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

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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Era</u>'s columns, which also included drama reviews, summaries of news, editorials, market reports, and advertisements. Early issues of the <u>Golden Era</u> relied heavily on material clipped from other journals, but gradually the <u>Era</u> 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.

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

By

Lawrence E. Mobley

#### A THESIS

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Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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PLEASE NOTE: This dissertation contains mounted newsprint reproductions. Very poor copy. Filmed as received.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS. INC.

11/22/61

#### 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 <u>Golden Era</u>. 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.

## CONTENTS

Plates 1 to	o <i>3</i> 7		
Part I:	Introdu	uction and Setting	•
Part II:		Era, December 19, 1852, to September 55The Folio Period	
	I.	Introduction 16	5
	II.	Production, Circulation, and Editions 20	)
	III.	Poetry	2
	IV.	To Our Correspondents 57	7
	v.	Fiction 69	)
	VI.	Non-Fiction Prose 82	2
	VII.	Editorial Policy 9 <sup>L</sup>	ŀ
	VIII.	Drama Reviews	)
Part III:	Golden	Era, September 23, 1855, to April 15, 186	50
Plates 38 t	to 64 (1	following p. 120)	
	I.	Production, Circulation, and Editions 121	
	II.	Poetry	)
	III.	To Our Correspondents	5
	IV.	Fiction	<u>;</u>
	v.	Non-Fiction Prose	}
	VI.	Drama Reviews	<u>,</u>
Part IV:	Summary	y	)
Bibliograph	ıy		,
Appendices			)

# LIST OF PLATES

Vol.	I, no. 1, page 1 Plat	e l
Vol.	I, no. 1, page 2	2
Vol.	I, no. 1, page 3	3
Vol.	I, no. 1, page 4	4
Vol.	I, no. 11, page 1	5
Vol.	I, no. 16, page 1	6
Vol.	I, no. 18, page 1	7
Vol.	I, no. 31, page 1	8
Vol.	I, no. 31, page 2	9
Vol.	I, no. 31, page 3	10
Vol.	I, no. 31, page 4	11
Vol.	I, no. 40, page 1	12
Vol.	II, no. 14, page 1	13
Vol.	II, no. 16, page 1	14
Vol.	II, no. 20, page 1	15
Vol.	II, no. 40, page 1	16
Vol.	III, no. 1, page 1	17
Vol.	III, no. 27, page 3	18
Vol.	III, no. 39, page 1	19
Vol.	III, no. 39, page 2	20
Vol.	III, no. 39, page 3	21
Vol.	III, no. 39, page 4	22
Vol.	I. no. 17. page 1: Steamer Edition	23

Vol. I, no. 17, page 2; Steamer Edition Plate	24
Vol. I, no. 17, page 3; Steamer Edition	25
Vol. I. ro. 17, page 4; Steamer Edition	26
Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 1, top left	27
Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 1, bottom right	2ප්
Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 2	29
Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 3	30
Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 4	31
Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 1	32
Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 2	33
Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 3	34
Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 4	35
Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 5	36
Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 6	37
Vol. III, no. 41, page 1	<b>3</b> 8
Vol. III, no. 41, page 2	39
Vol. III, no. 41, page 3	40
Vol. III, no. 41, page 4	41
Vol. III, no. 41, page 5	42
Vol. III, no. 41, page 6	43
Vol. III, no. 41, page 7	44
Vol. III, no. 41, page 8	45
Vol. V, no. 1, page 1	46
Vol. V, no. 1, page 2	47

Vol.	V, no	. 1,	page	3.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Plate	48
Vol.	V, no	. 1,	page	e 4 .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		49
Vol.	V, no	. 1,	page	<b>9</b> 5 .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		50
Vol.	V, no	. 1,	page	e 6 .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		51
Vol.	V, no	. 1,	page	e 7 .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		52
Vol.	V, no	. 1,	page	e 8 .	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		53
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	ge l	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		54
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	g <b>e</b> 2	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		55
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	ge 3	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		56
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	g <b>e</b> 4	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		57
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	g <b>e</b> 5	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		58
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	g <b>e</b> 6	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		59
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	ge 7	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		60
Vol.	V, no	. 27	, pag	ge 8	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		61
Vol.	VI, n	0.3	2, pa	age 1		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		62
Vol.	VIII,	no.	26,	page	: 1	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		63
Vol.	XIII.	no.	20.	page	1														64

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## APPENDICES

Α.	Biographical Sketches	3
В.	Representative Selections from the Golden Era, December 19, 1852, to September 16, 1855 196	5
C.	Representative Selections from the Golden Era, September 23, 1855, to April 15, 1860 253	1
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	3

