories, the editors offered prizes for the best locally produced romances. There were no awards for poetry, however, probably because the editors were more interested in prose than poetry, as indicated by the gradual reduction of poetry.

For both the editors and contributors, poetry was still desirable for a literary journal, to be sure, but not necessarily so important or essential as prose. Writing poetry was proper; after all, Burns, Byron, Wordsworth, Longfellow, just to name a few, had devoted their lives to it. The editors of the Golden Era, however, preferred prose for the most part. At least in the Golden Era the sentimental novel received more emphasis than poetry. Too often both poets and editors were content with a few mediocre poems.

This evaluation is not intended to depreciate what the editors of the Golden Era were doing, but rather to suggest what more they might have done. After all, they both criticized poems sent to them and tried to improve the poetic level in San Francisco. Too much critical activity, however, concerned rhyme and meter, and when the editors commented, as they at times did, that a proffered poem was metrically correct but not poetry, they failed to go beyond this evaluation to explain what in the poem was bad. Again, however, it is important to note that much of what they had to say about

defective prosody needed to be said, even though poetic excellence includes a great deal more.

In order to illustrate what is meant by this satisfaction with poor poetry, a poem regarded by the editors as good is quoted below.

TIME

Time, on his morning pinions, gaily
Fresh with the dews
Of early life,
Doth dare the strife
Which ever strews
His pathway with hearts broken, daily.

Time, soaring to his culmination
Doth, in the morn
Of hopes and fears,
And smiles and tears,
Give man the boon
Of joyousness without salvation.

Time, at eventide descendeth
On weary wing;
Quenching the light
Of faith and sight,
To faint man brings
Despair, which all his bright hopes blendeth.

Time passeth onward daily, ever,
While man doth mourn
With panting breath
From birth to death,
To find that bourne
Whence he, poor thing, returneth--never!

San Francisco, December, 1855, by Luof
(IV, 1)

Obviously one poem is far too small a sampling to support the contention that the poets and editors alike were often content with the appearance of poetry without taking a closer

look to see if what appeared to be poetry really was, but other poems from the Era reveal this same weakness.

Another possibility worth considering is that the editors of the Era had reached the limits of their critical abilities when they had said what they did. In any event, whether from a lack of a real passion for poetic excellence or from a lack of critical acumen, the editors of the Golden Era printed many poor poems. Daggett and Foard would have justified this quality of poetry as the best original poetry available to them. Since the expressed purpose of the Golden Era was to encourage and to publish original California literature, the editors preferred these indigenous poems to better poetry copied from other sources. Although poems in the Golden Era often lacked poetic excellence, still they provide a good sampling of the poetic concepts and skills among Western Americans in the 1850's. Typical original poems from the Golden Era of this period are found in Appendix C, Part 1.

CHAPTER III

To Our Correspondents: September 23, 1855, to April 15, 1860

From the beginning the editors of the Golden Era used the "To Our Correspondents" columns to acknowledge and to evaluate prose and poetry and to answer questions on a variety of points, with major emphasis on encouraging writers through criticism of poetry and prose. This practice continued after the enlargement, although there were several significant modifications from 1856 to 1860.

The most noticeable change came in IV, 17, when "To Our Correspondents" was moved from page four to page one, column one, where poetry had been. Along with this shift in position came a general increase in the number of items so that by volume VI, "To Our Correspondents" often took up half of the first page. After three years on the front page, the column was shortened and returned to page four in VII, 18, so that by the end of the editorship of Daggett and Foard this feature averaged two columns in length. One other minor alteration came in V, 27, when the name was changed to "Answers to Correspondents."

Instead of giving additional criticisms of material received, the editors greatly enlarged their earlier practice of answering questions on a wide range of topics and of printing in the column copy not good enough for publication elsewhere. The column also continued as a medium of exchange among the several correspondents. Because the items in this column from 1856 to 1860 were, except for quantity, about the same as during the folio period, I have not included any typical entries in this chapter; instead I have reprinted the entire column for March 13, 1859, in Appendix C, Part 2, as a sample of the column. As for criticism, which followed the same general trends noted in the folio period, I discuss the few significantly different points later in this chapter, along with several items of a more general nature relating to the policies of the Golden Era.

At this juncture it seems appropriate to question the purpose and importance of "To Our Correspondents" as related to the over-all objectives of the Golden Era. When the paper was founded, the editors wanted to provide an outlet for those "who possess literary attainments of a high order, but have heretofore been deprived of a medium through which to give their productions to the world." At first they used this column as a convenient method of acknowledging copy and evaluating it. This practice, which saved writing a separate letter, probably stimulated other writers to contribute to

the Golden Era. As time passed, some of these evaluations grew into little critiques containing the literary theories of Daggett and Foard. Also on occasion the editors answered a question for a correspondent, apparently as a service to a friend who, because of his location, did not have the information available.

Up to this point, the column was a useful addition; however, by the time it had been expanded and moved to the front page, the column had outgrown its early purpose. Its initial function had been lost in quantities of copy not related to literary criticism or to promoting local literature, but merely to answering, often at great length, questions on many subjects. This change in the column poses an interesting question. The success of the Golden Era amidst the failures of rival papers attests to the editorial judgment of Daggett and Foard. Why, then, did they place this non-literary copy on page one, or so much of it on any page? Although the expansion to eight pages might have pushed them into using such copy because they had no other, this possibility seems unlikely because if they were using this material just to fill out their paper, they certainly would not have put it on page one. A more likely explanation is that the editors believed that their readers enjoyed the column, which supposedly attracted both subscribers and contributors. If the patrons of the Golden Era did find this copy to their

liking, and the success of the Era argues that they did, then Mark Twain and others may have had a point when, in the 1860's, they turned from the Golden Era to journals regarded as more literary.

In any case, much of "To Our Correspondents" was not directly related to the development of a California literature, although the editors apparently were convinced that this casual, rambling type of writing pleased their customers. Certainly any study of the literary tastes and levels of San Francisco during this period would have to reckon with the popularity of the Golden Era with such a column as opposed to the failure of what might be styled more literary journals, such as the Wide West.

By the end of the folio period, the editors had pretty well said all they had to say about what poetry should be, with the result that comments on poetry in the "To Our Correspondents" columns largely echoed principles laid down earlier. The fact that the editors did not advance new or different critical theories about poetry does not mean, however, that what they wrote was not useful. Their reiteration of points previously made kept these standards fresh in the minds of readers, while the application of these principles to the individual poems helped writers to see how their own particular poem fitted into the general poetic principles established by Daggett and Foard.

These criticisms were a service to writers rather than an exposition of new critical theories, as the editors often applied previously established principles instead of advancing critical standards. In this sense, the criticisms in "To Our Correspondents" were something of a teaching device with the local poets as the students. In their criticisms, the editors placed heavy emphasis on prosody and grammar and touched more lightly, if at all, other poetic qualities.

Even though criticism in the "To Our Correspondents" columns in the quarto period to 1860 largely repeated earlier ideas, a few points merit attention. To J. M. at Sutter Creek the editors wrote that "Poetry is not made by rule, but by nature, and gushes spontaneously from the heart, and finds melody in its own measure. Fie! upon rules for making poetry! That person who has poetry in his soul, has music enough in his ear to form and metre it in verse" (V, 22).

Commenting on the best California poet, the editors observed that "It is about an even thing between Pollock and Soulé. 'Caxton' has a very feeble muse. The twelve greatest English poets, are Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Burns, Coleridge, Moore, Byron, Wordsworth and Campbell" (VI, 12). This listing suggests that when the editors thought of poetry, they naturally turned to English rather than to American poets.

A few other items from "To Our Correspondents are interesting. To S. S. of San Francisco, the editors wrote:

"Let us see a sample. The chances of your poetry being published are better than you may be aware. We sometimes find room for the very bad" (VI, 4). No one will deny this admission. In the same vein they wrote to W. M. of Stockton: "Your poetry is horrible--declined; our 'horrible' column is full for this week" (V, 10). And finally to G.W.N.R.

> Don't work yourself into a passion, young man, because we spoke lightly of your last poetical effort, nor write us impertinent letters with unchaste expressions, nor breathe threats of vengeance, nor rend your linen, nor talk of "smashing" the paper, nor make yourself ridiculous by any act or deed so entirely unproductive of good as "pitching into" the editor of a newspaper because he may not agree with you in regard to your merits as a poet--it won't pay. You cannot write poetry. This is the fifth time we have intimated as much (V, 52).

Whatever else they may have lacked in the criticism of poetry, the editors were frank and candid, and they had not lost their sense of humor.

As with poetry, criticisms on prose during the quarto period up to 1860 were largely restatements of ideas expressed earlier, with comments on the fitness of the subject, the organization and probability of events, the grammar, and related items. Again, as with poetry, these criticisms were useful in helping the individual author whose work was evaluated and in keeping before the public the Era's preferences and standards.

The editors also used the "To Our Correspondents" columns to state their policies on several matters. They

preferred prose "by all means" over the average of fifty poems received each week, "the majority of which are immediately transferred to our capacious scrap-basket" (VII, 34). In listing rules for correspondents, the editors requested their contributors to be brief, to avoid personalities, and to refrain from the "practice of 'puffing' hotels, livery stables, etc.; we have advertising columns set apart expressly for such purposes" (V, 25).

Another problem was pay for correspondents. Consistently the editors declined to pay for copy, explaining that they were unable to do so. "Robin Hood--San Francisco.--We regret that we are unable to offer you the pecuniary encouragement you suggest. We do not pay our correspondents. We shall always be happy to hear from you when you can afford to write for the fun of the thing, for we honestly avow to you that we cannot afford any remuneration" (IV, 19). Although much of what the editors received deserved no pay, awarding prizes for the best stories was a form of payment, and quite likely other deserving contributors also received pay.

The editors occasionally used the column for private jokes with their correspondents, with just enough information to let their readers sense what was going on. To Sluice-Fork, a regular contributor from Columbia, they wrote, "You are either becoming savagely moral, or writing to please some lady acquaintance. What about the case of native grape juice?

It is useless to feign ignorance--we know all about it" (V, 11). To Felix Snob, another "regular," they replied that "You have all the symptoms, Felix, and the only remedy is to take to matrimony, or bad whiskey" (IV, 1). These and similar exchanges helped to liven up an otherwise somewhat dull column.

Finally, the editors declared that they would continue to avoid political issues (V, 31), religious controversies (V, 35), private matters (V, 21), vulgarity and obscenity (IV, 6), and perhaps most significant of all, the slavery question (III, 50). All these taboos were intended to keep the Era neutral on controversial issues and hence to avoid offending potential subscribers.

The importance of a column which for three years occupied up to one-half of the front page is not easily assessed. Through the column the editors stated their standards for prose and poetry and applied these principles in criticisms of specific pieces. This was perhaps the most important aspect, at least from a literary point of view. The feature also helped the editors to maintain a friendly correspondence with their many contributors as well as to provide information not more readily available, although the authenticity of some of the inquiries is questionable. Finally, the column apparently attracted additional writers and subscribers, or at least the editors believed that it did.

Except for the criticisms of poetry and prose, the column lacked literary significance; however, because the column helped to make the Era popular, it also contributed to the total success of the Golden Era.

CHAPTER IV

Fiction: September 23, 1855, to April 16, 1860

The enlargement of the Golden Era did not bring any immediate change in fiction, as Daggett and Foard continued to employ it to give balance to the contents of the Era; however, the more distinctive local-color sketches gradually disappeared after the enlargement so that by the spring of 1860, the emphasis and preference of the editors had shifted from light, humorous, local-color sketches (such as those by Blunderbuss) to the original, sentimental romances, which often drew from local color. The most significant change in fiction was the publication of serialized romances, which the editors had several times previously refused.

The editors also continued to select material from available magazines and books. These items, usually non-Western, provided variety since much of the original material was based on Western themes. As noted in Part I, Chapter V, these borrowed items may be classed into general types or subject areas, although several types current during the folio period gradually declined in popularity during later years. In the

folio period the editors preferred the oriental story, the story translated from a foreign language, and the story written expressly to teach a moral. After the first few years, however, these types were gradually replaced by sensational stories about medical personnel, magicians, and others under circumstances of mystery, death, night, and darkness.[1] The owners apparently were not disturbed by accounts based on the most improbable events. For a modern reader accustomed to a heavy and steady diet of sex in literature, these stories appear tame, although they often carried titles indicating material more sensational than they contained. If nothing better came along, the editors could always call a story "A Thrilling Account," which apparently worked, as indicated by the number of times "Thrilling" was used in titles.

This multitude of selected stories did not contribute to the distinctiveness of the Era, as the same or similar stories appeared in other literary journals of the period. Some of the stories were good, of course, but many of them

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[1]Typical selected stories were "The Confession of a Nurse" (VII, 11); "A Bear Story" (IV, 18); "The Emigrant's Daughter" (IV, 24); "A Live Subject: A Thrilling Scene in a Dissecting Room" (VI, 15); "A Thrilling Adventure" (IV, 5); "A Night of Horror on the Amazon" (IV, 31); "Mormon Women--The Sale of Two Daughters" (IV, 1); "The Fate of a Queen" (VII, 2); "The Wife of Two Husbands; A Scene from Real Life" (VII, 6); "Cornering a Madman" (VII, 47); "A Japanese Girl and her Book" (VIII, 5); and "The Cannibal Feast" (VIII, 14).

used the same basic formula over and over again with slightly different places or people. The significance of the Golden Era rests more with its original material, although the selected stories indicate preferences of the editors.

If any one particular issue of the Golden Era became the turning point from emphasis on the local-color sketch to the sentimental story, which often also used indigenous material, it was V, 27.[2] With this number, the Golden Era began the first of a number of serialized stories, its hallmark in the 1860's. For their first continued romance, the editors turned to Wilkie Collins' sensational The Dead Secret, which had begun January 2, 1857, in Household Words (London, 1850 to 1859), conducted by Charles Dickens. In introducing this new serial, the editors commented, "We are not in the habit of publishing continued stories, but the 'Dead Secret' comes to us so highly recommended, that we feel assured our readers will thank us for varying from this rule in this instance." The decision had been made, and for years to come the serialized story was a regular feature of the Era, although there were short periods when no story was being serialized. Also significant is the choice to serialize a novel by an English author instead of a California writer, because there were not any local stories even remotely so

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[2]See Part II, Chapter 1 for discussion of new editor and name plate, also added with V, 27.

good as Collins' The Dead Secret. However, while The Dead Secret was being run, the editors organized a contest with prizes for the best California stories, which were then serialized following The Dead Secret.

This sequence of events, i.e., the selection of The Dead Secret and the organization of a contest for local writers, whose stories were then serialized in the Golden Era, suggests that part of the editors' previous reluctance to serialize stories came from the lack of good material by local writers, a lack the contest aimed to supply. Although Daggett and Foard used many items not written in California, they always held to their originally announced intention of making available the columns of the Era for local writers, whose works they featured whenever possible, even though this copy was less polished than that which could be clipped from the many journals available in San Francisco. This continued preference for copy written expressly for the Golden Era--and the editors always indicated when copy had been written for the Golden Era--meant that the editors had been limited to the shorter sketches, stories, poems, and reports sent in by their correspondents. However, the serializing of The Dead Secret met with sufficient reader approval to cause the editors to announce a prize for the best stories written for the Era. This contest would, in turn, enable the editors to continue their preference for local color and

still be able to serialize a story to compete with their rival journals.

The contest began September 6, 1857, with $200 offered for first prize, $100 for second, and $50 for third. Stories were to be from fifty to one hundred pages of foolscap in length. The editors explained that they offered the prizes "With the view of contributing our mite to the development of the literary talent of the State, and at the same time, we are free to admit, securing for the Era an increased popularity equal in value to the extent of the hazard." To be judged by "three gentlemen of acknowledged literary attainments," the manuscripts were due the first day of November, or in just under two months. Since The Dead Secret was due to run out November 15, the editors hoped to have their new, first prize story ready by then, but they missed this date by two weeks. In the issue of November 29, 1857, Judges Jos. R. De Prefontaine; J. E. Lawrence, former Era editor and California journalist since 1849; and E. G. Paige, founder of the New York Sunday Mercury and author of the "Short Patent Sermons" appearing regularly in the Era, announced that first prize had been awarded to "Madeline, the Heartless," by Dolly Dashwood (Mrs. Fry); second to "Logan Forney," by Edward Pollock, an Era poet; and third to "The Golden Cross, by Walter Camden.[3]

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[3]Beginning with V, 52, these stories were serialized, each story requiring four issues to complete. Following the three

Beginning with V, 27, when The Dead Secret started, the editors had, with the exception of three issues, presented their readers with a constant stream of serialized romances which, other than The Dead Secret, had been written expressly for the Golden Era by California writers; in other words, there had been fifteen original serialized romances in sixty-four numbers, with sometimes two and once three stories all going at the same time. Following a lull of twenty-three issues without a serial, there were the "Great Original Romance: The Sybarite; or Western Homes and Eastern Harems, The Adventures of a Wandering Californian," by Dundas Warwick and "The Prince of Cuzco; or the Last of the Incas," by David Wooster, M.D., the longest of the original romances written for the Golden Era.

During this flourishing of romances written for the Golden Era the editors explained their position in an editorial "Home Literature" (VI, 15), basic to any evaluation of the Golden Era under Daggett and Foard.

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prize winners came "Orea; A California Dream," by Edward Pollock; "Leeda Breton; or, A Stray Leaf from Life," by Anna; "The Two Wives; a Tale of Domestic Life in California," by Miss Rowena Granice; "Kate Clifton," by Dolly Dashwood; "The Desert; or Mormon Saints and Yankee Sinners," by Robert F. Greeley; "Oromania," by Flamingo (Robert F. Greeley); "The Misfortunes of an Heiress," by Mrs. E. L. Mulford; "The Confession; or the Curse of the House of Wenster," by Callinus; "Revelations of Yerba Buena," by Robert F. Greeley; "Dolores Ranch," by Flamingo (Greeley); "The Blacksmith of Fenton," by Blunderbuss (Daggett); and "The White Wampum," by Greeley.

Whenever we hear it suggested that in order to elevate the literary tastes of the people of California, the influence of foreign authors of established and brilliant reputations, should be brought to bear upon them through the columns of local journals and periodicals, our antagonisms are at once aroused. We feel an impulse of pride which amounts to indignation. When it is proposed that a Dickens, a Thackeray, a Gerald Massey, or a Mrs. Browning, shall be paid by the inhabitants of this State--to act through the medium of their pens, as reformers of taste and morals--as missionaries among a collection of barbarians, in a literary point of view,--we are at once put upon our metal, and begin to ask ourselves whether our readers, who form a considerable portion of the people, are quite as deficient in taste and morals as the proposition would seem to indicate; whether we can draw our own literary sustenance from amongst ourselves. We make these remarks with due respect for all the great writers of other States and of foreign countries; we believe that we sufficiently appreciate their excellence and understand their positions and do not desire to place any of our California writers in competition with them. We are pleased to hear of public libraries being established, and of their works occupying conspicuous positions in them; we believe their influence <u>through books</u> to be in the highest degree desirable and beneficial. . . .