Vol. I, no. 1, page 1

A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amusemen's

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	Confinition, but no Blood,	Motore Worked Full Lake returned not	you fad the modful for those shing. Door Mrs. Crowder, how do you maken."	alone of London, who was then on his way	stood in the pay of the police, a sotuation which he man architely record units for the		"Next did you want with new di-
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	You as no mil'd for much of the Capa appear from the store, And marry braght, and press team, And elitteen a new cont.	though her protty above was very assistle and	the counter. Turning his eyes upon those second him, he may rule, senden church, in-		by the provinces to open his life. So he	receive a third men pay?  None * Therefore the Palenta uses to, the having every take men compelled as starse an- world with price uses, and thereting and appli- cation every with the relabelled not eliminate going.  Not so with Mrs. Debook, however. She was fact too against the behavior in sec. once building	No Delever del notation to hear a
		tory, yet also was best a girl of tiltations. For	found eyes and regged guessers. He show turned these upon the statule upon the statule upon to be	by a piotal shot from Mr. Brooks, who having		Not so with Mrs. Dalman, burning Street,	to rected our of the house, with ad-
	As that has some, a picamer male Panell also he one has, Which seemed to give each largest line A straigh subsency grass.	har very part, although size had given up the huncers and proposed to Cabburt, size bit the die words a partner of today falls retailers, time size pines—was whole days after proof—	termed them upon the stately spectroset, he builted through the stone into the parker, and new brilling gluces and patterns, and philoso- and from formation, and a rich compet, and Man-	and from the back of the partiest quality to		for the against to believe in my much become tensions as that "My dear theory, it would be it gone to be	
	Which sented to give each largest line A straigh substract grave.			ing the impulsite demand. A some of torrile analysist raceod. The region of the panel	her fire a with last or his array paid to early her off by the sid of his middle a, and being	"My dear fixery, a read do, it was a da," she said one proving so they not at heart too, so long as some men up by making analysis.	No Diches his arrey in moch me owns refere mee, and the most in Equation and the Highes of man is here into a Storem to this day.
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	* And pathot's flower and forful things, and channel the bette-dy. And little daught? they doubt from SUR Jun T thin doub! do."	made for man. How old do you my thin gra-	" A giase of gia, sur'ou, is what I so wait-	The doors of the nativals man care open, but	As Inc. or Pressure.—There are purhaps		recommended of solery in assessment
	the fift interpretable from the same	in my opinion, Madem Worked, not a year	pency that I shall put down on this source for team a long day.			proops more in a summer, and market to be	property of afternooning on in-
	No furtire specietar would be bose, I remail and west over our	marrying another old man, to be his nature, as	Mandy handward frome. His wife and his	Miss Perry, the wombed tally, he is the arms	social of the master these proc beings have		ten for the next out photosopolist being able to poderno in any other per man and discharged. However,
	AT APP BLESTERY Judge H., now a	are Wedged gargled in the threat, between a		the horse which she felt in the common	interior, says a correspondent of the Casion	det. I fell yet one was has as much right as all the hideways of the most is marrier. The most is used to be a substantial to the control of the most in the party and, and to a marrier of most in the party and th	per man the discharged. However,
F	at the delivery of our of old argre pursus	"Twentydon," and the foundations," such as symptoms, Madous Worksoft, not a year symptom, Madous Worksoft, not a year young far just. Twe mood never them of marrying unified ridd man, to be the native, and and beliefup up you are." Note most changed grayled in the chemic between all and many far and many far and many far and the many positioned the familie formed, " ye have. If the many position of the familie formed, " ye have.		infliend the injury, had neverth less deputed of resistance, and was veight and excessing to			
Е	shoe by way of illustrating a corning pos-	the new fit to be your productor." Madone Worked picked news, and smiled. The circle	It was a justil surprise to them, he return-	status the blood, which flows in tomate from the glassly reseal.	high fresh to, it appears that a square belong- ing to one of the tether, carefully get dresses.	"The affinial my desir times, it will not may a desirable amount of classification by an observation to part of the upper lates to the part of the par	Mrs. Parmerron's Last
E	and a small Benefiterer," said in , "the soul of the the many is no diver in the night of the Lord as	second to speak resignation; the smile, a Lorded per' so the party was made up, and the	or good house.	For some using a the highwaymen looked upon this more of I seem, until a low more	ed; the body was discovered and taken our.	"Firsh" you talk the a will we man it say	They, is it too that Tomory Finhs is prive gradier, and a polly pour at Duo, feer, pour retent 1 and the
	and all the white more. Now you all not up the a sittle, the beater on his golden-	offer was put have the bearle of the female from	George, "for also you have been crying. I'm	sity of going him that attention which his	fasted by the tribe of the believ square.		there, door, poor retter! And the mighter Styles has get the mastigs
P	and come; you'll know do Jodge, edgeso, a horry fine man he is, too Well, now,	In the gurden of the White Horse Hotel, at Elevatoration, two young term emoked their	the wife model and half, "working have not	wine selfered to prove that he was not charged	pite, was half by her french and relation-	less for. But how, here is no man presented	bron, and an effectation of the or organs. Door, oh door! it is no think on. " And the poor old had
L	garine to make a little comparidment.— noute' de Judge stern for commis' puts his	rigars out sipped their rollies, as they talked together in a medicate tree of roles.	toy, who was standing apart in a concerned, death & return.	cleader arm of Non Parry, Bell apent coeff	I wished on the following day to coronous of linearing was to take plane. There was a larger		is her nerveue numbelity, a whole
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į	below to would not stop to an weekler do	handry is to her. I shall never forget the	was not to things, and that he was one you had hom detaking away all the money, and when		her by the non-board ending boundaries I over load. The body was raived and sustain	that all who present more than another are empting and ought to dury with those who have stope?"  "Yes, and who ver maintain: "he equiva- ing is other a find or a larger."	onin your brad! "Unger all the
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1	a part to joy oft to Lord, or her down on	of these worshed works at Northware, I do	"No read from schooling of said you	Mr. Brods are his home put to the our- sings by his here are duck, who exhibited the	and watched with a next of mala choly marriery	Mr. Bishen, was in on orate y as the the'r of making a consert of his wate, and departed	* Davis on I' I don't believe th
- 1	efact quality ? ?	at Cased. It was a trapslation from the Steel Code, which becomes I had become counter of	"And they were had we do, man," said his	somed rather to wish him you then or !	As rest as the finner had promised the holy,		whether or and a july had reflect along the partners, " or wheat revolute on the hope,"
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#### Vol. I, no. 1, page 2

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# Vol. I, no. 1, page 3

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#### Vol. I, no. 11, page 1



# A WEIKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Local and Foreign News, Commerce, Education, Merals, and Amuseunges

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#### Vol. I, no. 16, page 1



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Vol. I, no. 18, page 1



Vol. I, no. 31, page 1



#### A WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

DI OTED TO LITERATUR, AGRICIALURE, THE MINING INTEREST, DOCAL AND CORRES AND ROBARS AND AND STREAMS. SAN FRANCISCO, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 47, 1853.

Mortry.

SAN PRANUCKO, NIDAY NORVING, STEEL 17, 1953.

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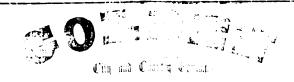
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# Vol. I, no. 40, page 1



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	ا است ۱۹۹ موسوس	<ul> <li>to be had been at each ask as a dealer of the second of the</li></ul>	products a said a half tree to the servers have the hours association full with a volumer of	distanced discount there are government, and conservate og af this common at Nober 1920 o About the bost of Nobember, or deer name	ija men tive bancen. U flama have been fille fil falle ije filograph of bolganti. Ugene malje to gjingsishing iss end. Kisa samet havi besish	n francisch Karlon (1 august 1 au Die einste deutsche d	The second of th	graphic formulation of the second control of
	. Carrighal	in the second se	, the four in a mounted — Miles, it first in a mer-	the atmosphere of Chalco, server which the most fact the rest place of Mirzons, possible extents	in now in the healther seats to be a climber little a place of manager that in Direct seats to	சிர் நிறும் நெறிய நிரிய நிரும் இரும் இரும் இரும். நிருந்து முறையும் இரும் நிறும் நிறும் இரும்		1
	***	وقاع کرد به این این میسید کرد بست. ما ماه این در در معاطر است. این این میزمید برد. میسید کردن کرد کرد این	The presence temporal chair over produced, from 1. The north histories of 1. The 1. The north histories of 1. The 1. The north histories of 1. The 1.	tase properties all was take of the most stealing on moutheling the floor of the mostly, was taken to be made in the mostly, and the mostly of the mostly and the	pa spienki, ta Pate described a beni in Pautonel anada kur professioke etim to ka paramenti i mili, etmi e të komi etim is	er in hindress the Lieuwis Beek interior of the fire in Contraction (Mail Topics of the Contraction of the C	man avoidance	
	المنطقية المنطقة المنط	, ger seit im N. C. ej aud de desemble i Le fer de af in his independent hour endem i La pun i de de la proposition de de desemble independent de	The division brand at a listance of thirty to make	garangan a minangan Pa bangan anakanan angan ang	Consider the Every Elegan Berker Street for the Event Street Stre	e de la companya de l		وهاد العدد الم
		and the second s	To the common by referring at a day in the result of the common section that the common section is a section of the common section o	become with difficulty. The early of Mexico, activat lower, contained not loss than CP 1881 locks lowers. Committee from April 1- No.	A factor of an integration	المراجع معطور المحطور		
			Tentous Posthemon-Occurrent.  Is as all sarder (18, 219, 244,444).		photo Sugar A Server is no an and and a great production of the story as follows . At	ing specification in the second section of the second section is a second section of the second section of the second section is a second section of the section of the second section of the section of the second section of the section		
		o grande a la companya de la company	Finald a communication is the first of ag- compute that make it Harring research that makes and it has present out for a statem	Cards. Cards many in expenses before the time of	This who was the rack Thirties, as the com- pare, so the tree was exist, each, our form the both of the most his even against the	[2] S. J. Wang, and J. Wang, and the second dependence of the property of the control of the property of th		
		— but see not in Probably to Annal sept. — final country on the expension for a probably expension. — final country or the country for a final country.	Broaded profession makes to two the five may compute owner that the grown in History or cannot be more to to the grown in the five of the grown in the five profession of the computer of the computer of the five profession of the grown in	ethics the POE of Prize. The ferror of the sear theorem, created in the Fire com- fer all more in the season the test of	n geologie Colon Stade (d. Novel Clamage) volley Novel (d. 1900) (d. 1900) bilde movel (d. 1900) Clamage (d. 1900) (d. 1900) (d. 1900)	grigorius (Pagliais) ( <b>a.</b> 6 Maileann an San <sub>Grigorius (</sub> alb. No. 2000) (arbeitais) (a. 6 Maileann an San Aireann 2006) (arbeitais) (a. 6 Maileann an Baileann	V 847 - 447	a. jeskovit
			copies in course for the best as the Color	are risks with drugsate the save test or	nageralis, kriseri dames a sediligi.	The way was the season of the	7 - 10 -	in an
			See a see of the see of the see of the	والمراجع المراجع المرا	for the translation country and course, see			
		was party and a second of the second was selected to the second of the s	and the part of the fact was to like	ing the endought of the demonstration of the many in the content of the content o	e grane d'Alte mad income Body ou trackanda, ha The grane and classical d'Arme, the informació d'A	programmed and the second section is the	46	
		A Mich Prince.	الأرباع فالتراوية في المستويدة ويون ويون ويون عرامة بالموجود فيها مدورة وموضور وفي التراوية و	indigen, inches de Benards in Die feste einer ber Laku für bestellt eine fille bisteste eine Geleichenste	, man	The second secon		ing sell resident
	:*	فالقياصوفي فعدافون فيهما	أرافقك فعير المعاور والموا	the state of a second party as	I teens on a record as each or 15 mg	Paris and a service reason of the property of the service of the s		*
			" and a first section of the commendate	in a company of the company of the first series of the company of	a deservices and an experience of the second	The second of the same of the second of the		
		ر من ما دروی من ما که دروی من که که دروی	The control of the control of the con-				V	
		and the second of the second o	(a) The control of	Laboration and her Laborators	and the second of the same of age.	egination of the second of th		÷
		ورياه الأهلام العالم المنظمة الأوالية الأوالية. المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة المنظمة المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة المناطقة الم	The second secon	Brightson Charles Value (1991)	the commence of the experiment of the com-	A ferror control of the second		
		may be a seem of a first control of the control of	The Coming Contact.	en gewone de les de la les de les de la les de l Les de les d	HER THE HOUSE OF			
		•	Mary and the second of the sec	The second of th	at mesen to Part and modern	•		-

# Plate 13

Vol. II, no. 14, page 1

الاعدادة

154 to I terrative, Agriculture, the Walting Interest, Local and Circign News, Commerce, Education, Morals, and Amisements

THE RESTRICT TO VALUE

SAN ERANCISCO, CALIFORNIA SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 19, 1851.

X0 D

10 TO DEATH

Chaice Seichens

THE SHARE HUNTE - RECENSE

Vol. II, no. 16, page 1



Vol. II, no. 20, page 1



Vol. II, no. 40, page 1



A Werkly Samily Benspaper--- Devoted to Literature, Agriculture, the Mining Interest, Laral and Farriga Blens, Commerce, Education, and the Sine Arts.