All experience has demonstrated that if a country would have a sound and healthy literature, it must be like the autochthons "sprung from the soil," it must be distinct, peculiar and original. . . .

Our position is then that the literature of a country should be distinct and peculiar. In taking this position we do not, for one moment, intend to assume that it should not be influenced by the literatures of other countries; on the contrary we think it should absorb the excellencies of all. But we do contend that foreign writers should not be brought into daily, weekly, or monthly contact with the people, through the media of transitory publications, to the exclusion of native writers. We contend further that in order to secure a healthy literature, "racy of the soil," these native writers should receive all possible encouragement; that their energy and talent should be stimulated by popular appreciation. . . .

. . . We are desirous that upon the Pacific coast a literature shall be built up, as marked and well-defined as was that of Greece in olden times, or of

> Great Britain at the present. . . . We refer with pride to the contributions of the Golden Era, and to our genial contemporary, the Wide West, during the past few years--contributions freely written and generally amidst the bustle and excitement of active working life. We can also refer to the papers which have appeared in "Hutchings' Magazine," and to the communications and editorials which have been published in our daily newspapers. We are, in truth, a people remarkably intelligent and critical; most of us have seen the world pretty thoroughly, and the best of it; and with such intrinsic material and such natural advantages as we possess, it would be a burning disgrace--a lasting humiliation--to aid in the importation of foreign literature rather than in the development of our own.

This preference for a California literature, which parallels in many respects the concern of Irving, Bryant, Paulding, Cooper, Longfellow, and others over the development of a distinctly American literature earlier in the century, is undoubtedly tied in with the general feeling of national pride throughout the country at the time. Daggett and Foard believed that they had an obligation to publish the productions of local writers, even to the exclusion of superior literature, so that the distinctive qualities of the literature of the West Coast could be allowed to develop and in time to rival non-local literature in quality. This clear statement of intent explains why they always favored local productions even when better material was available from non-California writers and why they proudly labeled each bit of original copy as "written for the Golden Era."

Daggett and Foard never had any illusions about the relative merits of the copy in the Golden Era in comparison

with the leading literary works of the period. Yet they also firmly believed that the only way for California writers to excel was to have an outlet for their work so that they could through practice develop greater skill.

The three prize stories and those which followed were important in the development of literature in San Francisco, although artistically they merit little commendation. Overly sentimental, they had wooden plots, whose outcome too often depended on highly improbable events, and their characters had little depth, if any. Nevertheless, they were serious attempts to combine the sentimental romance and Western material, and the editors of the Era prided themselves in the fact that they had been able to elicit from local writers something like the then popular sentimental romance. In fact, out of the seventeen original serials written for the Golden Era, thirteen used local color in some degree.[4] By publishing these local-color serials, the editors were able to give their readers continued romances and still to follow their plan of using locally written material about the West, although the genre had shifted from the sketch to the serial story.

Probably the best of the writers were Edward Pollock, whose second prize story was superior to Dolly Dashwood's first

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[4]Local color in these stories varied from "Madeline, the Heartless," which had a California setting but little for local color otherwise, to stories such as "Logan Forney," "The Golden Cross," and others which made extensive use of California material.

prize one in plot, character development, and degree of probability, and Robert F. Greeley, who wrote more copy for the Golden Era than any one else. More significant than the stories themselves was the fact that San Francisco, which less than ten years earlier had had a population of under 1,000 and only two newspapers, had developed to the point that it and the surrounding mining towns not only supported the Golden Era but were also able to produce writers who provided most of its copy.

During the years from 1856 to 1860, fiction in the Golden Era often followed the form of the serial romance with heavy reliance on sensational and, at times, improbable circumstances. In this respect one sees the influence of other journals whose romances the Era writers endeavored to copy.

The work of Blunderbuss (Daggett) in this connection raises interesting questions. In a sense, Blunderbuss wrote two series. The first series of eighteen sketches, which appeared in the Golden Era from II, 40, to III, 43, are almost completely free from sentimentality, although the first person point of view did bring on some improbability in requiring Blunderbuss to happen to be at the right place to observe all the events in the story, as in the sketch about Dick Ormsby (see Appendix B, Part 5). In addition, these first sketches do not appear to be patterned after any style or writer in the way that the original sentimental romances

in the Golden Era were often slavish imitations of the popular sentimental romance. They seem to have come fresh from the creative mind of Daggett without reference to what other writers were doing. In style and subject they look forward to the rise of the Western local sketch in later years.

The second series by Blunderbuss, which ran intermittently from V, 44, after Daggett had returned from a trip to the East, to VIII, 14, are all basically short, sentimental stories using Western material. In the second series each story has its lovers delayed in their love, or some related plot, and two of them are rather unsuccessful attempts to adapt the sentimental romance to an oriental setting. Only the last one in the second series, "Waiting at Los Angeles," approaches the style of the first series, for here is romance but not sentimental romance--the story really belongs with the first series.

The first series show what Daggett could do, unaffected by contemporary preferences or trends, as they were written when Daggett was twenty-two or twenty-three and probably still largely unaware of literary currents around him.[5] In contrast, the second series were written after Daggett had edited the Golden Era for almost six years and had made at

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[5]At least there is no evidence that he had any formal literary education up to 1848, and after that he was occupied with getting to California, mining, and then establishing the Golden Era.

least one trip to the East. During these years he probably observed the trick of writing romances from reading them in rival journals.

Apparently Daggett never returned to the style of his first sketches, except for his "Waiting at Los Angeles," although he might have done so in his work on the Territorial Enterprise, as overly-sentimental stories hardly seem consistent with what is known of that rugged, riotous journal whose files appear to have been lost forever. In his one published novel, Braxton's Bar (1882), Daggett followed the pattern of the then-popular novel down to the last sensational improbability.

There were also many other original stories, some good, some bad, and many indifferent, in the Golden Era in the years up to the spring of 1860. Two frequent contributors were Chas. E. B. Howe, who wrote a number of short stories about California, and Robert F. Greeley, a distant relative of Horace Greeley. According to Daggett, Robert F. Greeley "was a phenomenon, a whole staff of writers in one person; a magician's bottle, from which a dozen kinds of literary beverage, none of them strong enough to intoxicate, could be poured at will in seemingly endless quantities. . . . But quality, it need scarcely be said, was so sacrificed to quantity, that he failed to achieve a lasting name in letters. . . . He never stopped to think, and seldom erased a word"

(San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 31, 1897). Using both his own name and the pseudonym "Flamingo," Greeley surpassed all other writers in quantity, with at least six continued stories and dozens of other stories, sketches, essays, satires, poems--he tried them all. His works were readable, "with sufficient merit to save them from being condemned as trash, but not enough to entitle them to especial remembrance. His best work was in the like of short descriptive and character sketches." However, Greeley was never able to achieve the authenticity in his local-color stories which Daggett did, probably because he lacked the personal experiences of Daggett.

The discussion of many more writers and stories would not change the over-all picture. In a time when Melville, Whitman, and soon Twain were developing a literature distinctively American and definitely not overly sentimental, the Golden Era, along with numerous other magazines across the nation, was preoccupied with the sensational, the improbable. Many years were to pass before the reading public satisfied by the Era would turn to Leaves of Grass or Moby Dick. For the present, the Golden Era was slavishly trying to found a school of mawkishly emotional stories with a Western glow, unaware that this effete literature had already received its deathblow.

CHAPTER V

Non-Fiction Prose: September 23, 1855, to April 15, 1860

The non-fiction prose, exclusive of editorials and drama reviews, in the quarto period up to 1860 offered a wide selection with perhaps one-third of the copy devoted to news and the rest to personal essays, accounts of travel, answers to correspondents, local events, and filler. During the folio period the Era featured articles on the discovery and settlement of California, such as the series by Filings and Juris Consult.[1] This area was apparently about exhausted by the end of the folio period, since only scattered pieces on the history of California appeared in later volumes. The most important series in the quarto period up to 1860 dealing with California history was a "correction" to the Annals of San Francisco, published in 1855. When the Annals first appeared, several San Francisco editors, including Daggett and Foard, asserted that the work contained errors and misrepresented history by emphasizing the wrong people.

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[1]See Part II, Chapter VI.

This dissatisfaction may have been partly the result of the Annals' failure to mention the Golden Era among the newspapers discussed, although the editors also apparently had some evidence to support their charges. In any event, the Era, beginning with III, 42, published six articles designed to correct the Annals. Having no quarrel with the first seven chapters covering the early settlement of California, the writer began his correction with chapter eight, which covered the spring and summer of 1846, and especially the activities of Fremont, who, according to the critic, had received credit due Stockton. Five additional articles described inaccuracies in the military history of California during 1846, especially concerning events around Los Angeles. Although no author is given, the series imply author participation in the activities discussed. A Captain Mervine attacked the validity of the Era reports, but in reply the editors reaffirmed the correctness of the charges against the Annals (see III, 49).

The Golden Era also published additional articles on early California history, but the editors gradually turned from history to accounts of travel, both in the West and throughout the world. This interest in travel paralleled a similar preoccupation throughout the country with accounts of travel, as such well-known writers as Emerson, Twain, Irving, and Melville produced travel literature in one form

or another. In volume IV, Dr. Lorenzo Hubbard reported on his travels in Southern Oregon. The most extensive and detailed travel literature, however, came from Frank Wendell, whose series "Idealotypes of Foreign Lands," appeared regularly in volume V. Beginning with London, Wendell described England, Scotland, Ireland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and Italy.

The series, which aimed to portray the ideal in these distant lands, evinced a keen appreciation for European culture and history. A heavy dependence on the description of buildings, parks, and other historical places, a steady sprinkling of statistics not usually a part of a personal report, and a general absence of personal impressions or reactions combine to suggest that the series may have been written from a travel or geography book rather than from actual experience.

Although the editors never identified "Frank Wendell," they did declare that the series had been expressly written for the Golden Era. Since the editors did not indicate that the reports were letters from a correspondent, they probably were written in San Francisco, perhaps without the benefit of any more exposure to ocean travel than watching ships from distant lands sail through the Golden Gate. In any event, the accounts helped to fill the need for travel literature, which was in great demand as Americans were beginning to rediscover Europe.

The longest series to run in the Golden Era were "A Short Patent Sermon" by Dow, Jr.[2] These rambling essays continued to appear regularly during the quarto period until volume VII, when poor health caused Dow, Jr. to miss an issue now and then. They continued, with occasional interruptions, up to the time of his death in December, 1859, when he died an alcoholic. As discussed in Part I, Chapter V, before joining the Era Paige (Dow, Jr.) had earned a literary reputation not equaled by his California series of the "Short Patent Sermons." However, until his death, his copy had a column on page one of the Era, which both the readers and the new owners, who took over the Era soon after Paige's death, undoubtedly missed.[3] In addition to his "Short Patent Sermons," Paige wrote a column called "Notes and Cogitations" by "Bubbles." Begun just after Wendell's "Idealotypes of Foreign Lands" had ended, "Notes and Cogitations" contained Paige's musings on many topics, which he often introduced by reference to a news item or local event. These "Notes and Cogitations" probably were interesting to contemporary readers, who would have been able to recognize the innuendoes, allusions, and references to current events, but they lack enduring qualities. "Notes and Cogitations" continued in about every other number of volumes VI and VII of the Golden Era.

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[2]See Part I, Chapter V.

[3]For a sample sermon, see Appendix B, Part 7.

Other columnists of the Golden Era during these years were Doesticks, whose column was copied from a New York paper, Korn Kob (Daggett), Felix Snob (J. L. McCutchen), Sniktaw (Jos. S. Watkins), D. M. Wooster, Sluice-Fork, Old Block (A. Delano), Elfie Elfin, and Flamingo (Greeley). Except for Doesticks, all these regular contributors wrote expressly for the Golden Era. Their loosely constructed columns contained mild criticisms and satires of local theatrical, political, social, and related events plus reports on the author's travels around the state. Not often literary, these columns nevertheless served to maintain the friendly, folksy touch of the Golden Era which the subscribers liked.

News in the Golden Era continued to be reported in summary form, usually in columns such as "News of the World," "From the Interior," "Crimes and Casualties," "City Events and Gossip," and "Atlantic Gossip." Although the Era did not regard the dissemination of news as its major objective, nevertheless readers of the Era received sufficient news summaries to be informed about local, national, and even world events, within the limits of news available in San Francisco, which still depended largely on newspapers sent in by steamers from the East Coast. Special non-partisan messages by the governor or president received additional coverage, as did the Vigilance Committee, which was active

during 1856, when the Era supported the work of the committee and furnished its readers with detailed reports of the day-to-day events. As a whole, though, news coverage was summarized on inside pages in small type.

The Golden Era used large quantities of filler, including anecdotes, quotations, and jokes. The more literary of these items were collected in columns headed "Surface Diggings," "Nuggets from Literary Placers," and "Siftings from Exchanges." For a short time the Golden Era also had a column "For the Ladies," with poems and other short items of special interest to women. The most literary of these features was the column, which had several headings, devoted to book reviews. This last feature, appearing first toward the end of the editorship of Daggett and Foard, and then irregularly, became in subsequent years under Brooks and Lawrence a regular feature. Generally, the reviews merely told what a book was about without any critical evaluation. Books reviewed included travel, fiction, and poetry, with occasional comments on other types of books, such as in VII, 29, H. R. Helper's The Impending Crisis in the South. The absence of any evaluation suggests that the column was written from other reviews or from publishers' accounts of books rather than from a reading by the reviewer. But the column, which kept Era readers informed about current books, had, for a literary journal, more reason to exist than did

some of the other columns. Also the Era continued to publish the reports of the California Academy of Science.

Beginning with VII, 11, the editors provided their readers with a chess department, complete with a drawing of the chess board with its problem for the week and the answer to the problem for the previous week. This feature continued until Brooks and Lawrence took over control of the Golden Era in the spring of 1860, when they apparently decided that they had things more literary for their newly acquired paper.

This potpourri of prose is hardly what one would have found in the Atlantic Monthly, established in 1857 with Lowell as the first editor and with Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, and other leading figures in American literature as contributors. Even the more sophisticated weekly magazines from New York would have eschewed much of the copy found in the Golden Era, and rightly so; but in turn they did not please the taste of the Californians as the Era did, nor had they been founded for the specific purpose of providing an outlet for California literature.

CHAPTER VI

Drama Review: September 23, 1855, to April 16, 1860

Daggett and Foard regarded the reporting on and the criticizing of dramatic productions in California as one of the basic functions of the Golden Era, which each week carried a column especially devoted to reporting dramatic events in San Francisco and elsewhere, even across the nation. Taken together, these columns furnish today a detailed account of the theatrical events in San Francisco and surrounding towns during the 1850's.

As would be expected, the writer of the column often commented upon the quality of the acting, and while a few performers received rather lavish commendation, many "stars" must have felt that the drama column in the Era expected too much of them, although play-goers perhaps were inclined to regard the evaluations as too generous. In February, 1857, Miss Rowena Granice, who occasionally also wrote copy for the Golden Era, appeared as Elvira in "'Eustache Baudin,' a drama with but little to recommend it in a literary point of view." Commenting on this performance, the writer of the

column noted that "Miss Rowena Granice made a most favorable impression upon the audience. . . . For ourselves, we must confess that this lady possesses talent far above the meed we have seen awarded her through the press.--Endowed with a musical voice, handsome figure and a highly cultivated mind, she might, with industry and care attain a high rank in the profession. She has many faults, however, and some of them great ones, too. . . . Her gestures in many instances were awkward and ill-timed, while her pronunciation was not unfrequently coarse and incorrect" (V, 11). Such criticisms of performers were typical of the column, which often offered both praise and censure. Although a few actors won unstinting commendation, many more received condemnation without any softening element of approval.

As a general rule, the dramatic critic for the Golden Era reported himself as less inclined to puff a performer or play than many of his fellow reporters for other San Francisco papers, although the degree was probably slight. Commenting on the San Francisco press, the column reported "No matter how much at variance with truth, they always inform their readers that 'large and enthusiastic audiences were present at the different places of amusement, last evening.' Verily, a little 'lager' and a 'standing advertisement' will hide from the public many a dramatic short-coming" (VII, 1).[1]

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[1]George R. MacMinn in The Theatre of the Golden Era in California (Caldwell, Idaho, 1941), observes that the Golden Era tended to be more commendatory than were a few rival papers, including the Wide West.

However, since the editors of the Golden Era tended to see most things in San Francisco through rose-tinted glasses, quite likely the drama critic of the Era often viewed San Francisco theatrical productions through similarly tinted opera glasses.

Several practices were stated to be detrimental to the development of good theatrical productions in San Francisco. The most severe criticism of theatrical activities was the drunkenness among actors and producers alike. Drawing a comparison between drama in San Francisco and England, "where managers are scholars, and actors and actresses are forced to maintain a moral as well as a professional standing," the drama critic observed that in England drunkenness is not regarded "as the only true evidence of genius, while here the idea has obtained that no man can be a great actor unless he is more or less addicted to the intoxicating bowl. If an actor gets drunk, he is not allowed to appear before a refined British audience and blunder through an evening's entertainment; here we have witnessed scenes of drunkenness on the stage which would not have been tolerated in the lowest whiskey-shops in the city."

Another hurtful practice was the custom of listing one or two performers as "stars." As a result of billing as a star someone "whose talents would not compare with those of the humblest member of the company by whom he or she was

supported," play-goers had become disgusted with the very name of theatre (VII, 6). Furthermore, a few plays were performed so frequently that the audience had no more interest in them. "In referring to the little book in which we have for several years kept our 'dramatic notes,' we find that since the inauguration of the first theatre in this city, 'Hamlet' has been given to our citizens by various actors, eighty-six times, 'Richard the Third' sixty-three times, and 'Macbeth' fifty-seven times, enough in all conscience to last us for the next quarter of a century to come" (V, 10).[2]

The drama critic often found himself torn between a sense of local pride which permeated much of San Francisco's cultural activities and resulted in excessive praise for mediocrity and an obligation to report without bias the quality of local drama as compared with New York or England. The result was a compromise--the critic pointed out faults in local drama and at the same time did all he could to encourage more and better drama. For the subscribers, the drama column set standards of excellence and made available reports of what was being done, and by performing these needed services, the Golden Era helped the flourishing drama of San Francisco become worthy of its patrons.[3]

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[2]MacMinn states that Richard III was the favorite.

[3]For a detailed study of California gold rush drama see George R. MacMinn, The Theater of the Golden Era (Caldwell, 1941) and "The Theatre of the Gold Rush Decade," Monograph No. 5, California Literary Research, State Emergency Relief Administration Project, edited by Joseph Gaer, published in mimeograph form at San Francisco, 1935.

PART IV

Summary

What is the significance of the Golden Era from 1852 to 1860, and how does the Era fit into the whole of American literature? Compared with the best in American belle-lettres written at this time, the contents of the Golden Era fall short of literature by Emerson, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Holmes, Lowell, Poe, Whittier, Melville, Whitman, and others, a difference which is to be expected, just as selections in other literary journals across the nation represent lower levels of attainment than those reached by the above-mentioned writers.

If the Golden Era had no special features to give it added significance, then it probably would not merit detailed study. As a major literary journal of the California gold rush, though, it provides both a historical record of the period and the most inclusive source of poems, stories, sketches, and other pieces of literature depicting this quest for gold. Coming at a period in American history when there existed a wide-spread belief that the ordinary man was

destined to rise to new levels of importance and understanding, the California gold rush appeared to be part of a master plan for the improvement of the common man by placing wealth within his grasp. The intense excitement and optimism throughout the mining areas as well as in San Francisco encouraged contributors who probably would not have written if they had not traveled to the West in search of gold.

San Francisco had grown from a small village whose two hundred inhabitants in 1846 devoted themselves mainly to hide trading to a wide-open city of forty-two thousand gold seekers by the end of 1852, when the Golden Era began publication. To anticipate that these just-arrived miners would write much of the copy for a local literary journal in competition with the numerous papers shipped in from the East required foresight. Yet that is just what Daggett and Foard envisioned when they founded the Golden Era, which claimed in a few years that almost all its selections had been written expressly for its columns.

This accomplishment is in itself noteworthy. The very continued existence of the Golden Era in the face of the problems of production, circulation, and development of writers argues for its importance in the literary history of the West. Its success when rival papers lasted only a few months or years suggests that it pleased in a way that the other papers did not the tastes of the miners and others

sufficiently to cause them to support it because they approved both its contents and its policy of developing local writers. For many Californians the Golden Era was an earnest of the future development of literature in the West. The annals of American literature record no sequence of events comparable to the establishment and continuance of a paper like the Golden Era in an area which only a few years previously had struggled to support one weekly newspaper, the four-page California Star, begun January 7, 1847, by Sam Brannan. Not without reason did these Californians select Minerva to symbolize the founding of their state.

Many of those drawn to California by the discovery of gold believed that America not only ought to develop its own distinctive literature, but that it could and must. After all, philosophers for years had reminded Americans of their latent abilities, a teaching which encouraged the flowering of arts and literature in California. In the gold rush areas, these Americans acquired a sense of local pride and endeavored to found a California literature worthy of and comparable to the growth of American literature throughout the country. Also important is the fact that many of the California miners, who were often young men full of verve and enthusiasm, believed they were destined to excel. This desire to develop an American literature and the enthusiasm of youth found the enabling force to support this San Francisco renaissance in

the gold which was everywhere to be had. Believing that Americans had within themselves undeveloped qualities of greatness, the San Franciscans with their newly acquired wealth, which brought independence and importance, saw an outlet for this greatness in the support of local literature and drama.

These young Americans who joined the gold rush had something to tell. Whether they had traveled west by ship or land, they had witnessed many new things, and after their arrival in California they daily participated in events very different from their former mode of living. These three important factors--youth, an implanted desire to create an American literature, and experiences worth writing about--moved them to contribute to the Golden Era, and their copy adds importance to the Era as a recorder of this exciting and significant period in the history of the West. In this respect, Daggett and Foard were typical of many who wanted to demonstrate the ability of Californians, even though just newly settled, to produce a literature worthy of their great state, whose writers compared their literature with that of the Eastern states, just as those in the East often compared their efforts with English literature. These Westerners, wishing not to be overlooked or forgotten while separated from the East by months of difficult travel, regularly sent back home samples of literary and artistic work along with

fortunes in gold in a desire for recognition which also prompted the issuing of Steamer and other special illustrated editions of the Era as discussed in Part II, Chapter II.

The Golden Era, then, records the growth of California with special attention on mining during its early years. The items by Downey (Filings), "Old Salt," Ryan, and other contributors provide useful historical accounts of the gold rush days while the reports on local conditions from the many mining camps give a good indication of the activities in the diggings. The summaries of news gathered from the surrounding towns reflect the difficult living conditions common in many parts of California in the 1850's. Even more important, the Era furnishes a detailed history of the rise of the literature, drama, and other cultural activities in and around San Francisco. Its drama reviews record in detail the development of San Francisco's theatres as well as reporting the work of many performers and managers. As for the growth of literature as a whole, the Golden Era, from its early preference for stories and sketches about California life to its extensive use of the continued serial, often by a British writer, indicates what was popular in the West.

The Era also interests the literary historian because it contains an excellent example of the literature produced by men attracted to California from all parts of the nation. Quite probably like items would have been written in other

sections of the country if conditions similar to those in San Francisco had existed to stimulate an interest in literature, with the exception, to be sure, of the Western subject matter. The editors and writers, whose tastes, preferences, ideas, and literary skills were basically no different from those of other young men throughout the nation, wrote poems and stories which follow national trends toward romanticism, morality, and idealism just as if they had been written in Boston or New York. Hence the Golden Era, because its contributors originated from all parts of the country, reflects to a degree what was being written across the nation more slowly and without the special drive furnished by the California experience.

According to Hamlin Garland, local-color fiction "has such quality of texture and back-ground that it could not have been written in any other place or by any one else than a native."[1] Implying as it does the use of local dialect, peculiar customs, landscape, superstitions, and other items of a specific area or period, Garland's definition suggests in part the reasons for the enduring qualities of some of the Era's local color during its early years. Because many writers, especially at first, were actual participants in the gold rush, their stories and sketches have a verity not

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[1] Crumbling Idols (Gainsville, Florida, 1952), p. 64.

always seen in attempts by later writers to produce Western local color.

The most important features of the Golden Era, then, were its recording of the history of the California gold rush and the use of Western local color, for in these two areas the Era was looking forward to new trends and movements in American literature. If for no other reasons, files of the Era would be significant today for their presentation of the early development of San Francisco and California. But even more noteworthy is the work of "Blunderbuss," "Old Salt," "Jules," and other writers, who laid the groundwork for the Western local-color story by using material which was to be worked and reworked by writers for years to come.

When started on December 19, 1852, the Golden Era became the recorder of the literature distinctive of the California gold rush, with special emphasis on indigenous material. During these early years Daggett and Foard, who knew mining and miners first hand, appealed to the special tastes of these miners; however, over a period of years the Golden Era gradually turned away from the miner and his literature until by 1860, when Daggett and Foard sold out, this pungent flavor was pretty well lost, having been replaced largely by an interest in the sentimental novel, although Daggett and Foard always stressed local writers and their productions. Under Brooks and Lawrence, the Golden Era

largely abandoned its early preference for Western local color, turning more to the serialized romance from English authors and to witty columns about city life written by Bret Harte, Charles Webb, and others. During the early 1860's Mark Twain wrote a number of items used by the Era, usually published on inside pages.[2]

After Brooks and Lawrence sold the paper in the late 1860's, it changed owners, styles, and formats a number of times until it was finally moved to San Diego in the hope that a new environment would help to restore its lost greatness. The new location failed to revive the dying Era, which was superseded in 1895 by the Western Journal of Education. Actually, the Golden Era began to decline with V, 27, when the shift was made from local-color sketches to overly sentimental romances, even though these stories often used California material. The Era was without doubt a flourishing journal in the 1860's with Harte, Twain, Stoddard, Mulford, and other important writers contributing some of their early items; yet it had already begun to turn away from the Western local color, which had given it importance and distinction as the recorder of the California gold rush of the 1850's.

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[2]See list of Mark Twain items in Supplement to Index, pp. 351-2.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Biographical Sketches

The following biographical sketches of James Brooks, Rollin M. Daggett, John M. Foard, Robert F. Greeley, and Joseph E. Lawrence are given to provide a limited amount of biographical information so that the reader may be aware of other activities of these men in addition to their work on the Golden Era. Except for Greeley, who was a major contributor to the Era, all the men edited the paper at one time or another. Obviously many contributors could be included, but for the most part these men have faded into the past without leaving a trace of their personal lives.

JAMES BROOKS

James Brooks, who had come to California with Foard in 1849 on the Susan G. Owens of Philadelphia, joined Daggett and Foard as an editor of the Golden Era June 14, 1857, and continued publication of the Era with J. E. Lawrence until April 19, 1868, when he sold out to Charles S. Capp. Apparently Brooks made a trip to Europe soon after leaving the Era, as a series of "Letters on the Wing" written from Europe by him appeared in the Daily Alta California in 1870. He died suddenly in Philadelphia in 1882, aged 50 years. Little else is known about him.

Sources:

San Francisco Daily Alta California, October 10, 1870; April 19, 1868.

Sacramento Daily Record-Union, May 30, 1882.

ROLLIN MALLORY DAGGETT

Rollin Mallory Daggett was born in Richville, St. Lawrence County, New York, February 22, 1831. Six years later his parents moved to Ohio, where young Rollin attended school in Defiance and also learned the printing trade. In 1849, Daggett, then eighteen, set out on foot across the plains for California, taking with him his gun, ammunition, and a little salt and hard bread. En route he lived among the Sioux Indians, who left him unharmed because they regarded him as a lunatic. In crossing the Rocky Mountains, Daggett came across a wagon train stricken with cholera. After several days all the adults died, leaving Daggett with three small children, whom he managed to deliver safely to their friends in Sacramento.

For a while Daggett worked as a compositor for the Sacramento Times, then owned by Loring Pickering. The lure of gold proving too strong, however, he made his way to the diggings, where he made enough of a stake to found the Golden Era December 19, 1852, along with J. Macdonough Foard. Daggett

and Foard became quite noticeable figures in San Francisco in their long frock coats,

> but on one occasion Daggett managed to attract more attention than usual. Just before the beginning of the war Doctor Scott gave utterance to some disloyal sentiments from his pulpit, for which Daggett assailed him so severely with his pen that a son of the reverend gentleman made threats of publicly chastising him. Not to be unprepared, Daggett procured an old fashioned horse pistol from some quarter, which he carried constantly in one of the tail pockets of his long frock coat. About the same time a bitter controversy sprang up between him and Calvin B. McDonald, a rival newspaper man. Meeting face to face in Montgomery street one day, the hostile editors engaged in a savage altercation that ended in a scuffle. There was no attempt at sparring; it was just a rough and tumble, clawing fight. In the fierce struggle the horse pistol flew out of Daggett's pocket and exploded on the sidewalk, terrifying the bystanders and alarming the whole neighborhood by its evidence to the desperate character of the fighters. But to the astonishment of everybody, including the principals themselves, the affray came to a sudden and bloodless conclusion. In their fury, each succeeded somehow in stripping the other almost naked; whereupon, realizing the spectacle they presented, the belligerents broke away and hurriedly sought refuge in the nearest store (San Francisco Call, October 9, 1883).

Daggett and Foard sold the Era in 1860 and started the San Francisco Mirror, an eight page literary daily which soon failed. Daggett then opened a brokerage office and regained his fortune. In 1864 he went to Virginia City, Nevada, and joined the Territorial Enterprise, where he worked with Mark Twain and "Dan De Quille" (William Wright). Daggett was clerk of the United States District Court from 1867 to 1876, when he resigned to serve as an elector for Haynes. In 1878 he was

elected as a Republican to the House of Representatives, but was defeated in the next election. Under Garfield he was appointed as Minister to Hawaii, and after returning from the islands, he retired in San Francisco, where he wrote occasional items for California publications. He died in San Francisco November 12, 1901. He was married twice and had two daughters by his first wife.

In addition to his work on the Golden Era, Daggett wrote Braxton's Bar: A Tale of Pioneer Years in California (New York, 1882), which is a sentimental romance, partly autobiographical, and he edited The Legends and Myths of Hawaii (New York, 1888). Daggett also had something of a reputation as a poet. The following are the opening lines of one of his Decoration Day poems:

> With leaf and blossom, spring has come again
> And tardy summer, garlanded with flowers,
> Trips down the hill-side like a wayward child,
> Her garlands fringed with frost; but in her smile
> The valleys turn to green, and tender flowers,
> Woke from their slumber by the song of birds,
> Reach up to kiss the dimpled mouth of May.

Daggett's keen sense of humor enabled him to enjoy jokes and stories. Quite likely many of his humorous Blunderbuss sketches were based on personal experience.

Sources:

San Francisco Call, October 9, 1883; November 13, 1901.

The Nevada Democrat, December 25, 1914.

San Jose Pioneer, May 19, 1877.

San Francisco Daily Alta California, December 9, 1877; November 8, 1878.

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JOHN MACDONOUGH FOARD

The less colorful of the two founding editors of the Golden Era, John Macdonough Foard was born in Cecil County, Maryland, 1829 (The San Francisco Morning Call implies 1826), and came to California via Cape Horn in 1849. From the time of his arrival in California to December, 1852, when he joined Daggett in founding the Golden Era, Foard worked in the mines, although records of these years are very scant. He and Daggett sold the Era in 1860 to start a daily literary paper, the San Francisco Mirror, which lasted about a year. After the Mirror failed, Foard worked for several of the San Francisco newspapers, serving in 1885 on the San Francisco Board of Education. Foard died in San Francisco January 15, 1892. He was a nephew of Commodore Macdonough, who won fame in 1814 on Lake Champlain. Foard had some reputation as a writer and satirist, but no identifiable samples of his writings are known to exist, although he must have written many of the items for the Era.

Sources:

San Francisco Call, January 16, 1892.

Cummins, The Story of the Files.

Hunt, California and Californians.

ROBERT F. GREELEY

Robert F. Greeley, the most prolific of all the writers for the Golden Era, was in some way related to Horace Greeley, but beyond this information, little is known of his personal life. He wandered to California in the 1850's after his "unstable habits" had prevented his advancement on the New York Tribune. According to Daggett, Greeley was a most rapid writer who could tackle anything, but he never revised, and his work failed to achieve greatness. During his sojourn with the Era he often had two serial stories going at the same time plus writing other columns and items for the paper. However, he drank too much and too often and could not be depended upon.

> He was fully alive in the dignity of his profession, and a quiet air of superiority marked his general intercourse with the world. This was especially the case when viewing it through the mists of incipient inebriety. It was in such a condition that he was found in the editorial rooms of the Golden Era one day by a modest drayman.
>
> "What do you want?" inquired Greeley, turning in his chair and glaring at the intruder.

With considerable hesitation the visitor explained that he had been estranged from his wife some months before, and, in the hope of a reconciliation, would like to embody in a letter to her a few verses of poetry. "They told me down stairs that you would probably write them for me," he added. "Can you do so?"

"Can I do so?" thundered Greeley. "Of course I can, but the question is, will I do so? What are your troubles to me?"

"But I am willing to pay for them," urged the drayman, "and--"

"Very well," interrupted the man of letters. "I will accommodate you."

"When shall I call for them?" was the very natural inquiry.

"Call for them?" snarled Greeley. "Sit down! Take your hat off and sit down!"

The drayman timidly complied, and Greeley turned to his desk, and in ten minutes scratched off three or four stanzas of verse, which he read and handed to his patron.

"Just the thing," said the drayman. "How much do I owe you?" And he drew from his pocket about the price for removing a load of pig iron.

"Ten dollars," replied Greeley. "It's worth a hundred, but take it for ten."

"Ten dollars! Ten dollars!" repeated the drayman in amazement. "Why, you've not been at it more than ten minutes, and a dollar an hour is---."

"Unmannered miscreant!" interrupted the insulted poet, rising in his wrath and approaching his visitor as if about to seize and strangle him. "How dare you to put an estimate upon the value of my services?--to compare my labors with those of a drayman or mud-slinger? Know, you miserable scavenger, that one moment of my time is worth more than the years of yourself and all your ancestors since the fall of man!"

It is unnecessary to add that the ten dollars were paid without further haggling.

After several years in California, Greeley returned to New York, to be lost in the unknown of that vast city.

San Francisco Chronicle, October 31, 1897--the account written by Daggett.

JOSEPH E. LAWRENCE

Col. Joseph E. Lawrence, called the father of California literature by Joaquin Miller, was born on Long Island in 1824, but when the news of California gold came, he was living in New Orleans, from where he emigrated to California on mule back via Mexico and Lower California, arriving in California June 24, 1849. Prior to joining the Era in December of 1854, Lawrence had edited the Placer Times and Transcript, one of the early California newspapers, and had served in the custom house. When Lawrence left the Golden Era in 1856, he joined the Wide West, the only serious rival of the Era, as editor, but the Wide West failed in about a year, leaving Lawrence to return to the Golden Era in the spring of 1860. During his editorship the Era attracted a number of important writers including Mark Twain, Bret Harte, Prentice Mulford, and others, although in spite of these writers, who were for the most part just beginning their rise to fame, the Golden Era featured the serialized romance, including stories by Charles Dickens, Mary Braddon, and Pierce Egan.

Lawrence apparently returned to New York after he left the Golden Era in 1868, dying in Flushing, Long Island, July, 1878. Lawrence made friends easily, and during the 1860's he persuaded almost every important visitor to San Francisco to contribute to the Golden Era, although he seemingly did not agree with Daggett and Foard about giving preference to local writers in the columns of the Era.

Lawrence was a member of the Society of California Pioneers and once served as secretary of that organization.

Sources:

San Francisco Daily Alta California, April 15, 16, 1851; June 16, 1857; July 16, 1878.

San Francisco Morning Call, September 4, 1892.

Sacramento Bee, April 30, 1887.

Placer Times and Transcript, April 13, 1850.

Sacramento Transcript, December 7, 1850.

Sacramento Daily Record-Union, July 16, 1878.

Records, Society of California Pioneers.

APPENDIX B

Sample selections written expressly for the Golden Era

December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855

Parts 1: Original non-Western poetry

2: Original Western poetry

3: Criticisms from the "To Our Correspondents" columns of poems accepted by the Golden Era

4: Criticisms from the "To Our Correspondents" columns of poems rejected by the Golden Era

5: Sketches by Blunderbuss, 1st series

6: "A Voice from the Wilderness," by Miles Quinton

7: "A Short Patent Sermon," by Dow, Jr.

APPENDIX B, PART 1

Original non-Western poetry

PERSEVERE

Bear up, be firm, whate'er betide thee;
   Never shirk from fortune's frown--
Hope sits smiling close beside thee,
   Pointing to a conqueror's crown.

What tho' dangers thicken round thee,
   What tho' threatening evils lower--
Struggle yet, they have not bound thee,
   They but try thy manhood's power.

Tho' despair be lurking near thee,
   Bidding thee from Hope to flee--
Meet her firmly, she will fear thee,
   Persevere and you are free.

Wealth may tempt, but to delude thee;
   Hope may point the way in vain--
Tho' a thousand ills pursued thee;
   If you falter, try again.

Bear up, be firm, the world's before thee;
   Failing once, again begin;
Tho' misfortunes hover o'er thee,
   PERSEVERE and you will win.

Sacramento, April, 1853 S.O.P.

EARTH NO DREAM MORE BRIGHT THAN THIS

O! for a home where drooping willows
   Kiss the limpid streamlet's cheek--
Far removed from bounding billows,
   Distant from the mountain's peak;
Where the green and grassy meadows
   Stretch their velvet plains along--
Where the evening throws its shadows
   And the sky lark pours his song.