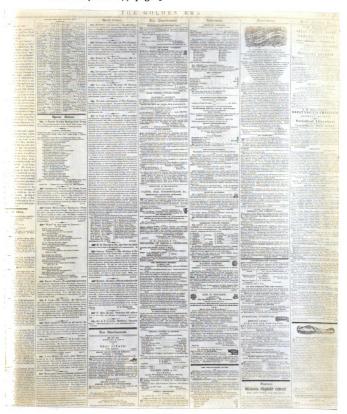
I.		SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF	ORNIA, SUNDAY MORN	ING, SEPTEMBER 17, 18	154.	
GOLDEN ERA.		duction of Killin Wilmedian may be and built in	produced for a construction which made their over-	I should be borotte in which has a surplice assertion	I might should now be had a fire on a small of	the and smallle man from the co.
	A flomance of California The	her heat friend and protector, with on more than the requests along between the poorgied and a falo	throw, depths the odds, an easy inc. Didner the seem had wased. the detaclment communical by	which it may be presented, from the frequent glain	sted by all a clost executary ann and devent circu-	for every and some would be do not from his wayer on victors
THE PROPERTY AND PERSONS.	(Applies how the entire per)			me also met towarde it, coronied a very completi- em place in her thoughts. The started up on hear-	tine, and wherever he went was extended to him ev- sty hospitality and bindown, not only by those wis-	sol braking is the head shoot
AED & DAGGETT	PIKE COUNTY BILL;	were the duth by fiv and figget. This clist, it appeared, had known the Colone, about from the	Fits County 201 who so it way man to accepting the charge the greater portion of the administration of the administration of the technique and the highest point of flows in the actination of binnighters. However of all high were offered, but	ing the Columnia region, and the steet growent Kalp. Wilmording was belief in the arms of the father—	were professes of his postended faith, but by the spirit cognoscity. He continued his latters well	man, to Charge har to help barrell.
THE R PROPERTY.	The ffleid of the fflountaine.	period of his first autilitated in the country, at a time when the sid was, there are vigorous and util-	to the highest point of those in the estimation of his		the spring of 1945, to all appearance in a next to exceptionable names, when, dishenoring the other	botheles, she at bogch did. It with them for about a mile, who
	By Radout F. Coroloy.	here us the hest of his emperious, used to make oreacted trading expedition into the introduc-	beighters. Howards of all high were offered, but	notice accord to have been eablinly removed.	exceptionable names, when, dishemoting the wife of a create of mine, who had both one of his less	vacce, on string as I left through
-	CHAPTER V.	On our evenire, this chartain's littled ben phore!	In reliand encycling enough some presents in the way of stock and sends for his lattle farm, secretary	Pick, it appears, had falles in with her in the wighterhood of St. Vanin's Port,—where, her	friends and warment proportion, he can night de- ositeped with one of his mirriady but honor, after	ent grafteds, which brought to. "The and time I see Like
Postry.	THE PARTY'S ASSESSED ASSESSED AND ADDRESS AND	in properly, so far that cause appeared impossible.	that the placy of the adventure was all to aspired to. Substitute pay be believed, size monothersby	story having been made known, on angle record waveflowed for the chief Mutawe. But he refused	esimped with one of his nictina's but hower, after reliding his himse of what paners and jewelry were	part of the sensor of '50. Map
(no to some sec)	CO-SHIPT OF PRO!-A "BUS" FIRST			h. "I have discharged my duty." he replied, when the offer was made to him, "and, having dime that. I will return to my trike as I left its." Experts of		
TO 8 0	AND PERSONAL PROPERTY OF EAST-THE	not freprites his bandarior, and, though Kate And lighted in his bound a punior before unknown to it.	nation grows has of the liber. It may be sounted among other things, that the explain of pattern	I will return to my talks as I left in. " Reserve of	great countervation in the originarized, especially when the fire, occurse known that, it find here con-	I thought non-cet sudness to decord I this not at our name in
in time	HAN CARD-THE REW SAVISS-NIS STREET		naming other things, that the explains of justice. Withinhouse did not go unblanced; —be, black took good care to per crolle for a pread many non-militarious authoromouse than pendid have followed that the other control of the period of the			
or woney traveller, principal fractions stress after.	THE DETERMINE	For some time the effects of Nature, to he was named, were mounted. Dut, as, one after mother,	task good care to get syndir for a year many new minimum authorsance than should have delice of	Fork and his bride the had been earlied in weeken, to K sin immediately after thate remains) such up their line of march the the SuX. Lake City, one	held, a reward officed, and attack communical for the abstracting 'up-atts /' but all to no purpose—he.d. did not even have a trace by which he could be fit.	Seeding upon his just 10s, \$ 5 it as to straight him in his year. But I
or in the state of	[concess.] How was a preference for an assured man,	the captives were navificed, or suprepted away. Know was now almost the only one remaining. Her	right to his clare, but the extension story under	there ire of march he the Salt Labor City, unto	did not even knex a trace by which he could be fill.	
a long and droney night,	and a clergyman to boot? Witherboos had not proposed before, except in a portained way, in 10-10s, other now in was disactively in notion. With a relative gravillar given the set a printy wasting with open news for him follow, it was		beauty label out and then the parent's repeta-	which they netted, upon a handsom pion of pro- perty which Dick's concline, seconds by these of	*In for or the warm when this count I storted	continued builty at his such a their and simunciating that he
by bloom of daviding light,	Mit-but new he was drawfiely hi surrors. With		from of his reversal above in disput, and departed from Dominical Source.	steet of his neighbors, man brought under online- tion. Here he had resided utell the compared of a		rage and actual based. He std. for I too had standbookly show
and the same and	a columnate greating above the and a grissly	her arms, and she had little hope of her father her- her allow the same, therefore, that her time came,				
continue is the energy	enough to make one proy.  There is no belling what would have become of the person in this exemptory, had not a shoot, set up at this enought by room those of losity thresh-	log aller; the some, therefore, that her time enter, the bear of. There was presentions and before, however, is which over death would have restant,	for the Colonel. Day after day he had found his old	they funded together a new household—where all the old absents of conduct and convenience me-		
constitute in the using a lar of a deliberated, finaling a lar near walls, full high and strong, of hore fall on most one of these deve the hore high eigen- toryes from spirit application.	Three is no belling what, would have become of the money in this supremove had not a shoot set	is respect, to which even death would have evened.  In respection, a movey—and when the titu of flight way first supposted to her, she gladly embraced the	strength having him. Age appeared to be setting in presentantly, and it is doubtful if he would have	respit them, and where they frequently resolve a	believed it to be about flety sales, and we storied set upon it only one morning, with the improveder that both water and grain could be obtained near	pried the reason for my alone, ing my position or heterolog are for I know, that I had nothing
that down the hom-bird ofpe-	up at this mount by some draws of losty threats	was first supposed to her, do gladly entrand the	faited much longer, bad not tidings of his despiter sequeroportally reached him.	a visit from "Pile County E-E" and his binoming	that both water and grain could be obtained year	for I have that I had nothing a
	close at head covened his that unitary was coming. As he holded around and now several	apportunity, although an one how befor then hereoff the dangers and diffendinc by which is		and the latest states.	was to seemide many trains that had started !	
dealering lefter swites.		Nature new that his telescope ware petting jud-		Mining Recollections of '49-'50.		for that of Joe William. The sec his hand and he made have to be
of their thought beguns	to and. What I they mired the solutal and	me of Katr's criding profession of him where the	mining parties, whose salety Bill binned dought satisfiable, solvidestanding the period which had shaped show they had been based from, and the Col-	Misseg Merelinbens et '18-'00.		of the bank 130s, Warre, I belle
description of the second of t	ritie to the hand of his newly sympass translate, levelled at the least a new apprehension crossed his used. What if they mixed the usehad und brought down label. The thought, however, had handly linded upon him, when there came a simul-	our of Katr's orthog profession of him above the rest, and from their frequent multiplings and indis- nations in the council he knew that a crisis war ap-			toos, the limited supply of water with which or	relient Merskal of Sternatures   1