Moonbeams on the dew-drops sleeping,
   Glittering in the crystal sheen--
Woodbines o'er the trellis creeping,
   Robed in pure and living green.
Round me many a blooming flower
   Wafting fragrance through the vale,
Calmly resting 'neath the bower,
   List'ning to the night bird's wail.

There along a stream of pleasure
   Gushes forth a fount of bliss--
Earth can give no greater treasure--
   Earth no dream more bright than this.
Hill and vale and streamlet flowing,
   Bird and cot and wreathing vine,
Flower and zephyr sweetly blowing,--
   Home like this, may it be mine!

San Francisco, Nov., 1853 S.C.P.

(In another column the editors noted:)

To our Correspondents:

S.C.P.--"Earth No Dream More Bright Than This," will be found on the first page. It is very pretty, and evinces a poetical and refined imagination. We hope for the pleasure of often hearing from our fair correspondent.

Vol. I, no. 51.

LINES

There are some moments when life's pleasures seem
So paltry and so vain, without one gleam
Of real joy to gladden the sad heart,
That I could look on death without a start,
And smiling, kiss its unrelenting dart.

There are some moments when my soul does crave
That mighty secret, reached but by the grave--
Which once attained, all doubt must pass away
Like morning's mist before the sun's red ray:
So much to learn--O spirit, wherefore stay?

O wherefore cling to earth, with all its pain,
When thou hast nought to lose and all to gain?
Death's mansion has a joy for those who see
Beyond its gloomy gates; Who pass are free,
And losing time, obtain eternity.

There are some moments when life's pleasures seem
No unsubstantial and delusive dream,
But gifts from God for all men to enjoy--
Blessings which grief and care may not destroy
Though sorrow ever mingles her alloy.

Then crave not life, or death, but calmly wait
The will of Him who guides thy doubtful fate.
Though time may slowly drag his weary way--
Grieve not, my soul, but bide the coming day,
When doubt, and fear, and sin shall pass away.

San Francisco, December 1853 G.

Vol. I, no. 52.

(In the previous issue the editors commented to "G":)

G.--"The World is Beautiful," is on file for insertion. There is poetry in it, although much of it is lost in the careless selection and disposition of expression--this is particularly the case with the first part. This is our duty and prerogative--to speak with candor of the faults of a contribution; for the press is the great assay office of the merits of productions.

Vol. I, no. 51.

'TWAS THERE

'Twas there, beneath the old oak boughs
   That shade her father's door,
We sat and pledged our mutual vows
   That we may hear no more.

'Twas there, upon a rustic seat,
   The moonbeams trembling o'er,
Our lips at times did softly meet
   As they may meet no more.

'Twas there we mingled lovers' sighs--
   Thank heaven they were pure--
And looked into each other's eyes
   As we may look no more.

'Twas there our tears without alloy
   Commingling oft did pour,
And there I felt a thrill of joy
   That I may feel no more.

'Twas there she said she would be mine--
   Her heart was running o'er,
Tears speaking in her lovely "eyne,"
   Said lips could say no more.

How my enraptured heart did beat!
   O how I did adore
The girl that blessed me on the seat
   Beside her father's door!

Alas, that I was such a fool!
   I told her I was poor--
She sent me howling from the stool
   Beside her father's door.

Rabbit Creek, Calif., Jan. 1854 G. Harry R.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The wind is strong, and the night is cold,
And the snow lies deep in the forests old,
And the stars are glittering down from on high,
Shining as if there was ice in the sky;
And the sullen lake, and the leaping stream,
Glisten alike in the moon's cold beam;
And many a rich man's hearth is bright
With a cheerful blaze on a New Year's night,
And forth on the snow-fields, far and near,
The gleam goes out like a spirit of cheer;
And many and swift are the sleighs that go
Sliding along o'er the gleaming snow,
And happy and light the spirit that swells
In the joyous sound of the gingling /sic/ bells,
And often the laugh peals loud and long,
For the furs are warm and the steeds are strong.

Ah, little they heed, in their joyous mirth,
How Poverty shirks on its cheerless hearth!
Where the lights of the city are never seen,
Where the dwellings are old and the streets are mean,
In the meanest shed of the dirtiest lane,
Where the wind comes thro' by the rattling pane,
And howls around with a merciless roar,
Through the gaping chinks in the hingeless door;
Feeble with want, and pale with woe,
Cherishing coals that have ceased to glow,
A mother and child, so wan and pale!--
Oh, would to God the wealthy and hale,
With pockets so heavy and hearts so light,
Could see them there as they crouch tonight!
Their looks so haggard, and lips so blue,
And pale, thin hands that the light shines through,
While scarcely enough of life remains
To urge the blood through their freezing veins.

Ah! will it not touch their hearts to hear
How the Poor enjoy the bright New Year?
Whom their love of pleasure and thirst of gold
Condemn to hunger, and toil, and cold.
But thus it is; in the bright New Year
When the homes of the rich are filled with cheer,
And Gayety speaks from the lip and eye,
When the heart is young and the hopes are high--
Then Poverty adds new links to her chain,
And want and woe have a keener pain;
Ah! say, shall these things be told in vain?
Are there none, alas! will be glad to cheer
The feeble and poor in the bright New Year?

Lora Lee

APPENDIX B, PART 2

Original Western poetry

TOWN VERSES COUNTRY;-- OR, AN EXQUISITE'S VISIT TO THE MINES

I'm off for the mountains, so hurrah! for the hills;
I'll quaff from pure fountains, and I'll lave in clear rills;
I'll inhale perfum'd air that loads every gale,
From wild flowers that spangle each hill and each dale.
Amid rare flowering shrubs, beneath the evergreen pine,
There in refreshing cool shades at noon I'll recline:
I'll enjoy the deep calm that contentment instills;
So hurrah! for the mountains--hurrah! for the hills.

So sang a poor drowsy cit, who with ennui opprest,
Could scarce drink his punch, or eat his toast with a zest;
And packing his starch'd shirts in a carpet-bag grey,
With a dozen regalias, he starts on his way.
In the coach snugly seated long before the day dawn,
He peers thro' the mist, between a stretch and a yawn;
Ugh! ho! augh! hopes 'twill improve as day light beams bright,
And wonders why stage folks should start in the night.

To pass off time he would snooze; so settles well back,
For sleep his eye closes, when a bounce and a crack
Sends him high flying upward--then down with a thump,
He curses the driver for giving such a bump.
Then comes the sun with his dazzling bright rays,
To chase from the landscape dark clouds, and deep haze,
Our "Ex." brightens up, all other ills are forgot
In snuffling dust clouds--then it's so damnably hot.

But arriv'd at the hills, the pure fountain of bliss,
He'll enjoy life truly--naught will now go amiss:
So hurrah! for Grass Valley, where, 'mid flowers and gold,
There's a feast of enjoyment, there's pleasures untold.
Bright Hope's oft deceptive--disappointment is worse,
The stranger comes joyous, but departs with a curse;
And--I anticipate not, but I'll tell the cit's tale
Of clear fountains, of flow'rs that scent ev'ry gale.

See him climbing the hills in the heat of the day,
Walking up and down steeps to secure a safe way;
O'er rough stones now jolting, with flesh-bruizing shocks,
Now fording deep streamlets, now dodging huge rocks,
Tired, sweating, and dusty, when at late nightfall he comes,
Where fancy paints bliss in the brave Miner's homes;
Exhausted and weary, with pain racking his head,
He thinks of tomorrow--then slinks early to bed.

To bed--ah, to bed; but let cit. tell his own story,
And embrace all his joys in one grand category;
For my muse in the first person will sing best his song,
Echoing cit's mountain bliss in tones deep and long.
"My couch was a hard board, with a blanket o'er spread,
(A bag of shavings on which I pillow'd my head,)
While so short was the length, I could scarce stretch my knees,
My sole comfort was, I imported my own fleas!

"Morning at last dawned, I had not slept a wink;
My stomach cried cupboard, my lips called for drink;
But the whiskey so horrid, that no excuse screens,
My breakfast slop coffee, with fat pork and beans.
The landlords and miners, disregarding my class,
Tho' perfect my moustache 'they wrote me down for an ass.'
My rings and my chains prov'd by incipient ills,
My pockets they thought lined, and charg'd double bills.

"The rills were all muddy from washing of gold,
Through a Long Tom each fountain its dark water roll'd;
The trees were cut down; there were no Sylvan bowers,
The curs'd miners had dug up the earth and the flowers.
Contentment! oh, pshaw! give me toast and my punch,
My regalia and chair at Wilson's Exchange lunch.
In the mountains no more will you catch me to roam,
Where I ran short of change, and made a loan to get home.--
(True by heaven!)"

Vol. II, no. 15; appeared on inside page instead of page one.

TO THE LADY WHO DISLIKED "LOW MINERS"

My lady friend,
Your ear please lend--
'Tis not the greatest pleasure
I ever knew
To address you
In this blunt style and measure.

For I conceive--
Nay, do believe
Yours is a spicy nature,
And does not brook
High tone or look
From any living creature.

That is to say,
You'll have your way,
And feelings ne'er consider,
Where lowly birth,
Or humble worth
Be for your smile the bidder.

Do you not know
That earth's bright glow
Which rags may be concealing,
Deserves most fame,
And puts to shame
Aristocratic feeling?

What's riches, birth
Upon this earth,
This "vale of tears," the portal,
When you or I,
Or both shall die,
And we become immortal?

Then let the dove--
Emblem of love,
Be thine own sweet example;
And ne'er henceforth
Scorn honest worth,
Or on its image trample.

And age, and youth,
And mercy, truth
And hope, and we will bless thee,
And angel throngs
Will sing their songs
In Heaven, while they caress thee.

American River, April, 1854 Pleiades Vol. II, no. 19.

A MINER'S EXPERIENCE, AN O'ER TRUE TALE

Five long years have rolled away,
   Since I resolved to roam;
Yet memory sheds one glimmering ray
   Round that forsaken home.

Full many a bitter tear was shed
   On that momentous day,
When the parting word was said
   By those now far away.

But the beacon light of hope shone bright
   To lure me on to fame,
Which sank, ere long, in dreary night--
   But soon to rise again.

Through toil and strife I journeyed on,
   O'er mountain, plain and forest,
To a land towards the setting sun,
   To reap a golden harvest.

And when the last deep gorge was passed,
   And the last mountain climbed,
I sank, exhausted, down to rest,
   Without a single dime!

But hope revived, when I beheld,
   On every hand, the dust,
And all the hombres doing well--
   So go to work I must.

I seiz'd a pick and pitched right in,
   Though a deserted hole,
And soon I found the shining tin,
   And washed it in a bowl.

Since then I've always had enough
   Of what the boys call oro,
Although at times the fare was rough
   And rather hard to go tho'.

But now I'm living on the best,
   Among the "upper tens,"
Where ladies smile to greet their guest,
   And thus my story ends.

"Note--the author takes it for granted that the reader will extend to him the full 'poetic license.'"

Advent

Vol. II, no. 29.

A MINER'S LIFE

The miner when the day begins,
From his cabin gayly sallies,
His heart's at home, but his thoughts will roam
O'er the treasure-laden vallies,--
No bosom's so light!--no brow so bright
As his, when Hope's sun is shining;
Say what they may, when our efforts pay,
There's reason and method in mining.
Cheerily brothers turn the sod,
Thus light to our efforts yielding,
There lurks a charm in each dull clod,
That may follow the spades we're wielding!

The farmer reaps the golden grain,
His crops for a good time hoarding,
His sole reward a well fill'd board,
When weather and times are "according."
But the miner's life, though not free from strife,
Has a more exciting pleasure--
For his daily pains he reaps golden grains,
And his dreams still run on treasure.
Cheerily brothers turn the sod,
Thus light to our efforts yielding,
There lurks a charm in each dull clod,
That may follow the spades we're wielding!

Should fortune wear an iron frown,
We'll greet her with jest and laughter,
Today we'll pass with the social glass,
And make our piles, boys, after.
And if success should our efforts bless,
We'll scatter about the shiners--
With no rent to pay, no hearts so gay,
And no money so free as the miner's.
Cheerily brothers turn the sod,
Thus light to our efforts yielding,
There lurks a charm in each dull clod,
That may follow the spades we're wielding!

When winter comes with hail and storm,
   With a cabin to keep out the weather,
How rough so e'er may be his fare,
   He's content, if his friends stick together;
Give him the group round the cheerful hearth,
   His pipe and his bottle of cherry,
Tho' the night may wane he'll not complain,
   But go to bed mellow and merry.
      Cheerily brothers turn the sod,
         Thus light to our efforts yielding,
      There lurks a charm in each dull clod,
         That may follow the spades we're wielding!

He loves his lass, and he has one, too
   Wherever his free foot ranges,
Tho' his plans fall through he'll still prove true
   'Mid all life's many changes,--
When merrily tale and jest go 'round,
   And merrily clink the glasses,
Here's to friends at home wher'er they roam,
   And a health to our absent lasses.
      Cheerily brothers turn the sod,
         Thus light to our efforts yielding,
      There lurks a charm in each dull clod,
         That may follow the spades we're wielding!

Plumas

THE MINER'S GRAVE

The miner's grave!--a lonely spot:
O 'twere a sad and mournful lot
To fall beneath the spoiler's hand
In yonder far off stranger land,
With ne'er a monument or trace
To mark the silent resting place.

At "home" those cherished ones await,
The while unconscious of his fate--
A "broken band," with hopes and fears,
And yearning love and bitter tears.

A maiden fair at twilight hour,
Bedecks with lover's taste her bower;
Alas! returned from golden land,
Sweet maiden, he'll ne'er claim thy hand.

Beyond Nevada's summit bold,
And snow-topped mountains bleak and cold,
And near Pacific's billowy shore,
Where long he toiled for glittering ore,
That heart has ceased its longing prayer
For "home," and slumbers calmly there.

No loved one near, no kindred dear
To wipe away the burning tear,
Nor words of hope are whispered when
The waiting soul returns to Him.

No drooping willow planted there,
Nor budding rosebush pruned with care,
And stranger feet perhaps will tread
Near the poor miner's lonely bed,
In search of gold, while rudely roam
The wild beasts o'er his earth-made home.

But fragile flowers may spring and wave
In wildest beauty o'er his grave,
And zephyrs softly chant their lay
With murmuring rills at close of day:
May angels guard and the Heaven save
From ruin's blight and Miner's Grave!

Niles, Michigan, 1854 Miss Lydia A. Kingsbury

Vol. II, no. 41.

CALIFORNIA

In the morn of Earth's creation, ere Time's journey had begun,
When from ethereal station first looked down the morning sun;
When the Moon, with borrowed radiance first dispelled chaotic night,
And the streamlets with glad cadence danced beneath its mellow light;
When the silent spheres in duty bowed before their Maker's face,
As they hung in new-born beauty shining in unbounded space;
When the angels happ'ly shouted o'er young nature at its birth,
Ere the seedlings yet had sprouted from the bosom of the earth;
Then smiling from celestial space, Great Jove in grandeur stood,
And looking o'er fair nature's face, pronounced creation good.
He raised his wand to break the spell--the slumbering spheres to wake,
When at his feet an angel fell, and to his Maker spake:
"God of the world! but deign to see the labors of thy hand;
The Earth looks up and worships Thee--the waters and the land
Speak of Thy wisdom; yet behold! throughout its circling form,
The rugged mount that rises bold, the plain in beauty born--
The fertile vale, the mine of wealth, the ocean's restless tide,
The barren waste, the clime of health, earth's distances divide,
Make Thou a spot upon that globe where rippling streams shall play,
O'er sands of gold; where beauty's robe shall clothe each passing day;
Where mountains wild their heads shall rear to kiss the azure sky,
While at their feet the desert drear and fruitful vale shall lie;
Where summer's gentle, fragrant sights, with wintry blasts shall sing
O'er fields whose verdure never dies--o'er one eternal spring:
Let every charm Thy gracious hand on this one spot bestow,
That man, by looking o'er that land, may all Thy bounties know."
The angel bowed in silence there,--"'Tis done!" Great Jove proclaimed;
"The fiat has gone forth; thy prayer is granted as 'twas named;
That spot is formed--the seed is sown; that land in future day
Shall to Earth's heritage be known as CALIFORNIA!"
He raised His arm o'er distant space, and by His will controlled,
Young Time began his weary pace, the spheres in concord rolled.

R. M. D. /aggett/, his only
signed poem in the Golden Era.

Vol. III, no. 8.

BLOWING UP THE WIND

"The following lines possess an interest, not only from their poetical merit, but from the fact of their being the first original poetry published in California. They are copied from the second number of the California Star, the first newspaper published in California, under date of April 24th, 1847."

Ever blowing, colder growing, sweeping madly thro' the town,
Never ceasing, ever teasing, never pleasing, never down,
Day or night, dark or light,
Sands a-flying, clapboards sighing--
Groaning, moaning, whistling shrill,
Shrieking wild, and never still.

In September, in November, or December, ever so;
E'en in August will the raw gust, flying fine dust, roughly blow,
Doors are slamming, gates a-banging,
Shingles shivering, casements quivering,
Roaring, pouring, madly yelling,
Tales of storm and shipwreck telling.

In our Bay, too, vessels lay-to, find no shelter from the blast;
White caps clashing, bright spray splashing, light foam flashing--dashing past;
Yards are creaking, "blocks" a-squeaking,
Rubber rattling, ropes all clattering,
Lugging, tugging at the anchor,
Groaning spars and restless spanker.

Now the sun gleams, bright the day seems--hark!--he comes! is heard the roar,
Haste to dwelling, dread impelling, heap the fire, close the door.
Onward coming, humming, drumming,
Groaning, moaning, sighing, crying,
Shrieking, squeaking--(reader, 'tis so,)
Thus blowest the winds at San Francisco.

April 20th, 1847. E. C. Kemble

Vol. III, no. 12.

TO MY DEAR (?) OLD UNCLE

My good old uncle dear!
   How oft I've thought of him,
And his kind and pleasing ways
   To his humble nephew Jim:
And of his quaint old-fashioned smile
   And voice once sweet to hear--
They live in recollection now,
   My good old uncle dear!

But, good old uncle dear,
   They write--now can it be?
That you've set your heart's affection
   On the girl that's pledged to me;
You surely must have known it, too;
   Oh! it grieves me much to hear
That you're treading on forbidden ground,
   My good old uncle dear!

Oh! fine old uncle dear!
   Because you've got the tin
You think you've but to say the word,
   And then go in and win.
I'll have a pile ere long, old boy,
   And when old home draws near,
I'll pay my kind respects to you,
   My--rascally old uncle!

Buck Drumor

ON THE DEATH OF A MINER

He has dreamed his last dream, his bold spirit has fled
To the land of the silent, to the shades of the dead;
His life flowers blasted, his hopes set in gloom--
Alas! the poor Miner, he's cold in the tomb.

Oh, why did he wander from his own native home?
Or why after Gold did he restlessly roam?
Knew he not that his visions of th' golden land were
Light as the white clouds that float through the air?

They were vain, they were false as the meteor blaze--
They lured him to dark and to sorrowful days;
And left him at last on the mountains alone,
Where the wild winds away bore his last sad moan.

Go, mother, and weep, for thy darling is dead;
Cold, cold is the place of his last lonely bed:
Ne'er again thou'lt embrace him with love of a mother,
The son of thy pride has been claimed by another.

"Oh, sister!" he sighed, in the far stranger land--
O'er the bright days of youth, when ye played hand in hand,
In his last hours he longed for thy kind gentle care,
And ne'er thought of thee but he breathed a prayer.

Fair maiden, dream on: ah! too soon wilt thou know
What shall blight thy fair visions and steep them in woe.
Dream on, dark-eyed maiden, too soon shalt thou mourn
Thy lover--alas! he shall never return.

He left thee; no cloud seemed to darken the sky:
Ye gazed on the future, no sorrow seemed nigh:
But the dark cloud came--and thy joy and thy pride
Shall never return to make thee his bride.

For yonder he sleeps, on the mountains alone,
Where the pines sigh his requiem in a sorrowful tone,
Where the wild winds at midnight doth fitfully rave,
Oh! there at last is thy wanderer's grave!

R.H.--An El Dorado Miner.

Vol. III, no. 13.

"Your 'Lines on the Death of a Miner' are somewhat faulty in rhythm and measure. We will overlook its defects, however, and give it next week."

Vol. III, no. 12.

THE MINER'S FAREWELL

Farewell, farewell, thou bright and lovely land,
Ye towering hills and sunny vales adieu;
I'm going now, though with a rising heart,
And eyes bedim't with tears, that seldom weep.
The long and much desired time has come,
Which in the future ever seemed so bright;
But ah, where now's the brightness and the joy?
Deep buried 'neath the sullen waves of grief
Here I have friends, and they are friends indeed,
Whose towering intellect and social worth
Can e'er command, while they enchain the soul.
Here I, too, have a home, though rude it is,
No woodbines climbing up the trellised porch,
Or rosebuds opening 'neath the window sill;
Yet it has been to me a HOME, and now
My heart is wedded to its homely worth,
And never can forget its rustic charms.
How can I leave them all!--how can I say
A last farewell! Oh, when I'm far away
'Mid friends of yore, and in my native land,
I'll oft return to thee on wings of thought,
Bright smiling land, and linger for a while
Among the scenes and friends I love so well.
How throbs my heart by sad emotions press'd
As I behold the steamer's sable hull
And smoking nostrils, which will soon away
Over the deep, blue waters bear me on.
My friends, I now must say good-bye to you;
Give me your hands--long may you live in peace,
And all the sweetest joys of earth be yours,
Oh, stranger, smile not that again a tear
Distils beneath my heavy, drooping lid,
For see how fast we're leaving in our wake
Bright objects of my spirits' cherished love.
Now, noble ship, I trust my all in thee,
Oh, bear me safe from friends to friends again;
Yet pause awhile till I can take one long
And lingering look at all I leave behind--
There, haste thee now, and bear me swift away,
Hills, vales, and trees, and flowers, and friends, farewell!

Moose

APPENDIX B, PART 3

Criticisms from the "To Our Correspondents" columns of poems accepted by the Golden Era

"Alpha.--'The Dark Hour' is filed for insertion next week. We like it much--it contains poetry.--'Truth and Error,' is of more ordinary merit, and will be found a corner at an early day. Let us hear from you often" (I,41). "Truth and Error" never appeared.

THE DARK HOUR

"There are hours in this life when the Angel of Faith spreads her white wings and vanishes; and although her sister Hope remains, we see her shadows only."--Schiller.

Oh, weary heart and weary brain,
   Will ye not cease your troubled strife?
For throb with anguish as ye may,
   It will not wake my bride to life.

But yester'-morn I saw her smile,
   While death's cold hand was on her brow;
She knew not of my presence then--
   What knows she of my anguish now?

And can it be that truest love,
   As earnest and as pure as mine,
Can die and come to naught at last,
   Like earthly things that have their time?

I'll look upon that form once more,
   Ere earth shall hide it from my sight;--
Her form! her soul is what I seek--
   My soul is lost in blackest night.

Oh, best beloved of my heart,
   If thou canst see me in this hour,
Now let thy spirit hover near,
   And sooth me with a spell of power.

In vain I call upon her now--
   She comes not at my earnest prayer;
I'll hope no longer 'gainst all hope,
   But yield myself to grief and care.

Alpha

Vol. I, no. 42.

"'Luof.'--San Francisco--'Stanzas to my Wife,' will be found on the first page. Sentiment and poetry excellent. Would be pleased to hear from you often."

STANZAS TO MY WIFE

Dear Fanny, in the bye-gone days,
   When we were gay as summer flowers,
My harp was rapturous in thy praise!
   Thy smiles with joy winged all my hours.
And still, though clouds obscure my sky,
   My fondest thoughts all turn to thee;
I breathe thy praises, in a sigh,
   Upon the shore, down by the sea!

Afar from home, afar from thee--
   What once was love, seems madness now;
For Time hath laid his hand on me,
   And wrinkled my once smoothen brow;
But o'er thy charms, as light as air,
   His shadow falls, that they may be
As fresh as angel foot-prints are
   Upon the shore, down by the sea!

I stand beside the "Golden Gate,"
   And, listening to the Ocean's roar
Impugn the stern decrees of Fate,--
   I would be with thee evermore.
But, like a lion strongly caged,
   I chafe the bars of Destiny;
I stalk, with dark grief unassuaged,
   Along the shore, down by the sea!

And shall "<u>we meet</u>" in Time? Or where
   Time mergeth in Eternity?
And shall we find our "Jewels" there--
   Those, dark Death whilom stole away?
Those thoughts oppress me more and more,
   While musing by this wide-west sea:
'Tis well: we may meet on the shore
   Of blissful Immortality!

San Francisco, June 27th, 1854 Luof

Vol. II, no. 31.

"Luof.--San Francisco.--'To S.G.,' sweetly written, and poetry and sentiment good--shall appear in our next issue" (II,33).

TO S---- G----.

As when the weary traveller,
   With wandering footstep strays afar,
'Mid darksome wilds and lonelier,
   Hails with delight the morning star:
So, o'er grief's long and dreary night,
   Which did my heart of joys beguile,
Rose, like the bloom of dawning light,
   Love's harbinger,--thy winsome smile.

Sweeter than on a foreign shore,
   To pining captives is the song
Of home and childhood, floating o'er
   Their prison walls, full high and strong,
Thy words of love fall on mine ears:
   Sweeter than dews the hum-bird sips--
Than seraph-tones from spirit-spheres--
   The murmuring music of thy lips!

Even as the slumbering infant smiles,
   When music stirs its placid dream;
Or, some fond fairy thought beguiles
   Its tiny shallop down Time's stream,--
And half awake and half asleep,
   Its untaught lips divinely prove
The fount of life, warm, rich and deep,--
   So sweetly have I proved thy love!

Thy Love! Why should I blush to own
   I love and am beloved by thee?
Who loves--may bear Time's ills alone,
   Nor fear those of Eternity.
Let no neglect thy visage mar;
   No sadness shroud thy heart in gloom;
The genial clime is not afar
   Where Joy and Love forever bloom.

San Francisco, 1854 Luof

Vol. II, no. 40.

"U. Miller.--Your lines on the 'Death of a Son' have been read. They are not brilliant, yet passable. Filed for publication" (II,41).

ON THE DEATH OF A SON

Far, far from his home, by the side of the sea,
In the land of the orange and vine,
Where the rays from the bright sun in sultriness pour,
And the tide's ceaseless surges are bathing the shore,
There sleepeth a kindred of mine.

In life's giddy age, when ambition looks light
On the blessed all-hallow of home,--
When fancy allures by its magical power,
And erects in the vision its loftiest tower--
O'er the wild seas he sought for to roam.

On Pacific's broad bosom he spread the bright sail,
With hope beating high in his breast;
But ere fancy's castle was scarcely begun,
Alas! all the sands from his life-glass had run,
And he sleeps in a haven of rest!

The world and its castles are naught to him now,
They are lost in the shadows of night;
The tower his ambition designed him to rear,
Shall now in reality never appear,
Nor shine out in fancy so bright.

My heart in deep sadness and sorrow bewails
The loss of my loved one afar;
Fate passing that way claimed my child for his own,
And within death's cold mansion his body has thrown
But in hope there still beams a bright star.

Though in the dark tomb they have lain him away,
Where no friend can behold him again,
His spirit shall soar up with angels to rest,
And reign evermore in the realms of the blest,
Ever freed from all trouble and pain.

Rest, dear one, rest in thy peaceful abode--
Though thy parents are shrouded in gloom--
Though thy kindred all weep and in sadness deplore
That thou should'st have died on a far distant shore;
Yet, "we are all on the march to the tomb."

How fleeting and changeful are things of the earth!
Today we behold the bright sun;--
Tomorrow we perish--like flowers that have blown,
And fell from the place where in brightness they shone--
And life's troubled journey is run.

Columbia, Calif., September, 1854 U. Miller

Vol. II, no. 42.

APPENDIX B, PART 4

Criticism from the "To Our Correspondents" columns of poems rejected by the Golden Era

Guillermo.--We have received your poetry, with the following note: "Is the enclosed poetry worthy a place in the Era, or had the writer better 'dry up?'" The questions are honestly asked, and so shall they be answered. We cannot admit that the lines are worth publishing, yet we dislike to recommend an instantaneous "evaporation." We will point out a few reasons. In the first verse, the third line is a syllable too long, and, together with the fourth, is grammatically incorrect; in the second verse, overlooking every other inconsistency, no alternative is left but to put a poetical stress upon the article "a," in the second line, which can never be done in such instances with propriety; in the third verse, the second and fourth lines are not in rhyme; and in the three verses, we can observe nothing indicating much poetical talent, and nothing that has not been said by dozens of others in styles vastly more attractive. Here are the lines, with corrected punctuations:

FRIENDSHIP, LOVE AND TRUTH

Friendship 'twas from Heaven sent down,
Man's lonely path to cheer;
Peace restore smooth the angry frown,
And dry the mourner's tear.

Love is not ripened in a day,
Nor yet in a life time;
'Twill live when earth has pass'd away,
And ever brighter shine.

Truth is a beacon that will guide
Our steps to honor's throne,
And he who travels by her side,
Keeps clear of many a thorne.

Michigan Bar, July 1 Guillermo

Jenno.--"Beauty" has been laid on our table.--
We quote one verse:--

> Some say there's beauty in all things
> That nature has adorned:
> Some say there's beauty in the face
> Of weeping maids forlorned.

We presume the two last lines are intended by the author merely as a hypothesis, but demonstrative of what, the finale of the production gives no idea. --We would also suggest the impropriety of introducing into the English language, now that it is becoming somewhat systematized, any new words for rhyming purposes merely. Etymological disagreement with those who have heretofore attempted to reduce our language to a science, has induced you to offer the word forlorned!--to us entirely new. True, poets' privileges with the English Language are not very clearly defined, yet in this instance, you have overstepped the bounds of the most presuming bard, and that, too, without making a very startling addition to the category "F" of the English vocabulary. Declined.

APPENDIX B, PART 5

Sketches by Blunderbuss, 1st series

MY COOKING EXPERIENCE

The Plum Duff

by Blunderbuss

Phrenologists who have examined my head, have universally agreed upon one point, and that is, that the knot of imitation stands out prominent from the diminutive phrenological mounds surrounding it, like a towering land mark among a row of ant-hills. And as a very limited knowledge of human nature teaches me that where this trait of character exists to a predominent extent, ingenuity can also be found. I have come to the conclusion that I am both imitative and ingenious to a most dangerous degree.--Hence, very frequently I stake all upon the chances of imitating some one who has by accident, perhaps, succeeded in carrying through successfully some great undertaking, or as often rush heedlessly into a doubtful enterprise involving life and reputation, trusting solely to my ingenuity to bring it to a happy termination or extricate myself with honor in the event of its failure. And of course I do not always succeed. Heavens! no; the very opposite is generally the case; yet in the

following instance I was, to say the least, particularly successful. In the spring of 1851, after prospecting the country over from the Maripose to as far north as the Yuba, I found myself one night on Landers' bar on the Main Yuba, without a dollar. But do not imagine, dear reader, that a knowledge of the last mentioned fact created any uneasiness in my breast, or interferred half as much with my night's rest as the millions of fleas that frollicked round me. I was certainly aware that I could not pay the landlord the next morning for the bunk I was occupying, yet I felt confident that if my ingenuity would not help me out of the difficulty to the mutual satisfaction of myself and host, that I could at least imitate the example of many others, and let him whistle for his pay. So, with these consoling prospects before my eyes what would hinder me from sleeping?

The next morning while at breakfast, I heard the landlord inquiring for a cook. I thought this a most excellent opportunity to place my finances in a little more healthy condition, and volunteered my services. Mining wages ranged from six to eight dollars per day, but believing cooking a trifle less laborious, I decided upon attempting the latter at all hazards, although my knowledge of the art went no farther than a slight insight into the mysteries of slapjack baking. The landlord questioned me concerning my qualifications, and I him in regard to my wages. Both were

answered satisfactorily. He told me that he had fourteen boarders, and would pay me $175 per month, and I in return rather startled him with the announcement that I had on several occasions been pronounced the most scientific and economical cook in America, and that I would undertake to introduce into his kitchen improvements making a saving of fifty per cent on raw material.

I went at it. For the first three days my success was astonishing to myself and encouraging to the landlord. I manufactured dishes of a hundred varieties, although my bread was not always the lightest, or the soup the finest flavored; yet I had the reputation, and for one week, without a word of murmuring, the boarders managed to choke down some of the most damnable compounds ever placed upon a table. What I lacked in knowledge of the business I undertook to make up with ingenuity. I experimented upon the loftiest scale. I stewed pork and dried peaches together, and sat the delectable mixture, well peppered and buttered, before my boarders, giving the dish a foreign name which I could not pronounce twice alike. I fried onions in sweet oil, and potatoes in vinegar; put loaf sugar upon beef-steak, and flavored the coffee with alternate doses of pepper sauce, mustard and current jelly. But for one week the boarders stood it all, for each disliked to be the first to show his ignorance of artistic cooking by denouncing my dishes _a la Francaise_.

Up to this time, I had not experimented any in pastry cooking. But as Sunday approached, a day the landlord informed me upon which the boarders would expect either pies or puddings, I resolved to make the attempt. So, the Saturday night previous, while all were at supper, I asked the boarders what they would prefer the following day in the pastry line, intimating that I would prepare them anything they desired. As two-thirds of them had been sailors the answer was duff.

Here was a dilemma for me! What in the name of kind heaven was duff? I didn't know, and of course it would never do to enquire. I might make them eat strange dishes with strange names, but I well knew that I could not mislead them, with all my pretended science, when it came to duff. I saw that if I made a failure of this dish, the nature of which I had not the most distant idea, my reputation would vanish and my science would be scorned. I laid awake all night, revolving the matter over in mind, but the next morning I was none the wiser for it. I analyzed the word "duff," and exhausted in vain my entire knowledge of every foreign language in attempting to ferret out a meaning for it. But I determined, after all else had failed, to throw myself back upon my ingenuity and take the chances. The boarders asked for duff, and I resolved that they should have what they desired.

As I felt assured that upon the success o' this little pastry enterprise hung my fate as cook of that establishment, I settled with my employer for my week's wages; and as soon as breakfast was over, commenced preparing the duff, in order that by twelve o'clock it might possess at least one redeeming quality--that of being well done. During the morning, by accidentally hearing dropped at the table the word "duff-bag," I became convinced that duff was cooked in a bag. Working upon this discovery, I took one quart of molasses, about five pounds of flour, a half pound of butter, a pound of dried apples, a half pound of sugar, a tea-cup full of salt and about an equal quantity of pepper and allspice, and mixing them together I tied the compound up in a towel, and put it into the oven of the stove to bake.

Noon came, the bell was rung, and the boarders rushed to the table. The first courses were waded through, and the duff was called for. I packed up my blankets and placed them beside the back door. I then opened the stove door and taking from the oven the lump of stuff, stripped the towel from around it and placed it on a plate before the boarders. --In a moment a half dozen knives were plunged into the mass, and the next as many mouths were testing its quality--and the next, as many honest miners were ejecting it and swearing in fearful earnestness--and the next, Blunderbuss "might have

been seen" making his way up the hill, with his blanket on his back, without paying any regard to the trail.

Whether that duff was entirely consumed, is entirely a matter of surmise, yet it strikes me pretty forcibly that it was not.

Vol. III, no. 7.

Mining Recollections of '49-'50

by Blunderbuss

DICK ORMSBY

Dick Ormsby! What a crown of pleasing recollections does the mention of this name conjure up in the mind of Blunderbuss!--of days "lang syne," when long beards, flannel shirts and pockets well lined with dust were the individual accompaniments of so large a portion of our population--when flour was worth $2 per pound, and a drop of the "ardent" was purchased by a pinch of oro! These were Blunderbuss' palmy days; but they are past,--the waters of oblivion are fast obliterating from the land every evidence of their former existence, and from the memories of those who witnessed them even the recollections of them are rapidly disappearing. Yes, those good old days of excitement and romance have slipped through the fingers of "Blunderbuss," and so have those long and well filled purses which he was wont to rejoice over. Well, let them go; if he has not the gold, he

has something which is to him of more value--he has a thousand pleasing recollections to feast upon, every one of which is relished as well as would have been the delicious grub which his departed wealth might have purchased.

Dick Ormsby (or R. Barrington Ormsby, Esq., as he usually subscribed himself,) was a singular man (I know of him in the past tense, for heaven knows whether or not he is living). I scarcely know how to describe him, yet I will attempt to do so. He was perhaps thirty years of age, of medium height, rather genteel in appearance and quite intelligent. He was not lazy, yet he was never known to work; he was not a thief nor a gambler, yet he always found a dollar in his pocket when it was absolutely necessary for him to have one. He was always happy in spite of every difficulty and embarrassment, and was always overflowing with fun when surrounded by circumstances which would have driven ordinary men to self-destruction. But the most remarkable peculiarity about him was his impudence. It was none of that low, sneaking impudence which so many possess, but which is for nothing but making enemies,--it was of the fresh, vigorous, overwhelming, knockdown brand of that article, which is sure to triumph the world over.