his liga dictionly proving		proaching. He accordingly took so seconds when none observed him to acquaint Kate with his place.		A Free Storp.	had provided members began to prove abusingly does, and humay that suffering might be the co-	commencione attack upon the off; tall this of his recognition a home, and of his safeting stream art any on the dealer; tall him to
y have I proved thy late.	something very heavy and very hipsis tombied from the tree above the pursus and both came to the ground topether—while the grindy, dichking bis	to see the desired him to separate Kate with his place.	the "youth and chiralty" of Directivitie were con- crited in its well filled realty. Peopl', above, bong	much truth, that in entereine from the mater's	requests of it, and not incoving the exact distance to the river. I will asset to short on harmfurt, for	
Why should I triot to own	ground topolor-while the griedy, skilling be-	It was his design to easy her off under sever of the night, two of the best horses having been pro-			the nearest water, procure a supply, not bettern	of cry in the delit; tell him to
Why should I think to swa I am belowed by thee? may bear Timer 2h alone, there of Europhy.	present question were getting tim but for him. do	the high, the in its rest mean moving term pre- viously englished by Pengi, who was determined to follow the fortune of his mistron, and is make his way, noteding to the bod of his knowledge, to its, Vrnin's Figs, where she was perhals of finding	minutals and prairie, and, builder, had particles al-	then every principle of boundy and novality, and have communed their cover in this country with	to the train as more so possible.  * Refuse reaching Curves river a belt of mod nine	by to expose and regular him of
not the visage that I		his way, according to the best of his investeign, to	manufactural for home consumption by the induferi-	ne other object in view than that of accountaining wealth by our mount of the crosses of every		"It was mough. The owner seasoned that a man who would
is not after and Love Survey Wome.	with more visually than grace to the direction of	55, Venicis Fort, where she was periods of finding 65ads, and where she might guilles more follogs of	gald Mrs. Simmon, whom Pump! thought to be uncommend in the manufacture of "double-beneated	mostly virtue and at the merifee of every homes belog. At least, such is the general weekel. But	day is associately but, and no exceededly deep and beginning to ender it about in purchis even to exper-	rescholed that a man who would need to be
n 10/A	"The year take charge of the purson, begs," shoet-			Belling. At least, such is the general results. But	region. Upo approaching 2, 8 food many com- passin administrative properatory to under-	not the deen-cust body of Lies
	of Sill, who was among them, and I'll so if I can't get some for out of our friend in the grey cost yan- the f'—and before the words now fairly out of his	cape.)  One very clear alget Pompey contrient to de-	mess to various parks of her despettle mesops, and accordingly it was arranged that he should take a permanent position forth-eigh to the busine's house	spens now excels executation of the classicities and autimo of the present to whom this remark is applicable, in will be found that their collecting	pain infesting threating properties to colo-	notion was not a \$8 min to be and the desponses back of Lie- trath of my assertion, in wa- k-man. It was indeed a gravity
OUR UNION.	der?"-and before the words wan foldy out of his	my to some distance from the entry, under cover of the standed bushes which are thirtily green account.	percental pool is a forth with in the busier's house.	applicable, it will be found that their coldwhing and lengthes withinks as this side of the contame.	Home of the men armound for a most deployable	
reed at Lexington, and orinnessed	morth Bill had somethed down the onbankment with "Long Ton" on his doubler, and several, of		On this securing, for the first time, Subsey musi-		condition, and the wast of water was neverty file.	come the accordance of punctions, arrived in California widing has
of the Southern Gulf, and by the		my extent, were perfectly find. Not satisfpating any attack in the mountain factorists to which they	field seer dge of judgey. In her private uplo-	minutine to-discord their screples of right as the reduced assemblings of a context and dislocent		my; but he total not oply it. he had count in assumpting
Major; that reed above Pacific's golden	tom, at his horis. They seem came in sight of the manutes, but		finited some eigen of pulsage. In her private upla- ion, no petitional small ever hime maps in contact with her William without falling in her with him.	heart, whose blacksom they manage to keep hidden from time in the other States by throwing around	datase for this dend putlimes followed with or leading hand the emissation of "40 as well as of "40.	he had count to assessibling like a sightman. The pale fa-
note that ferroand priess by durk	"Pite Couty" our founds. The grinly was	the tree-Netzer above looping watch. The de-	and an informing densatio "some" was the up- shot. Bill had a way of his own, however, for our	dens view in the either States by throwing around it a cleak of systematic hypocrity and whiching and	and 50, Seek the Missoul steer to the valler of the	
mal	"Pite County" was founder. The gritisly was slowly publing across the strades, test seried hi- land as he became consistent that he was followed, and gave elimanes to a low days growt. Bill's re-	count mount having arrived Kate empt stead- ily part the returnment from of the element in the	abot. Bill had a way of his own, however, for rep- menting all-such electaries, and when six bade him-			before his eyes, and he mound to to find relief in the springures of
not brotherhood the trappers of the	and pure utilement to a low deep growt. Bill's re-	direction of the spot where Pompey,—wait of his use ministen as a percent of his furthers, was half- ing the house that won to worke them. Nature	menting all each standard, and when the balls him factuall the "ski gal" could not bely smiling through her bean mon her "stalling" Men.	How often do we not -pos, to this day—not en- gaged in the whost and ment disreputable eadings.	point, but his supply had long horn enhanced, for, like a good flaggerion, he had directored is money	
cities glass thousaken in Hele's		have grinned as a practice of his fluideen, was half-	her been upon her "golliss" lebro.  It was a july adventure for all hands, through Itill's admirable goldenor, the mountains were pro-		the sellers resignant, without many and witness	a beddeed. "I have not see him slove.
instructor brings the Breaking	taking effect in some values ide part, exceed the hear to turn. Before he had gained the appoint		Hill's admirable guidance, the mountains were pure	goes of puttip, who, with long there and more	"Tourier them to their fits. I started towards	
or December's how revented	hash, however, Bill was upon him—the member, on the very adje of the water, opport with his ter-	any opposition cheald such nearlist bladt. The not one of all the plospers observed their depar-	ad without encountering any character of nomest, and good weather accompanied them all the way.	detal looks, regularly parallel before their congrugations mercel benefits and ploss exherications, and	tar river, which I calculated my main might be used to reach in two home. I had not provided	a gang of thirsts who have I Prainteen for the past year.
perio florests.		Non-mountained benefits over the smiles at	The only addicture that happened was the straying off of the lad who had charge of the provisions and		used to reach in two hours. I had not provided	
ten fin length to good the smiling	-a victio, as his somedis thought, to his empgra- ated courses. They thought differently when they		biggings. This compelled them to go facing for benery-four hours, when the mining youth was dis-	and simple-hearted methers as fit examples for their children. Without the least dealer to cast the blos of	water-radie, whose eagree was namousled by hos-	not below, and has made his or in fact. I have require to below
ner eight books the patriot. Service	and courage. They shought differently when they mee the possissers Easte reface and the feature courage from their field are not used understood as be- fore, while a detecting halfs which he held in his hand, and a stream of Mood welling from the side	Come monetical and bounding over the prizers in a ratio which defined pressive. K and in pass at the field in the company of the worth statisting for. New hopes, of her follows existences and Elekard Albarton's energie ways. Minded with visitum of feature large-sizes, which increased in histority as selle at happiness, which increased in histority as selle at	tomorphise brain, when the mining peach our dis- gramed on a hopd of the Tracker often providing.	willed deception upon the followers of this production, and much less some the doctrions which then	dests of broken vehicles, all belling a prisons tale of the melletage of these who had presented to. I do-	elty this rections ; if so, and I