Dick was well known through a certain portion of the mining country in '50 and '51, and many are the yarns which are to this day told of the manner in which he "took in" this

landlord and that miner, &c. Although I have become acquainted in one way or another with many of his transactions in this country, yet I witnessed but few of them myself. The first time I ever saw Dick was upon his presenting himself to the landlord of the hotel I was stopping at, in San Francisco, and asking the price of board. This was in March, 1850. He had that day arrived (as I subsequently learned), in the ----, I have forgotten the name of the vessel, from Boston, from which he had disembarked without a change of linen (or cotton) and but one dollar and a half in money. But what cared he! He whistled upon being told that board and lodging had been reduced to twenty-one dollars per week, whistled upon being informed that it was to be paid invariably in advance, and whistled as he stepped out again into the mud and water with which the streets of San Francisco were at that time deluged. Poor fellow! what could he do under the circumstances? All he possessed was one and a half dollars, and he had not a friend in the city. Well, I will tell you what he did do. He was passing down Commercial street shortly after, when he heard an auctioneer crying out, "going at one dollar! who says the quarter," and being somewhat astonished to find anything selling within his means, he made the required bid and the article was knocked off to him. And what do you imagine it was? why a trunk, filled with no one knew what but its owner, and he had left it in charge of a man some

six months previous, and with a host of others, it was now being sold to pay charges. Dick paid his one dollar and twenty-five cents, shouldered the trunk, carried it to the sand bank near Bush street, broke it open, found one shirt --a clean one--two pairs of old pants, a linen coat, and a few other valueless articles; transferred the shirt to his back, filled the trunk half full of sand, again shouldered it, carried it to the hotel mentioned, placed it behind the counter, told the landlord to keep an eye upon it, registered his name and found himself a regular boarder--all in half an hour's time. The landlord was very polite to his new customer; asked him to try "something warm," which he did not object to, and checked him for the best bunk in the house. Dick entertained him with opinions on the mining and agricultural prospects of the State, of Spanish land titles, &c., &c., and finally wound up by asking the price of gold dust, provided a person might have two or three thousand ounces for sale. Of course, the landlord never dreamed of asking Dick for payment of his board in advance--never imagined that the money he loaned him would never be returned --never suspected him of being worth less than fifty or sixty thousand dollars. But he was mistaken in all his surmises. Dick, after boarding two weeks with his accommodating host, borrowed twenty-five dollars of him, "just for a moment," and decamped on board a small sailing vessel for the mines. The

feelings of the landlord upon opening the trunk can be easily imagined.

From that time forward Dick figured pretty extensively in Nevada and Sierra counties--in fact became so well known that he found it necessary to use some half-dozen different names during the two years which he remained in that section of the State. I have not the paper or the patience to relate the manner in which he "come it" over old G----, at Nevada, or one of the present Aldermen of Marysville (who kept a hotel in that place in the fall of '50,) by agreeing to drive every rat and mouse from his house in one week's time for one hundred dollars and board during the period it would occupy to accomplish the job, which hundred dollars was not to be paid until the task was performed. Of course it was the weeks board Dick was after, not the money; and at the end of that time, after having once or twice scattered a little dough in different parts of the house, and acknowledging the failure, he walked off with the landlord's sympathies and a five dollar gold piece which the kind-hearted man slipped in his hand at parting. But I will mention a little occurrence of his which I witnessed myself and <u>know</u> to be true.

Some time in May, '52, myself and partner were traveling on foot from Nevada to Downieville.--The trail was rough, the weather warm and we progressed but slowly. After we had

crossed the South Yuba and had travelled some six or seven miles beyond, we came to a hotel, (as a large sign in front of it informed us,) and concluded to take dinner.--The house was a long, canvass structure, with one landlord, one cook, one bar keeper and one hostler, and these were all encased in one small pair of pantaloons, and all looked through one pair of spectacles. The house was divided into two apartments--a kitchen and dining room, the last of which answered for a bar-room, sitting room and sleeping room. A large table extended almost the entire length of the apartment, the end nearest the kitchen of which was used for piling extra provisions, surplus plates, knives and forks, &c.

We were furnished with a good substantial dinner of bread and butter, coffee, fried ham, potatoes and pickles, and after partaking of it heartily, were enjoying a smoke in front of the house, when who would walk up but Dick Ormsby. He did not recognize me, but stepped into the house and ordered dinner, depositing on the end of the counter a small budget about the size of his hat. Telling my partner who he was, we drew our bench into a position favorable to our witnessing operations within. In a few minutes Dick was told to take a seat at the table, which he did, at the same time placing his little pack on the bench beside him. When he had about finished his dinner, he politely requested the landlord to take the piece of ham which he had on his plate and give it another turn in the frying-pan. The cook departed on his

errand, when Dick reached towards the end of the table and took from a knife-box an even half-dozen knives and forks, which he carefully wrapped in a paper and shoved into his little budget. Upon the return of the ham, which was "well done" as well as was the landlord, Dick ate a few mouthfuls of it, then shoving back his plate, addressed his host:

"Landlord, you set a pretty good table for this wild section of country."

"Why, yes, travellers generally acknowledge such to be the fact," was the smiling reply.

"What do you charge for such a meal?" demanded Dick, putting his hand into his pocket.

"One dollar," was the answer, and the landlord worked his fingers as though in the act of fobbing said dollar.

"Cheap enough--cheap as dirt," returned Dick; "but I guess you'll have to try and make the price of this meal off the next customer--I haven't a cent of money, nor have I had for near a year, and all I own in the world is in that little pack;" and he looked at the landlord straight in the face.

"The devil!" exclaimed the incensed host, "then I'll see whether there is enough in your pack to pay for your dinner;" and he made a desperate plunge for it.

Upon opening it, the first thing that his eyes rested upon was the package of knives and forks. He pulled one out, looked at it, put it back, placed the whole behind the counter, and tossing the budget back to Dick told him he could go.

Dick tied up his little pack, walked up to the counter behind which the landlord was standing, with his hand on an axe, and asked if he knew the price of the articles which he had taken from him. He informed the landlord that they were worth at least two dollars, and he could see that there was a trifle coming to him after deducting the price of his dinner.

After studying for a moment, during which Dick put on a look of injured innocence, the landlord agreed to give him fifty cents, after being told that they had been purchased for two dollars at auction the day before in Nevada. Dick fobbed his "half" and started, and I went out back of the house to laugh, and roll and laugh. When I returned, the landlord, half suspecting something, was carefully counting his cutlery.

This was the last I ever saw or heard of Dick Ormsby.

APPENDIX B, PART 6

"A Voice from the Wilderness," by Miles Quinton

Dear Frank:--I have but little more to communicate; a few brief scratches of the pen, and the world and myself will be again unknown to each other. Were my feelings to guide my hand, and my heart to dictate the voiceless wail of my sorrowing soul, I could write volumes, and there would still remain volumes to be told: but I will pass over everything but the facts, for the recital of them will sufficiently suggest the misery through which I have struggled to elicit your kind sympathy, which is all I desire.

The small pox, that scourge of humanity, was indeed in our midst. As soon as it was ascertained, and I had communicated to the people the deadly nature of the contagion, every attempt to stop its ravages was resorted to, but without effect. We removed all the sick into the valleys below, in order to keep the city clear of the disease, but every day new cases were discovered in every part of the city, and every attempt to prevent the spread of the scourge was ineffective, and soon the whole nation seemed prostrated with it. The people died by tens, and their bodies were tumbled over the precipices, and lay rotting on the sides of the hill. My wife was among the first victims, and soon our two children followed. In two days after, the Chief and his wife were buried, and the nation was left without a ruler. I need not tell you of my feelings as these calamities followed in rapid

and stunning succession! John [his faithful Indian companion acquired before he joined the tribe] was also attacked, but owing to careful diet and his naturally strong constitution, he was among the few that survived. As for myself, I had been vaccinated when I was young, and consequently escaped.

As I stated, upon the death of the Chief, the nation was left without a ruler; yet no one ever suggested the appointing of successor, for all that could be heard or thought of was the groans of the dying and the heart-rending wails of friends and relatives.--Never have I witnessed or read of contagion that carried on its dreadful work so unrelentingly, or that was more fatal in its career. All our simple remedies seemed only to aggravate the disease, and to bring the sufferers nearer their end. The only means I could think of to save the people from total destruction was to recommend them to light vegetable diet; but this seemed to have but little effect.--The disease silently went its deadly rounds, sweeping everything human before it--young, middle aged and old--until by the last of November one half of the nation must have been carried off, and its violence still seemed unabated.

Despair seized upon the people, and with faces agonized with fear and horror, they moved through the streets like spectres, gazing unmeaningly upon each other. They called

upon me to save them--me, who had lost wife, children, all--but I could offer them no hope;--total annihilation stared us in the face, and I saw no remedy for it but to leave the city, which seemed to be doomed, and to get beyond the reach of the infection. The policy of this step soon found another and more powerful argument in its favor, and reduced itself to a necessity. Every morning, the dead were removed from the houses and tumbled over the sides of the mountain, where they were left to rot and decay, and to fill the air surrounding the city with their deadly stench. This daily grew worse, until the atmosphere became so appallingly foul that we were compelled to leave the city, taking with us our sick and a small supply of provisions.

After much difficulty we transported all about three miles distant, to the farther side of the smaller mountain, where we erected temporary buildings.--But the disease followed us, apparently with increased determination as our numbers became fewer; and one by one the people were carried off, until at last, as winter set in and the disease took its flight, from the sheer want of victims, but seventy remained! Yes, out of a population of near a thousand souls, in less than three month's time the small-pox left but seventy, and these reduced, by watching, care and anxiety, and by a succession of horrors which pen cannot describe, to the mere wrecks of human beings, both

physically and mentally. Of this number, more than half were women and children.

We returned to the city, but oh, what a change within the past few months had taken place around us! The houses were all there, but where were they who were once their occupants? Look over the rugged sides of the mountain, and the sight of their whitened bones and gastly skulls suggested a fearful answer! Our graineries were still full, but our hearts sickened at beholding them, when we thought of the departed hundreds for whom they had been filled; our cattle and horses grazed in hundreds on every side of us, but we took no pleasure in contemplating their increasing numbers, for they for whom they had been raised and guarded were gone from us forever. Everything was desolate, and we walked from house to house like strangers, each rude structure forcing upon the mind recollections gloomy and dreadful. I went to my own home, but as I crossed the threshold and my eyes again rested upon familiar objects, a sense of my utter desolation presented itself to me, and I felt that I was indeed wretched; wife, children, relatives, people--all gone! No, not all, for as I threw myself upon a seat to give vent to my grief, a hand was laid upon my shoulder, and I looked up and saw John by my side. He had shared with me every danger for many years past, had as brave and honest a heart as ever beat within a human bosom,

and I loved him as a brother. The sister of my dead wife was also by my side, and looked to me for protection, as did also the saddened remnants of our people. I had thought of leaving them; but upon looking around the spot where I had spent the happiest part of my life, and upon the faces of those who had shared it with me as well as the trials succeeding it, and who looked to me for counsel, and would have given their lives for me, I had not the heart, and resolved to end my days with them. The people were overjoyed at my determination, and went to work in removing evidences of our late calamity by collecting together and burying the bones of the victims, and cleansing the streets and houses, and ere the winter had passed, our little community began to wear a more cheerful aspect.

I have little more to add. John is now the husband of the sister of my late wife, and we all live together. She is some years his senior, but they live happily, and are much attached to each other. This is more than he could have hoped for had the Chief lived, but my consent was now law, and you may imagine was easily obtained. The people are again in a thriving condition, and although their misfortunes for a time almost paralyzed them, they are gradually recovering from the blow. But we are weak and almost defenceless, and I can see, that should we remain unmolested, in a few years, at farthest, the Moquis nation

will be remembered with the things of the past. They are in the hands of Heaven, and its will be done!

As for myself, as I have before told you, my tent is pitched for life. Sometimes I think of my old home on the banks of the Ohio, and long to again see it; but the thought is momentary, and were it not that my old mother may still be alive, I should never entertain it. Fate, that has given me my strange disposition, as has thus cast my lot, must answer for my apparent indifference for dear friends and relatives in thus secluding myself from them--I cannot. But enough. I am here, and here I shall remain.--If you ever see my mother on this side of the grave, tell her I will meet her in another world, when I will be able to explain to her what I cannot in this. I shall never see you again on earth, and this is the last you will probably ever hear of me. Farewell!

Miles Quinton

APPENDIX B, PART 7

"A Short Patent Sermon," by Dow, Jr.

A SHORT PATENT SERMON

California Series--no. 4

My discourse for today will be drawn from the following brief text:-- Go with the crowd!

My Gregarious Brethren:--Your congregating propensities exhibit such a peculiar protuberance that I hardly know unto what sort of creatures to liken you: whether unto bed-bugs, bees, geese, sheep, or ravenous wolves. In some respects, you are ring-streaked with the general characteristics of the whole. 1st. Unto bed-bugs; for you devour one another, and are prone to back-bite those whom fortune has placed upon downy beds above you; and because you emit a not very sweet-scented odor when singed by the candle of retributive justice. 2d. Unto bees; because you keep up a constant humming, and among you there are drones as well as workers. Gold is your honey, and a most marvelous faculty you possess for extracting it from old rags and guano, as well as from the dandrif upon the cuticle of California--from almost everything except a poor, miserable preacher, like your humble servant. Knock him down for his money, and

you may consider it a lucky strike if you find anything approaching nearer to the wished-for color than a brass quarter and yellow flannel undershirt. 3d. Unto geese--yes, why are you like unto geese? Because, high as is the arch to the portal of heaven, you all bob your heads as you enter--if you have the good luck to be admitted at all; because you evince your disapprobation by hissing, when flocked together at the theatre; and because to my notion, you show off to the best advantage when dressed for dinner table; and, moreover, it costs more corn to keep you than your carcases are worth. 4th. Unto sheep; because you need a shepherd and big dog to watch over you, notwithstanding you are surrounded by a most formidable brushwood fence of laws and ordinances; and because, when one of you has jumped into a pasture where there is good picking, all Tophet, with a pitchfork, and the tenth commandment, couldn't keep others from following. 5th. Unto ravenous wolves; for you prey upon unsuspecting innocence, arrayed in sheep's clothing, transmogrified into a gallus suit of broadcloth; and because, when your avaricious appetities are once whetted to a feather edge upon the bone of prosperity, you won't even hesitate to break into a sacred fold of religion, if you chance to smell a bone unpicked by the vultures that continually hover there about.

Consolidating bipeds! I shall liken you unto nothing further than to your own selves. You are a heterogeneous conformation, and you know it. You swarm in commercial nests, called cities, where, despite the apparent harmony that seems to reign, principles, interest and pursuits, as antagonistic to each other as oil, water and fire, predominate, and upon all the elements of discord, strife and selfish ambition are subterraneously at work in comparative silence, like so many rats undermining a granary. . . .
(I omit several paragraphs illustrating his point.)

In moral and religious movements you generally go with the crowd. When any particular church once is in a fair way of being filled with a rush, hundreds stand ready to join it--especially if it be a rich one--though I know a free and easy, liberal-minded mortal in this community, with an inch of fat upon his ribs, who says he can never be induced to join any church whatever, so long as there is room enough outside, unless it agree to furnish champaign and turtle soup at the Sacrament!

My Bewildered Brethren! If, at any time you are at a loss, and don't know where to go, follow the crowd. If you would have me "holler" to your satisfaction once a week, go with the crowd. If you wish to go straight to the devil in a hurry, follow the crowd, and you can't miss the way. But on the other hand, if you desire to go to a more respectable

place, wait patiently, till the united efforts of us good Christians shall have rendered heaven popular as h-ll--then gird up your loins and mix with the crowd. So mote it be.

Vol. III, no. 24.

APPENDIX C

Sample selections written expressly for the Golden Era

September 23, 1855, to April 16, 1860

Parts 1: Original poetry

2: "To Our Correspondents," March 13, 1859

3: "The Duel by Candle-Light," by Blunderbuss

APPENDIX C, PART 1

Original poetry

STANZAS

Golden autumn, gorgeous autumn,
   O, the pensive autumn time--
When the music of the woodlands
   Hath a melancholy chime;
And the songs of birds come mournful
   Through the hazy atmosphere,
And a solemn silence broodeth
   O'er the closing of the year.
When no more the fairy flowers
   On the sunny fields are seen,
And the leafy woods are putting
   Off their livery of green;
And as though to mock the splendors
   That are fading day by day,
Have donned unseen and silently
   The splendors of decay.

There is silence in the woodland,
   Undisturbed by aught around,
Save the rustle of the dead leaves
   As they tremble to the ground;
And the chipping of the squirrel
   As he skips from tree to tree,
And the stream that sings forever
   A delicious melody.
There's a stillness in the lowland,
   And a silence on the hill--
Broken only by the screaming
   Of the blue-jay, wild and shrill;
But there's something in the landscape,
   Though the last and loveliest,
Like the sleep of second childhood
   Ere the spirit sinks to rest.

There is beauty all around us--
   'Tis the loveliness of death--
The bloom of summer withered
   By the winter's icy breath;
Like the form of manhood stricken
   In its glory and its prime,
It hath too an awful aspect--
   Mournful, solemn and sublime.
There are sad and spirit voices,
   That come sighing on the breeze,
And my spirit hath an echo
   Holding sympathy with these;
For it whispers ever, ever,
   Of a vision seen before--
Passing quickly, ah! too quickly,
   But returning never more.

It is nothing but a memory--
   An illusion of the past--
For oh! it was too bright and far
   Too beautiful to last;
But of all life's former pleasures
   That have fled and are forgot,
Or dimly are remembered,
   'Tis the only verdant spot:
And though the retrospection
   Waken pangs that slept again,
The poison hath no power,
   For it is a pleasing pain;
Like a stream of mournful music
   As it steals upon the ear,
We linger still to listen,
   Though we tremble as we hear.

It was when the robes of autumn
   Hung upon the forest bough--
Dyed in yellow, red and crimson,
   Ever radiant as now--
That a lovely, gentle flower
   Bloomed the object of my care--
O, so beautiful mid blushes--
   Nature never had as fair;
But a chill frost nipt my flower,
   And I saw it droop and fade,
And all ravished of its fragrance,
   In the dust neglected laid.
And I sorrowed as I mused of all
   Its beauty and its worth,
That a creature so divinely fair,
   Should be so much of earth.

LIFE'S EVENING

Behind yon western hill now sleeps the sun;
Its heavenly course in splendor hath it run;
No gilded ray of beauty's left on high
To decorate the grandeur of the sky.
Its settling damps the bright, gay smile of mirth
And evening lends dull shadows to the earth;
While all around seems cold, harsh, drear, unkind--
Each ray has faded--nought is left behind.

So with my heart--its bouyance has gone,
The eve of life, in youth supplanted morn,
While saddened thoughts are ever passing by,
To crush each rising smile into a sigh.

But now, Oh, God, my heart asks but one boon:
Memory, retain those pleasures once mine own,
And let my mind, though sadly, fondly gaze,
Upon the scenes of bright, happier days.
Though youth no longer now in smiles is decked,
But lives and moves a piteous shattered wreck,
And fading, soon will take its final rest,
Still treasuring dear thine image in my breast.
The charms of earth to me hath passed away,
And sadness fills the heart that once was gay--
That bids adieu to earth's seducing glee,
Though loves, at least, the power to think of thee.

J. B. M'Quillan

"THE MINER'S DREAM," by T.S.D.

The miner sits in his cabin door
Near a canon, dark and lone,
While the shades of night, o'er mount and stream,
Tell the day hath fled, and the last bright gleam
Of the setting sun hath gone.

Now an hour since, and that miner's arm
Swung the shovel and the pick,
In search of the gold, deep hid in the ground
Of the gulch, the stream, and the hill sides round
That cabin and "Canon Creek."