menting energlades to Horsey's look-	county from their field ar sale and unbarried as be-	hope, of her fother's resistance and Richard Ath-	str, sab, but blandf sell sigh dust from unbou- tion. Bill expended all bir parage of centry	propelipsis and conclines practice, yet I meant forbust mentioning a fact, the truth of which a close		hin, my remargo will be comple
nation's past thells through a kin-	hand, and a stream of blood welling from the stale	Imprison, which improved in intensity as selle af-	tion. Bill expended all his parties of coatray	Reform mentioning a fact, the traffs of which a close	yest, and the a first momentu shield impact from the	But he did not find him. 13 had been "spatted" by the 'Y' and forling blussif descried to
To take in sold it does the check	of his expiring antagonist, total, in hingsupe bricing than words and quite as pixts, the story of his do	no sale of the wide operating plain was trampled become their first. Pumpsy lengted and gam-	open for "rested carmint," as he warpleard to eath him, but a copious discharge of team and promine	charges of the subject has satisfactorily solution- tioned—that a intentiably large number of the po-	bes. I had exceedy taken my out, exactled by	
No lete in rest in other ton conser-			to do better in the fiction totally discreased into. "It never could bear marion," in sold—"Iniat in say	Stational gundiers of California have at one time been automobil expansions of the guspet. But to		
pride ate Busher 1888 or Mont.	"Well door, ald lay?" "Pite County forces?" and a variety of codemations inhead the bost, or	tion straites. During the day they galloped through the midst of the wildest seemy, No.		the story.  Our het der in the sensor of 1811, while tree-		works after, his body was four Marywille. The copies had
or above the Buy the stars of en-	they returned to the spot whose they had left the		looks, too-well, the thing's door, and there are not	Our het day in the seamer of 1851, while tree-	more the light and empty wages to which they were attached. The animals were guided by a bay com-	
o'er the dark it pour a concess	Widorhous, is the meastiget had given kinesis	of taking guess as well as of scooling, and at anyth	From that moneys forward, \$15 was absented to	effing in the stage times Harramonia to Marpeville, I spent a next interesting hour in conversation with	tim or twilter years of ago, said a woman, with a child in how seem, was walking slowly behind the	the in new in more married
and the same one divide.			be alogalody studied to the Loy, (probably he came he discreted that it was follow in dispose)	a follow-passenger—an extendingly plainly drawed man, but who, it was easily seen, was labited in tie		
ury ye meny one delike, wings spekin, are the see of only	mal he was in the endonce of, nor did he care. He have that it hit and sensitive, that it was policy	hooping watch, though none was seeded.  In the interval which had seemeded the final de-		ballbesting and ballability outside rather from		Ceremon Name
white-based children who find w	his bair out by the soon, and that it was block- and that was all be appled to convince him that it	parters of Bill for the Pacific, Atherton, true to his such, had strailly parsed his purpose of recov-	on only and pleasant time of H. In this region to	half-heating and half-shiring costone rather from shoice then nessely. He was of about a speller height, and purious tiling years of ago, with a loos	the speculator upon human minery and adod him for a cap of water for her child, who was alread.	
lakes are specking, and where			hash had prepared throuston for a tength twolve hours labor. The rain pounted down in a continue			On Boom stated, in the
reced at Enter; and binding	"Take it every" he resent, efecting his open to keep out the heavil sight.—Take the d.—d thing away, if you can, but an abouting."	had become of her. After his first unwaitenable of				
rwind at Enter; and identity bet again the Delaware amid the slow	away, if you can, but an abouting."	tempt to company with Bill, he had impact in with several veteran trappers, he might up as such in the	read becoming more and more rocky, and the last ing loss somes, they pound for the purpose of to	By a series of carefully proposeded questions I was		The women though good to ing a skin of almost suggest
screen the Demonstrated the store	It was for allow, as the hydroders afterwards de shared, in on the parson relling and accurate, y or				grief, as the pointed to the little one, that the lad no memory; that he limbered had started for the	unmidskable eridence that
he perchasut, where the said to			cadio bland'at fich. A few moments' closers	gains because opposed. He was on business on	so mency; that he hashed had started for the	Altimore at black as the
ort of Jeffson bear Probler	the ground, looking up the disk and expensions a the autogenial, while place undermotives unto arch impressions rolled from the old hyporities much the guits from the hopper of a girt mill. And it while, too, that the cause of all this spacer are alrent should be nothing more formitable time a li-	neutrin my thrantes. He around their part and truring and habed as though he had around		sected with the fear Frenchere Vigilanes Coronil to too, an organization to which Collinsia brinds to	ther den house before, and all the many which ther presented was with him; that the would not	
that record bright, and have the	the code from the houses of a grint will. And to	hinged for a life in the wildown.  At our time Disk and his companion were being	way. The only thing now left for them was a treat to the esquelty of their animals, and then	for much of her present quiet and excertly, and we		that a pair or asserted also
Claim healify there with plighted	Silds too that the cause of all this operar are	on a head, so mear to the object of his awayds, that only a allold ridge or money of earth, ownered by	was a propose of a very rough night for then	visiting Maryorite. So the purpose of securing a nonelline village who went by the many of Are Will	The authorizer worth aded for if the hall not a fire pounds of provisions which she would like to an dampe for water, telling her than he constitu-	ble of which committee in the
hart f a Harreck's some elen with a			was a prospect of a very rough night for these when our of the scenta note up with the intelli- gence that they were justice unightenhand of an on-	hed.		It need be confound; any
			toul's ratchs,—as promounted which dow from all banks a heavy close. Bit dook his head a	- Hard hist sanction and salmont. Here of		
Cutornal blood a Carroll's decide	the parton more than the better individual, on faciling out what was the matter, would have likely to	Sees and not reconsidering, was so indiviously to in Ad bets the bank of a party of washing Force.	the intelligence brought by the sever, and deskro	"Not to know him, that I are across of," worm	they wan almost mittedy doubter of every kind	outset godiens of "the way
a serior harden is Bestevil		who, not thing his semplexion and appearantly won at that indical to be less exceeded their the	that there must be a micrato "counwher," so be be-	You cressed the Pinion, this you not I or at hos	and I they did not exceed in cleaning repolics a	thely blended, as in the w
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of the up for tend to Karkinway	too authory, makes you as a much sampled at his	Canancian, but his prayers and enteration suspice with what knowledge for postered of their new disdard, induced them to room his life, and, on			ings of this hell-board, she stopped to the wayer and taking from it a small bug of stor—for protein	shony stamp. One fine a
with equal hunte a termings of			count, who was nevertheless very positive to his	It have count the string two, and bridge		
a the story fug that e'er them	was and was automobile in recognizing in the flu-					"darkey" and then a "ye
and the same of the same of		na their Booking. In their company to constact the Partier steps of the Storm Nevada, and had been	Said seals, and had unlasted them for the wall and obligation of an inhabitual disputies. It was di-	is parent, with fiction of reliabetion, "and what have of them I have burned from several obs-		
Die Alteres and in orthodore		Partir steps of the Horn Novale, and had been dependented up to the time of BU's meeting with		T Malia		
ches file their year comme	the plains, and when he had represed to to by the time as dead to powder and half could have trad-		guidance of the man who half beautiful the new the party in less than an hour drew note in frust-	"Then," ougsted the strange, "yes have you the sen hip certic Hessical's Desert, in 1449.	id tog from my belt a large timberhalls, the m as wager, which I proceed, I walled specific no	
		of which Hill had set out to yould.				

Vol. III, no. 1, page 1



Plate 18

Vol. III, no. 27, page 3



Vol. III, no. 39, page 1



# Vol. III, no. 39, page 2

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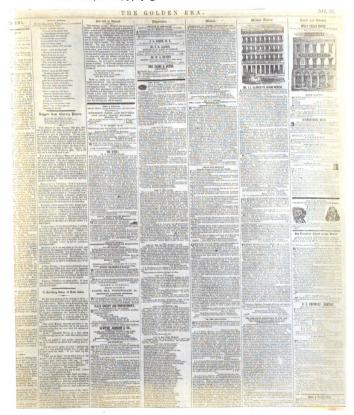
Plate 21

Vol. III, no. 39, page 3

The content of the				GOLDEN E	KA.		NO
## 1997 A		Special Metiers.					San Francisco Letter
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## 1.5 Part		Ocean of Summer and State steels, appeal the Standing Steels for Process, where above not constitute one about	CAN PRANCISCO BALL-Water		Louiseys.		THE REAL PROPERTY.
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Plate 22

Vol. III, no. 39, page 4



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



#### FOR CIRCULATION IN THE ATLANTA MAKETS PERSON SALES ASSET THE PARTIE MAKES.

#### A WEEKLY FAMILY MULTEPAPER.

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

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

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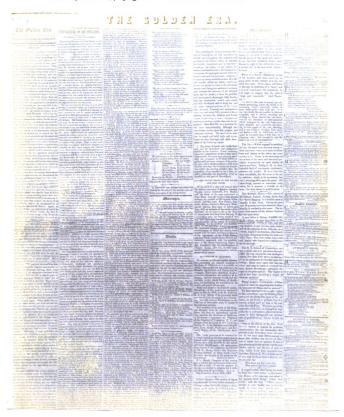
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Plate 26

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



#### Plate 27

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



Plate 28

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



## The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 2

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# The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 2

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The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 3

Plate 30

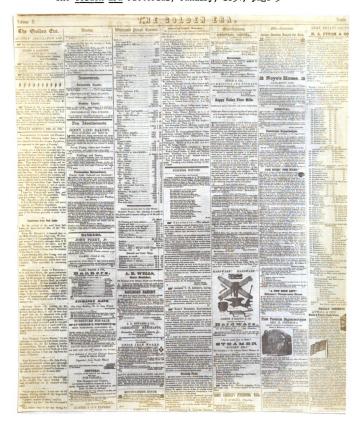


Plate 31

The Golden Era Pictorial, January, 1854, page 4



The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 1

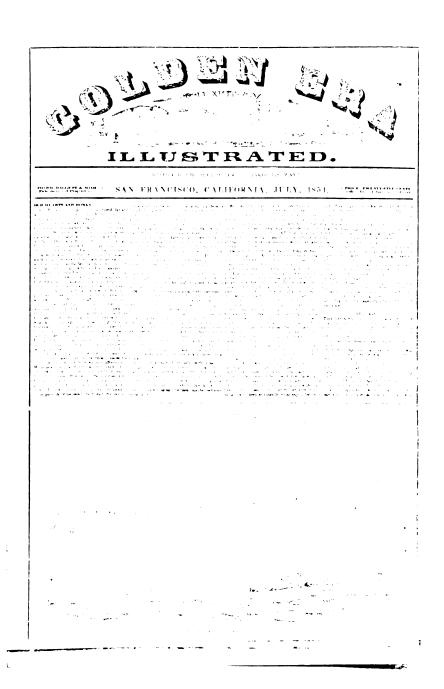
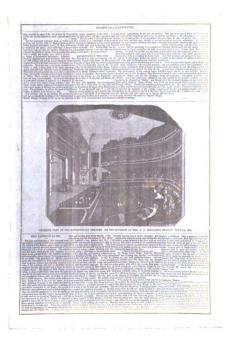


Plate 33

#### The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 2



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

Plate 34

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#### Plate 35

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 4

## SAM FRAMCISCO

WEST SIDE OF MONTCOMERY STREET, FRO









#### EAST SIDE OF MONTGOMERY STREE









Plate 36

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 5

## ILLUSTRATED.

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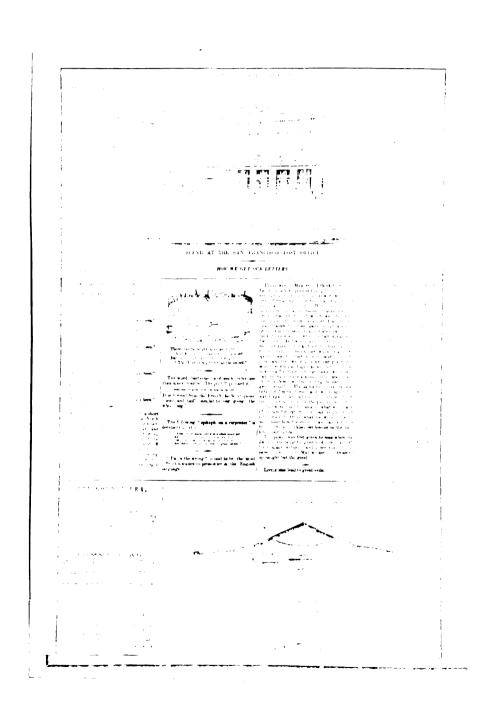




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Plate 37

The Golden Era Illustrated, July, 1854, page 6



### 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, feverproducing 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. 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. 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 breedingmares, 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

lwalter 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 1.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."

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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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

Frank Soulé, John H. Gihon, and James Nisbet, <u>The Annals of San Francisco</u> (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 "l 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 watchmaker /shops7; 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 <u>California Star</u> 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 <u>Alta California</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>,

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 <u>Overland Monthly</u>, edited by Harte. By this time, however, the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>, 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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." 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

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.<sup>2</sup> 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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> continued unchanged, except for nine numbers in volume one, until the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>impossible</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 figure-head 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 figure-head, the editors described it for their readers:

And now we ask our patrons to look upon our new figure-head, 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 <u>California</u> 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). <u>California</u> was also dropped at this time, only to be inserted nine issues later.

When, with I, 40, the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden</u> in bold type flanked by <u>The</u> and <u>Era</u> in a square, shaded type. At the same time, the designation "City and Country Edition" was added, along with the word <u>California</u>, 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 <u>Golden Era</u> carried the following notice: "M. M. Noah is in no manner connected with the editorial or financial department of the <u>Golden Era</u>-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 <u>Times and Transcript</u>, joined the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Wide West</u>, the only serious rival of the <u>Golden</u>

<u>Era</u>. Even Lawrence could not bring success to the <u>Wide West</u>,

which failed fifteen months later.<sup>3</sup>

Initially the <u>Golden Era</u> 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.

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

<sup>3</sup>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." 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

<sup>4(</sup>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," 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

<sup>5</sup>Cummins, p. 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>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 <u>Era</u> listed twenty-six agents. The number grew steadily, with forty-one agents three months later. By the end of the second volume, the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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:

<sup>7</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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.<sup>8</sup> 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. 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).

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. 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,

<sup>9</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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. 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

<sup>10</sup>Franklin Walker, San Francisco's Literary Frontier (New York, 1943), p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> 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 twentyfive 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<sup>12</sup> 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

<sup>12</sup>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.

<sup>13</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>. Because the <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Blackwood's</u>, <u>Putnam's</u>, <u>Harper's</u>, <u>Olive Branch</u>, 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. 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. 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<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Mrs. T. P. Shirley apparently was not "Dame Shirley" (Louise Amelia Knapp Smith Clappe), author of "The Shirley Letters," which appeared in <u>The Pioneer</u>; or <u>California Monthly Magazine</u>.

Egy 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, <u>i.e.</u>, 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.

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

Poetry drawn from Western life or experiences also regularly appeared in the <u>Golden Era</u>. 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup>

Poems expressing embitterment were not printed in the <u>Golden</u>

<u>Era</u> 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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>See Appendix B, Part 2, pp. 208-9.

<sup>3&</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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. 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 <u>Golden Era</u> as a significant start of the movement. However, since none did, the poems of the <u>Golden Era</u>, 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. 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 <a href="Era">Era</a> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>. 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 In such cases, if the author be reasonable, doing. 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 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden</u> 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 <u>sic</u> 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. 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 localcolor 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 <u>Golden Era</u> during these early years.