He gently rests, for his day's work's done,
And he sleeps most calmly now,
For his mind, untroubled, doth freely roam
From California to his distant home,
While a smile rests on his brow.

He thinks of a mother's gentle love,
And sees the smile on her face,
And not all of the ills of a wandering life
The world's contentions or ceaseless strife
Can her form from his mind efface.

Again he romps on the old grass plat,
'Neath the locust tree's deep shade,
And his sister's laugh ringeth out as clear
As when erst they wandered, nor tho't of fear,
In the moonlit forest glade.

With the early dawn he's off to hunt
The timid yet watchful deer,
And a brother's voice is cheering him on
Till the night dews fall, and the game has gone
To the forest lone and sere.

The scene now changes--he's been away,
But returned from Eureka's strand
To his native land, his youthful home,
Resolved in his mind never more to roam
To another distant land.

Round a blazing fire they're gathered now,
That family circle--all--
And kindly greetings are pass'd around
To the one once absent, once lost, now found,
And now he's within their call.

But, hark! a crash! in the "Canon Creek"--
A flume has burst in the stream,
And the miner starts from his death-like sleep,
And the cold night winds round his heart strings creep
As he realizes his dream.

Diamond Springs, California

A NOVEMBER LYRIC

One dark, cold night, when the winds blew hard,
   We stirred up the waning fire;
With a sudden flare the flames leaped up,
   Darting and dancing higher.
Books were unopened, work tossed aside,
   Papers away were thrown;
The half-uttered jest died away on the lip--
   All a-weary of talking had grown.

Four, abstracted and silent, were watching the flame,
   With an earnest, absorbing gaze,
Yet nought could be seen in the embers' red glow
   Nought in the pine-knot's blaze.
A sudden shriek from the deep woods came,
   The same dreary voices replying;
I started aghast! Pshaw! 'tis only the wind,
   Away in the distance dying!

Again it swept forth, more plaintive and low,
   With pleading emotion quivered;
Only the towering forest rocked,
   Only the dead leaves shivered.
Shrieking, calling and moaning--"Who! who! who!"
   Will list to the sad refrain?
How distinctly it came, yet it seemed so strange
   Thus to hear an old owl complain!

Quickly looking around--Ah! nobody heard,
   Nobody cared but me;
Disconsolate bird of the slow, solemn voice,
   Sing on, I will listen to thee!
Never was bird so ill-fated before,
   Shunned and hated of men alway;
Neither gifted with beauty of plumage nor song,
   Grim-visaged, ill-omened and grey.

Silent and sullen all day he has stood
   In a hole of a hollow tree:
Dozing, nodding and napping all the sunshiny day,
   What an idle dreamer is he!
Dwelling apart from the noise of the world,
   Companionless and alone;
Shut up in the cell of the hollow tree,
   His musings were all his own.

The robin trilled on the bough above,
   The quail his whistle blew;
The jay from his willowy thicket came
   And joined in the concert too.
Up through the sounding canon swept
   Such glorious melody!
How I longed to sing, yet I dared not leave
   The hole in the hollow tree.

Then the wren sailed up with a gushing thrill,
   To twig or leaflet clinging,
While the fair katy-did a madrigal piped
   With the cricket's monotonous singing.
They have gone, all gone, with the bright day's close--
   All gone to rest but me;
Like a criminal, hungry and cold, here I stand,
   Alone in the hollow tree.

Darkness is better for me than light,
   Than the dazzling noonday's glare;
A niche in the wall of the dungeon cave,
   Or a ruin, all broken and bare.
At night I send forth the dreariest lay
   That ever the dim woods heard;
Men passing along, shrug their shoulders and say,
   "Ugh! that stupid, ungainly bird!"

Alone! Alone! e'en the bright, merry birds
   My pathway forever shun;
Ever hunted, pursued by an adverse fate--
   Say, what has the poor owl done?
The prisoner pines for the light of his home,
   Dreaming of all things free,
For the haunts by the streams of his native hills,
   And the glad birds' minstrelsy.

Yet the convict knows why the gates are barred,
   And the dungeon has closed him in:
I am the dungeon-bird of the wood--
   Let me ask, what my crime has been?
Only the answering pine trees moan,
   Tossing up their emerald locks;
Oh! listen how the angry storm-wind drives--
   Listen! how he laughs and mocks!

Elfie Elfin

THE PRAIRIE GRAVE

One of our lady passengers died at Sacramento during the winter of '49, and was buried on the banks of the American River. The subscribed lines were suggested by the sad event:

She sleeps not in a forest bower,
   Where tangled wild-vines grow,
But where the rose and prairie flower
   Their mingled perfumes throw;
Where many a couch of moss is spread,
   Unpressed in by-gone years,
Save by the valley-lily's head,
   Bow'd down by dewy tears.

The lowly, lovely violet
   Bends meekly o'er her grave,
And there the creeping mignonette
   Her flowering branches wave.
No village bell tolled mournfully,
   As knelt we there to weep;
But 'neath the green sod, silently,
   We laid her down to sleep.

Empire Ranch Vernon Hill

THE BAILIE O' PERTH

The Bailie o' Perth was a blithesome mon,
   And a blithesome man was he,
And his gude wife lov'd him well and true,
   And the bailie he lov'd she;
Yet mickle or muckle the cause or kind,
   Whatever the pother be,
Be it simple sair or unco deep,
   The twain could never agree.

Syne spake the bailie with blithesome mind,
   Fair and soft spake he:
"Twal lang year hae we married been,
   Yet we can never agree.
Now, my ain sweet love, let us try for aye,
   Forever and aye to see
If for ain blest time in all our life,
   You and I can ever agree.

"Now listen to me: should it chance that ye
   Were paidling in the lane,
Ye should meet a bonnie buxom lass,
   And a winsome laddie twain,
Wha wad ye kiss, good dame?" he said,
   "Wha wad ye kiss?" said he:
"Wad ye kiss the bonnie buxom lass,
   Or the winsome gay laddie?"

"Hoot awa man! are ye ganging daft?
   Are ye ganging daft?" said she;
"Twal lang year hae we married been,
   And I have been true to ye;
Man hae never my twa lips touched,
   Nae man hae glinted at me."
"But wha wad ye kiss, good dame?" said he;
   "I wad kiss the lass," said she.

Out laughed the bailie with mickle glee,
   For a blithesome mon was he;
"Twal lang year hae we married been,
   And now for ainst we agree;
If yet met a lad and a buxom lass
   Down in the gowans fine
To kiss the lass wad be your choice,
   And I ken it wad be mine!"

Frank Bret [Harte]

CUPID'S REVENGE

I once did think, and boldly say,
That all Love's power had pass'd away,
Or if he still his skill essayed,
'Twas on some silly, dreaming maid,
Whose fluttering, expectant heart
Would, ere 'twas pointed, feel the dart:
But now I curse the fated hour
That I denied his mighty power,
A list'ning Zephyr, passing near,
Wafted the words to Cupid's ear,
And he, incensed at my denial,
Trimmed his best arrows for the trial;
Then for a proper ambush next,
He hid himself in Lina's breast.

Why did I not in terror fly
When his first dart flew harmless by?
But no; I thought to view such charms
I'd face the war-god's self in arms.
So, when I saw him shyly look
From (as he thought) his hidden nook,
With bold, defiant scorn I smiled,
Which so enraged th' Imperious child,
That he, forsaking that retreat,
(How could he part from aught so sweet?)
Boldly usurped Persuasion's seat,
And never yet did Pitho own
A more enchanting, rosier throne
Than Lina's lips; so ripe, so rich,
Their lightest movements would bewitch:
And then their arch, so sweetly turned
That Love, (who still with anger burned,)
Mistaking, used it for a bow,
And darts fell fast as driving snow;
But 'cased in doubt, that stout old shield
'Gainst all such wounds, I would not yield,
But boldly faced the arrowy show'r
And, sneering still, defied his pow'r.

Now Love (who knew it) never failed
To conquer hearts that he assailed;
So, with a firm, determined air,
He sprang to Lina's glossy hair,
And hid him in her curls' soft maze,
From my or other mortal's gaze.

Alas! what purblind fools we are;
Not seen, I thought the god afar,
And, tempted by that beauteous hair,
I press'd my lips upon his lair;
When lo! sent forth with all Love's zest,
One of his arrows pierced my breast.
I turned to fly, half wild with fear,
When Love, who knew his triumph near,
Sent one bright dart from Lina's eyes,
That filled my breast with tender sighs,
And I, who once his pow'r did brave
Am now bright Cupid's willing slave.

by Yuba

GIVE ME A SIGN

"Eheu! fugaces labuntur anni."

Almighty God! my years are as the dust,
   Borne on the wings of fleeting time;
Give me some sign, that I may know that I
   Have an immortal mind.

The face of Nature years have rent with seams,
   The footsteps of the Ages pass like dreams;
Are there behind this visible decay
   Fair and unfading scenes?

I gaze upon the vast expanse above,
   I search among the glowing orbs of night;
I fall before the glory of the sun,
   And cry aloud for light!

The promises of sacred lore are naught,
   Polluted by the touch of human hands;
O, if some height untrod the soul might reach,
   And see Immortal Lands!

Pulse unto pulse with Nature I have stood,
   And spanned with thought her universal throb;
But Reason scoffs at bending Faith, and says,
   "Poor fool!--show me thy god!"

Frail as the potter's clay, I tremble on
   Towards the future, shoreless all, and dark,
Where Death in revery forever broods
   Over the silent heart.

Upon the mountain tops of thought I pause,
   And see the lights of life go out below;
To the Invisible I raise my hands,
   And bow my head in woe.

I yearn, I long, I pray, and yet in vain;
   Faith finds no resting place except desire;
O God! O God! my years are as the dust,
   Borne on the whirlwind's fire.

Comet Quirls

Vol. VII, no. 51.

GENEVRA

The lambent moonlight sweetly falls
   From quiet skies of azure blue,
On Como's time-bleached granite walls,
   Now glistening with the midnight dew;
And o'er its deep and murmuring stream,
   That softly winds its smooth career,
The moon's pale, solitary beam,
   How oft it fondly lingers here!

And on those banks, 'neath fragrant trees,
   Has oft been heard the minstrel lay;
But now no song floats on the breeze--
   Its echoes long have died away;
And on the bosom of the stream,
   Whose faintest murmurs music spoke
Those mirrored eyes no more shall gleam,
   Which oft to music's strain awoke.

The nightingale perchance may sing,
   And linger on the silent shore,
But now its voice no raptures fling--
   Those ears are hushed which heard before;
And in the castle's chambers dark
   No voice is heard to break the gloom--
By welcome blaze, no e'en a spark,
   But all is cheerless as the tomb.

Its oaken floors--they echo not
   The faltering footsteps or sombre tread,
But forms we love are ne'er forgot,
   Tho' long they slumber with the dead;
And in the spacious corridor
   High on the arched and crested wall,
Hang pictures of those gone before,
   The ancestors of Como's Hall.

For in a chamber, lone to view,
   A crevice opens to the air;
A moonbeam faintly glimmers through--
   It rests upon a picture there;
'Tis of a lady, when the bloom
   Of youth and beauty flushed her cheek--
Features that wear no trace of gloom--
   A lip refusing grief to speak.

But look you deep within those eyes,
   And see if you can feel their woes;
Oh! can you not their grief surmise,
   And feel what they would ill disclose?
A pensive sweetness there appears
   Within those eyes, deep azure blue,
And you may trace repining years,
   Where they have left a sad'ning hue.

The daughter of a royal line--
   The last of all her noble race--
Genevra's sun has ceased to shine;
   She, too, has found her resting place;
And where her beauty once did bloom
   So sweetly in the summer air,
The winds wail dirge-like o'er her tomb,
   Or loiter in sad whispers there.

No storied urn records her name,
   Or marks her lonely resting place,
But the dark cypress trees remain
   In all their melancholy grace;
And in those dark and silent trees
   A bird sings nightly to the air;
Its notes float o'er the passing breeze,
   Mourning the spirit buried there.

Miron Reed

APPENDIX C, PART 2

"To Our Correspondents," March 13, 1859

READER--Sacramento.--"Messrs. Editors Golden Era:--At what period was the island of San Domingo divided into two governments, and in what year and under what circumstances did the people acquire their independence?" . . . . . Previous to 1803, Hayti was owned by the French, while the remainder of the island, now constituting the republic of Dominica, was the property of Spain. In 1791 the negroes of Hayti, led by L'Overture, revolted, and in 1803, secured their independence. The Dominicans took no part in the insurrection, but still submitted to their Spanish masters. In 1821, however, the slaves of Dominica were liberated, when President Boyer, of Hayti, extended his sway over the Spanish portion of the Island.--Up to 1844 the island remained under one government, but the cruelty with which the negroes treated all who had Spanish or Indian blood in their veins, drove the latter to rebellion in that year, and led by Santana, the present President of Dominica, the soldiers of Hayti, under Soulouque, were driven from Dominica, and a separate republic was formed over that part of the island, with Santana as its President. Although expelled from Dominica, Soulouque never relinquished his claim to it, but made several unsuccessful attempts to bring it again to submission. In 1847 Soulouque, who had taken prominent part in public affairs

for a number of years, was elected President of Hayti, and in 1849, much to the astonishment of the world, declared himself Emperor, and was duly crowned. The whole affair was a complete farce. He created dukes, lords and marquises by the score, after the manner of European monarchies, giving them high-sounding and ridiculous titles.--Never having acknowledged the independence of Dominica, in December, 1855, at the head of five thousand troops, his sable Majesty advanced with flying colors to its subjection; but the Dominicans, under Santana, met him with an inferior force and defeated his army in two engagements. Soulouque was compelled to retreat into Hayti, losing near fifteen hundred men and all his camp equipment. After these defeats nothing was heard of the Emperor for some time, and the Haytians were on the point of selecting a successor, when he made his appearance and again assumed the reins of government. Making preparations to lead another army into Dominica, the French and English Consuls General at Port au Prince protested against the invasion, when it was relinquished, and an armistice entered into for three years.--Had Soulouque not been dethroned, the probability is that he would again have undertaken the conquest of Dominica. The whole island contains an area of 29,000 square miles, one-third of which belongs to Hayti. The population of

Dominica is 150,000, with an army of 12,000 men; that of Hayti 650,000, with an army of 20,000 men. Nine-tenths of the population of the whole island are negroes.

RED TOP--S.F.--Some months since our correspondents thoroughly exhausted the topic of red hair, and we do not feel inclined to re-open the subject for discussion. The color of your hair (red, as you inform us) will probably never very seriously interfere with your literary prospects. You ask us, with alarming earnestness, if we ever saw a red-haired poet. Well, to be frank, we cannot at this moment mention the name of one, although we have in our eye a number of very clever poets and poetesses with light hair. A red-haired writer, who has evidently given the subject of hair considerable thought, informs us, that in ancient times, the nations who were the most polished, the most skillful in the fine arts, were passionately fond of red hair. The Gauls, the ancestors of the modern French, had the same preference, though that color is now in disrepute with their descendants, who like black hair. In some districts of Africa, they prefer light hair. A taste for red hair, however, still exists in extensive regions. The Turks, for example, are fond of women who have red hair, while the modern Persians have a strong aversion to it. The inhabitants of Tripoli, who probably learned it from the Turks,

gave their hair a red tinge by the aid of vermillion. The women of Scinde and Deccan are also fond of dyeing their hair yellow and red, as the Romans did, in imitation of German hair. There is among Europeans, generally, a strong dislike to red hair; but in Spain red hair is admired almost to adoration; and there is a story told of one of our naval commanders, who luxuriated in fiery locks, being idolized and caressed, in consequence by the Spanish women, and looked upon as a perfect Adonis. Red hair is often considered a deformity; but why it should be, is hard to say since in all cases the hair and complexion suit each other admirably. The "golden locks" and "sunny tresses" of the poet invariably accompanied the blond, frank and manly faces inherited from Saxon ancestors. We have heard of "villainous red hair," and "horrid red whiskers"; but hair is only "villainous" and whiskers "horrid" when the first is dirty, and the last worn without regard to the kind of cheeks they surround.

The author of "Written at Sea" is informed that the article is simply a well-chosen array of words. The verses are much better, and will be found a place in our next.

The author of the sketch of Algerine Camp is informed that the article has been filed for proper use.

T.--Sacramento.--There are fewer mortals ready to say a kind word for poor humanity than to lay bare its faults and herald its vices. Here is your picture of

Envy.

Say, can he look with loving eye
On beauty's chaming glow,
And pass the blessed creature by
Without a pang of woe?

Or can he hear bright Eloquence
Pour from a noble soul,
And feel not full mean suspense
He might, but won't control?

Or can he pass the rich and great,
The fortunate of earth,
Without a loathing, bitter hate
Toward those of better birth?

Or can he pity, bless or praise
Man, woman, child or brute?
Or has he heard in all his days
One fact he'd not confute?

Or can he see one noble deed
By fellow mortals weak,
And feel, for once, kindly agreed
His failings not to speak?

Or does he dare to cultivate
By patient, honest toil,
Those passions which do elevate,
And heal our wounds like oil?

Tell me, pray, some favored poet
Who tunes the Muse's lyre,
The mystery, in case you know it
That quenches Envy's fire!

T.

C.A.T.S.--Amador.--Your correspondence is what might be called a "loose and promiscuous" affair--detailing, in an odd sort of manner, a variety of personal matters,

in which the public could not possibly be expected to take an interest. Here is the conclusion of your letter.

Perhaps, friend editor, you are not aware that I have been raised to the honorable rank of colonel in my day. It is really a fact, though one would hardly think it from my looks, unless they went by age and beauty. I have not ventured out from home since New Years. My old white horse is dead, and the ground is so soft that I could not walk; the consequence is, I have not received the latest news, and it is useless for me to write any more. I hope you will sympathize with me in my misfortunes, and excuse this letter, as you are aware of the pain I am in, caused by the founder I have just taken. I will now inform you that I am dealing in heavy timber, as the pitch-pine is about run out; and I think that this lets me out; so I weaken, and remain your dutiful friend.

--------"The Death Watch" is declined. It is written in many metres.

ORLANDO FURIOSO--Sacramento.--Yours is by no means the worst of the hundreds of sonnets that have been written to Hope.

SONNET TO HOPE

Wrapt in a cloud, tinged o'er with silvery hue,
Along the ragged cliffs I see thee come,
Where the wrecked sailor, thinking of his home,
Sighs for the babe perchance he never knew,
And weeps for those who have already hung
Around his neck, and sorrows for the fate
Of his--he thinks--already widowed mate;

Then bleeds his soul till every sense is wrung.
Yet when his heart, work with the innate storm
Which whirls his aching bosom, threats to yield
The conflict, lo! with Fortitude's firm shield
He arms, received from thy benignent form,
Joins the small raft, implores high Heaven to save,
Smiles when thou gleam'st, and launches in the wave.

G.R.P.--Your reflections are entirely too sweeping. To assert that wives love their husbands only through a sense of duty, is monstrous, and we will not defile our columns with the slander. All women are not Helens.

When Menelaus went out to Crete,
His patrimony seeking,
His loving wife, with kisses sweet,
As if her heart were breaking,
Said, "hasten love, thy dear return,
For I shall mourn thee till then;
My heart with grief shall hourly burn;
Haste back to lonely Helen!"

He kindly kissed away her tears,
And said, with earnest joy,
"Let me commend unto thy care
Our noble guest from Troy!"
Thus he displayed superior sense,
And she, a wife's whole duty;
He later learned that innocence
Dwelt not in gems of Beauty.

KORN KOB--S.F.--Your impudence appals us. Here is your note, dated on Thursday:

Edituru Golden Era:--I have lurnt to turn to you in tribulashun, as a pup brakes for its own doorstep when assaled with brik-bats. I am in trubble. I have lost a little dorg--a kute-lookin kuss, with short eers, kontrackted tale, a spot in the face, a white streke

down the back, and won ey nockt out.--Will you have the kindniss to give the diskripshun to your subskribers, and rekwest them editorialy to hunt him up? I'll do as much for you, whenever ockashun offers. If you don't do it, I'll stele the furst fort I cum akross and bring disgrase upon the hole race of editurs and correspondents by pleading gilty and bing sentenced to the chane-gang. I am desperit, and don't triphle with me. I must have that dorg, or I'll pray upon poodles and lap-dorgs until I put evry house in mourning, and render my name a terror to old mades, and a lasting disgrase to the hi kolling I have adoptid. Korn Kob. [Korn Kob was Daggett.]

M.--"To Lovers" and "Home" are susceptible of improvement. The fourth verse of the latter is mysteriously worded. We are prepared to believe that Moses, Solomon and Adam, after a sleep of many centuries, have taken up their abode in your lodge; but <u>what</u> have they agreed upon? It is irritating to be thus left in the dark:

> But now for the banks of Columbia;
> He'll forget our sorrow and grief,
> And never again to a lady,
> To offer our hand for relief.
> Hence when alone in my cabin
> I'll take up my Bible and read,
> How Solomon, Moses and Adam
> From the first of creation agreed.
> Then alone in my cabin etc.

SAN MATEO.--After ten days in the possession of the finder, the estray animal must be advertised, for at least fifteen

days, and if not claimed at the expiration of that time, it may be sold at auction or private sale, or retained subject to redemption by the owner, who must pay advertising and sustenance charges. This is the law in brief.

DESPERANDUM.--Your story is declined. It is simply a narrative of every-day events. It should be bourne in mind, that successful writers are those who narrate remarkable occurrences remarkably well.

HEZEKIAH HOMSPUN.--Write plain English.--We have one correspondent who does up the "crooked orthography department" of the paper, and that is quite sufficient.

ABRAHAM HILLARD.--Your very interesting paper on the settlement of the Tulare Valley will be found a place in the annals.

PELEG.--S.F.--Will make some disposition of your favor next week.

.....The Steamer Helen Hensley was built in this city in 1853.

P.T.S.--Although the term Anchorite is applied to persons who deny themselves the pleasures of life, it designates a sect of Christians once quite numerous in Europe. The great problem of the origin of evil, which has perplexed every ethical system, has led to a dualistic theory, the

evil and the good, and ascribes the creation of the material universe to the evil power. Therefore, to all who embrace that theory, or were anchorites, life became simply a struggle to rise above earthly influence and conditions, by which means they expected to escape at length from the thraldom of sense into a purely spiritual existence. The theory appears in a marked form in Brahamism. This idea incorporated itself into Christian ethics, and was developed in the formation of the order of anchorites, near the middle of the third century, and later in monasticism, although monks and anchorites were not of the same sect. The extreme penances and mortifications to which the early anchorite subjected himself seem almost fabulous. They inhabited caves, practiced abstinence, looked at the sun until they became blind, and stood in uncomfortable attitudes until deformed. Simon Stylites a Syrian, who lived in the fifth century, is a remarkable example. For forty years he lived on the top of a pillar, or tower, near Antioch, exposed to every weather, and claiming to be a mediator between heaven and earth, preaching to the crowd who gathered below.

MONT.--In looking through a bundle of your poetic favors, we find the following. It should have appeared three weeks ago:

WASHINGTON

No cannon shook the glittering air,
   Or crashing thunder storm;
Nature was calm, but God was there,
   When Freedom's child was born.

The star that shone above him, then
   Unseen, was yet the same
That lit the heights of Bethlehem,
   When our great hero came.

The world knew not the sacred gift,
   What virtue here was given,
Until that child a sword could lift
   For Freedom, man and heaven.

Then Freedom crowned her darling child,
   While millions hailed the name,
And tyrants wept and Mercy smiled
   When our young hero came.

Like Israel's cloud of flaming fire,
   Thy words shall guide the State;
The hero, patriot and sire,
   Thy name is more than great.

Time that shall eat the marble down,
   But gilds thy deathless name,
And none could wear the fadeless crown
   Till our great hero came.

R.H.W.--Pilot Hill.--Distribute them throughout the land in your vicinity.

L.--Jamestown.--Poetry declined. It is entirely guiltless of thought.

N.N.--Pilot Hill.--Webster should be given the preference.

Vol. VII, no. 14.

APPENDIX C, PART 3

"The Duel by Candlelight," by Blunderbuss, 2nd series

THE DUEL BY CANDLELIGHT

by Blunderbuss

It was winter of 1851--the 17th of November. Well do I remember the day--not alone from the circumstances I am about to relate, but--no matter. The experience of every earlier adventurer here is dotted with enduring landmarks, to guide the noiseless step of recollection back through the dim vistas of the past, and lengthen the great way of life. Broad, this evening, is the road we traveled today, and flowers still blossom beside it and thorns linger in sight; but farther back, and it narrows into a thread-like path, along which the flowers lie dead and scentless, and, touching here and there at a monument of bliss or sepulchre of hope, approaches the confines of memory, and is soon lost to sight.

Well, it was 17th of November. The day had been a dreary, drizzling one, and as night approached, the wind lulled, and a heavy fog rolled like a mighty avalanche of snow over the hills west of San Francisco, and settled in a thick, almost drenching mist over muddy streets and housetop.

'Twas indeed a chilly, cheerless evening, and we did not wonder then, nor do we now, that the gambling houses were crowded and the bars of the drinking-saloons thronged, for the city was full of strangers, and promenading the half-paved streets by the uncertain light of an occasional door-lamp would scarcely be deemed a positive enjoyment.

The "El Dorado" was then the great center of attraction. It was not only one of the largest and most substantial structures in the city, but proprietors were men whose wealth was counted by tens of thousands, and every bank in its capacious saloon was loaded with golden slugs and ounces. Through the room there were played "faro," "monte," "vingt-un," "rouge-et-noir," "lansquenet" and a variety of other games, the very names of which have escaped me, while from a raised platform poured a continuous flood of exquisite music from a band of the best musicians in the country. The finest musical talent in the State found employment in the gambling-saloons of San Francisco and Sacramento, and many of the most noted performers in the country today made their debut before an audience of gamblers. Simonton, the well-known violinist, the Pettinos, one of the best pianists in the State, for two years occupied together the platform of the "El Dorado," at Sacramento, receiving together four dollars per day for their services, and the very first

musician in the city once led an orchestra at another gambling house in the "City of the Plains."

As we said before, the "El Dorado" was crowded. Many were betting and venturing their last dollar with an unconcern characteristic of the times, while as many more were elbowing their way from one table to another, with no other object than the gratification of their curiosity, and the vain hope of seeing some desperate gamester "tap" a bank and win it. A dozen or more were reeling through the saloon, entirely too wealthy in their own estimation even to covet the piles of lucre around them, while not a few might be observed with hands jammed into their empty pockets, staring abstractedly at the progress of a game that had relieved them of their last ounce.

The band had commenced its second performance for the evening, and seemed intent in boisterous execution to drown the clamor of clinking silver, when a tall, muscular-looking miner stopped in front of the door, and gazing a moment at the scene within, buttoned his thick coat around him and started slowly down Washington street. He was coarsely but comfortably clad. A pair of heavy brown whiskers completely covered his face, and the broad brim of a slouched hat almost rested upon his shoulders.

"This way, Jane," said a voice to a female, who had just emerged from a small wooden building immediately below

the "El Dorado," and stood hesitating beside a pool of mud and water. The miner stopped, and as the woman carefully selected a stepping place and sprang to the pavement, he involuntarily caught her by the arm. Somewhat surprised at the prompt assistance, she gazed into his unshorn face for a moment, and thanking him politely, passed on with her companion, who had taken a more circuitous but less dangerous (to his polished boots) route to the side-walk.

Hesitating a moment, the miner turned and followed. He started as he saw her enter the gambling-saloon. Pushing his way through the crowd, he next discovered her seated behind a monte-table. We do not wonder that he looked at her more than once--that his heart beat and his dark eyes flashed--for her sweet face was pale and careworn, and the smile that played upon it as meaningless as a wayside moonbeam. Her companion, who "called" and "cashed" the game as she turned the cards, was what any lady, without a too careful scrutiny of the face, would have pronounced a fine-looking man. He was dressed in the extreme of good taste, with the exception, perhaps, of too great a display of jewelry. His features were regular, and his eyes piercing and restless; but that proud curl of the lip, which not unfrequently denotes firmness and manly independence, in him was a repulsive indication of recklessness and disdain.

The cards were shuffled and a "lay-out" given. "Make your bets, gentlemen," sang out the gambler, while he jingled a pile of silver before him; "a jack and a ten--make your bets."

Pulling his hat over his eyes, the miner approached the table, and carelessly tossed a golden ounce upon the ten. The dealer looked up, and again her eyes met those of the unshorn stranger. She knew not why--for a thousand eyes had gazed as intently into hers before--but the color mounted to her cheek, and she involuntarily admonished the miner with a look to withdraw his bet. The indication, slight though it appeared, was not lost to the gambler, who answered it with a frown dark as midnight, and turned a searching stare upon the stranger, who met it with a glance of defiance that brought the hand of the gambler to the handle of a revolver in his belt. The woman observed all. --The miner quietly folded his arms, and the dealer, with trembling hand, proceeded to draw the cards. The jack won. Again the cards were dealt, and two ounces were thrown down by the stranger, instead of one. He lost a second time, and again and again, until a pile of golden pieces had been transferred from his pocket to the table.

"Let your husband deal," said the loser, addressing the woman; "perhaps it may change my luck."

"Certainly," replied the gambler, reaching for the cards. At the mention of the word "husband," a peculiar

smile rested upon his lips, and the eyes of the woman dropped to the table, as if to avoid the scrutiny of the stranger, that he might not read in them a confession that she had no husband, although she was a mother. But he read all.

Again the cards were dealt. There was a perceptible nervousness of the hand and strange twinkle in the eyes of the miner, as he drew from the pockets of his overcoat two purses.--All eyes were turned towards him. "I'll bet a hundred ounces on the ace!" he exclaimed to the astonished gambler, dropping the sacks of dust upon the table, "and will draw the cards myself."

"Five hundred dollars is the limit," replied the gambler.

"There is no limit to your rascality!" thundered the stranger, "nor should there be to your game!" and he replaced the purses in his pocket.

The gambler sprang to his feet, with his hand upon his revolver, but ere he could draw it, a blow from the horny fist of the stalwart miner sent him reeling to the floor.

In a moment all was confusion. A dozen gamblers from the adjoining tables rushed to the rescue of the fallen blackleg, with pistols and knives glittering in the lamplight. The woman had risen to her feet, and stood speechless behind the table.

"Stand back!" shouted the miner, drawing from a belt with his left arm a huge bowie-knife, and swinging an eight-inch navy revolver in the other; "stand back!" he repeated, retreating against the wall, as the gamblers attempted to close in upon him, "or by Mother of God, I'll strew the floor with your carcasses!"

"Shoot him down!" cried one of the gamblers, brandishing a pistol above his head, and evincing little inclination to undertake the job himself.

"The first man that pulls a trigger, dies!" said an elderly man, breaking through the crowd, and placing himself beside the lion-hearted miner. "Ten to one is too great an odds for any man. He is a stranger to me, but by hell he shall have fair play!"

"Right! right!" shouted the crowd, beginning to understand the nature of the broil; "give him a chance!" and a dozen more pistols suddenly found the light.

"Let me at him!" yelled the gambler who had been knocked down, attempting to reach the offender through the throng.

"Make way for him," hissed the miner, "and I will use nothing but this!" and he raised his twelve-inch "bowie," and threw himself into an attitude of defence.

"Hold!" said the elderly man who had first insisted upon "fair play"; "if you really want to fight, select some spot where there are fewer spectators; if not, put up your weapons!"

"You are right, my friend," said the miner; "but I will meet yon scoundrel where he will, when he will, and with what he will!"

"Enough!" returned the gambler, rendered desperate in his rage; "follow me with a friend, and I will accommodate you in ten minutes."

"I am completely at your service," said the stranger; "but I have no friend here," he continued, turning to the man beside him, "unless I may call you one, from the friendly part you have already assumed in this difficulty."

"I will not desert you now," said the old man, extending his hand; "for you are a brave man, and a Kentuckian knows how to appreciate courage."

The miner smiled, and stepping towards the table where the woman was sitting, pale and trembling, said to her, in a low voice: "Fear nothing--if you are sent for, do not fail to come"; then taking the arm of the Kentuckian, he followed the gambler, who was just quitting the saloon, accompanied by a friend.

"My friend," said the miner, as soon as he had reached the street, "the fight must be in a room alone, and without seconds--with what weapons, I care not. Let whatever may transpire thereafter excite no inquiry, and I will explain all tomorrow."

The Kentuckian bowed. Both parties passed down Washington street for some distance, and halted in front of a small two-story brick building. The door was opened by a Chinaman, and taking a lighted candle, the gambler led the way up a flight of stairs, to a small back room. It had one window, and was furnished with a cot-bedstead, a wash-stand and two chairs.--Placing the light upon one of the latter, the gambler strode towards the stranger, who had just entered, and said: "Here is the place, and now is the time!"

He expected the miner to manifest symptoms of terror at the announcement, and ask to defer the meeting; but he was in error, and the cool reply of "Exactly!" rendered him alarmingly cognizant of the fact.

As a last effort to shake the resolution of the belligerent mountaineer, and avoid an encounter for which he felt no inclination, the gambler said, with affected calmness: "If we fight at all, it must be alone, and in this room, each armed with a revolver and 'bowie.'"

"I am fortunately provided with both," was the resolute reply.

"Then, d--n you, take the consequences!" returned the gambler, determined to fire before the word, and finding courage in the dishonorable resolution. He found little

consolation in the smile just perceived through the heavy beard of his antagonist.

The arrangements for the desperate encounter were soon made. The principals, each armed with a knife and revolver, were to be placed on opposite sides of the room; the door was to be locked on the outside, and, at a word from the seconds, the fight to commence with either weapon, and to continue for ten minutes; at the expiration of which time the seconds were to re-enter the room.

The weapons were examined, and the combatants placed for the slaughter by candle-light. The door had scarcely been closed and locked before the gambler raised his pistol and fired.--The ball lodged in the ceiling, not an inch from the head of the other. With the spring of a tiger, the latter threw himself upon the gambler, and crushed him to the floor before he had time to again use either pistol or knife.--Wresting the weapons from his grasp, he seized him by the throat, and, holding a knife to his breast, the miner swore he would bury it in there if he uttered a loud word.

"All right!--give the word!" said the miner, as the seconds were about to enter, to ascertain the reason of the report.

"Are you ready?"

"Yes!"

"Fire!--one--two--three!"

No report followed, and the seconds looked at each other in silence.

"Now, tell me, Mark Bingham, why I should not slay you, who attempted to assassinate me," said the miner.

"The shot was accidental--indeed it was!" returned the trembling gambler. "Spare me, and I will return every dollar you have lost--give you all I possess."

"Let me tell you now why I should slay you. It is not for the dollars you won from me, for I do not value them--not for your cowardly attempt to murder me, for I expected it. Listen. Ten years ago, you stole a young girl by the name of Jane Farley from a boarding-school in Rochester, New York, and, under promise of marriage, induced her to elope with you to New Orleans. Her parents, who lived three miles from the city, did not know you, for you were not a resident of the place, and never visited the family but once. You did not marry the girl. You made her your mistress--the mistress of a gambler--and as such she became a mother. Shame prevented her from communicating with her parents, and they are still ignorant of her fate. Three years ago she accompanied you to California. Her brother, who had become a man, and vowed to terribly avenge the dishonor of his sister should he ever meet her seducer, followed shortly after, unaware of her presence here. One night he heard her

name pronounced in the street. He followed her to a gambling hell, and recognized her, and by her side her seducer, whom he had seen but twice before. In venturing his money, he found a ready means of bringing about an encounter, in which he determined to kill you. He met you in a room alone. You attempted to assassinate him. Do you know me now?"

"Mercy!--spare me!" said the gambler, "and--"

"On one condition," replied Farley.

"Name it."

"That you marry the woman you have dishonored, and abandon your thieving vocation."

"I consent--but when?"

"This very hour."

"I promise," said the gambler.

"But your promise is not sufficient," replied Farley. "I will have a better guarantee. This pistol shall not leave my hands or I your side until the promise is fulfilled; and, by my hopes of heaven, if you hesitate in the performance, or show a disposition to escape, I will put a ball through your body." Placing all the weapons in his pocket, except the pistol, which he held cocked in his hand, Farley released the gambler, and ordered him to send for Jane and a carriage. Through the half-opened door, which the seconds had opened in response to a knock from within, Bingham repeated the order to his astonished friend. Learning that no

blood had been shed, the latter left the house, and in a few minutes Jane was in the presence of the silent combatants. She requested an explanation, but was told that all would soon be made clear, and the whole party entered the carriage and were driven to the residence of a clergyman on Stockton street, where, at ten o'clock at night, Mark Bingham and Jane Farley were made man and wife. The unshorn miner then called his sister, and as she hung upon his neck, she thanked God that the same hour had sent her a husband and a brother.

Bingham sent for his child, which had been left in New Orleans, purchased a tract of land in Los Angeles county, and is now a wealthy and respected resident of that region of the vine and fig-tree. Farley is still a miner in "Old Touloumne," and "Old Kaintuck," as the world irreverently learned to call him, was killed by the Klamath Indians in 1855.

APPENDIX D

Index to Contributors to the *Golden Era*, December 19, 1852, to April 15, 1860, including a supplement listing Mark Twain items in the *Golden Era*.

INDEX TO CONTRIBUTORS TO THE GOLDEN ERA,

December 19, 1852, to April 15, 1860

Individual titles are listed chronologically under the author entry; pseudonyms are listed with cross-reference to the author's name, if known. Entries are marked (P) for poems, (A) for articles, and (S) for stories.

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*Starred items are in addition to the thirty-nine items listed in Franklin Walker's "complete list of Mark Twain material in the Golden Era" in his book The Washoe Giant (San Francisco, 1938). See also Edgar M. Branch, "A Chronological Bibliography of the Writings of Samuel Clemens to June 8, 1867," AL, XVIII (May 1946), 109-159.