## CHAPTER V

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

From the beginning the editors of the <u>Golden Era</u> 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

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. 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.

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).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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.

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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>See VIII, 20, for identification of Miles Quinton and Blunderbuss as Daggett.

for the <u>Golden Era</u>. 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

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<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Stegner wrote the chapter "Western Record and Romance" in the <u>Literary History of the United States</u> edited by Robert E. Spiller et al. (New York, 1959), pp. 863, 867.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Harte joined the <u>Era</u> 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 In fact, with the exception of "M'liss," almost none of Harte's work for the Golden Era was based on Western It appears as if Harte had admired Daggett's material. 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. 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 move-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

of the Writing of Bret Harte in the Magazines and Newspapers of California 1857-1871," <u>University of California Publication in English</u>, III (1933), 119-170, lists 130 additional Harte items in the <u>Era</u> 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 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

<sup>7</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden</u>

<u>Era.</u> 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. 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

-82-

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 <u>Golden Era</u> asserted that the items written by Juris Consult were correct. The last notice in the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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 <u>History of California</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 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 <u>History</u> of <u>California</u>.

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 Interest in mining activity was always high mining camps. 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 <u>Golden Era</u> listed marriages, births, deaths, and places of public worship, as well as wholesale prices current in San Francisco and the uncalledfor 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <a href="Era">Era</a> 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 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, 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,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>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 Certainly the Golden Era did at times paint in its arrived. 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. 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 <u>Golden Era</u> never varied. The miners could always count on the <u>Golden Era</u> 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.<sup>2</sup> "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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 School-craft, Catlin, and others focused attention on them. Even Longfellow's <u>Hiawatha</u> (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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Era</u> with violating the Sabbath. The editors tried to push these objections aside with the explanation that all the work except the distribution of the <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Uncle Tom's Cabin</u> 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 now a member of the California Legislature!

"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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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" 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 Era2 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

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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup><u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 197-198.

Within the first decade following the arrival of the forty-niners no fewer than twenty-two of Shake-speare'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.

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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup><u>Ibid.</u>, 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.

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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>nature</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> wanted more plays by Shake-speare, 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 <u>Boston Transcript</u> 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 <u>Era</u> 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:

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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 mediccrity 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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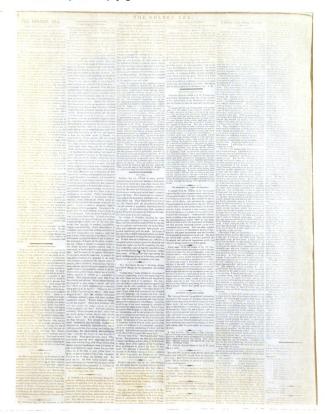
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Plate 41

Vol. III, no. 41, page 4



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Plate 44

Vol. III, no. 41, page 7



Vol. III, no. 41, page 8



Plate 46

Vol. V, no. 1, page 1

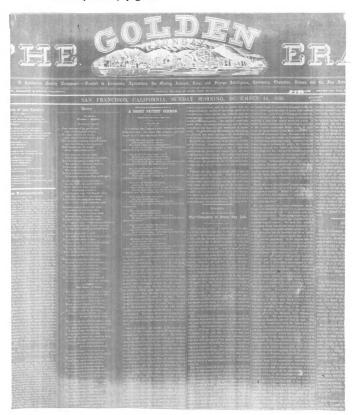


Plate 47

Vol. V, no. 1, page 2

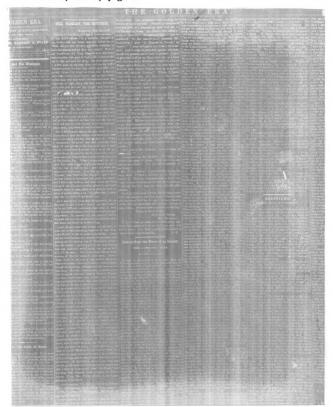


Plate 48

Vol. V, no. 1, page 3

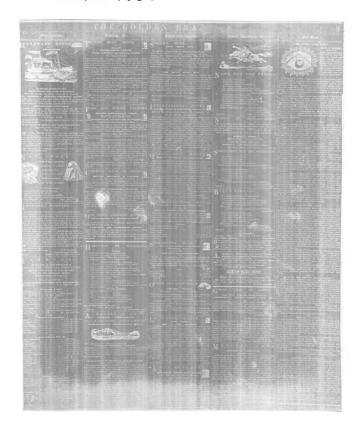


Plate 49

Vol. V, no. 1, page 4

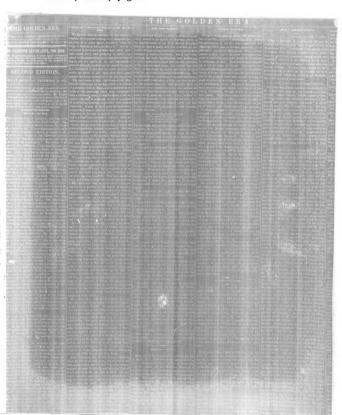
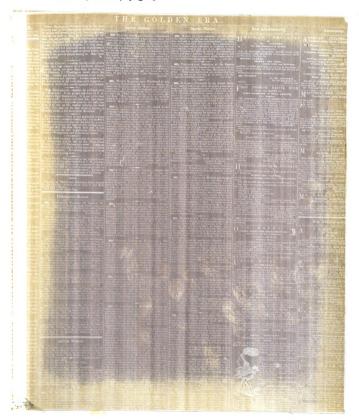


Plate 50

Vol. V, no. 1, page 5



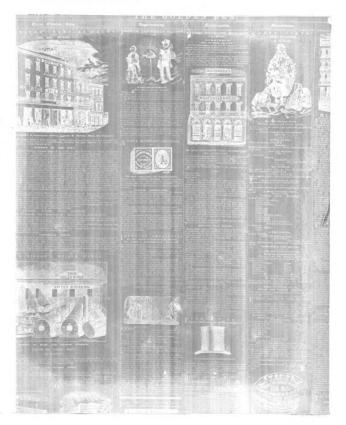
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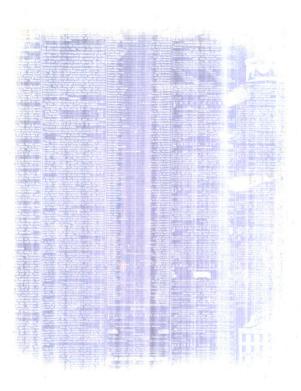
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Plate 52

Vol. V, no. 1, page 7



Vol. V, no. 1, page 8



#### Plate 54

Vol. V, no. 27, page 1



Vol. V, no. 27, page 2

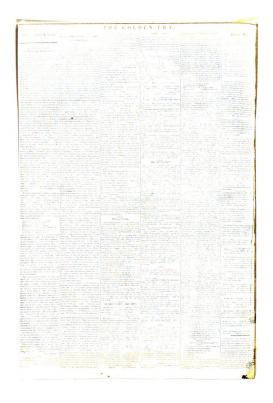
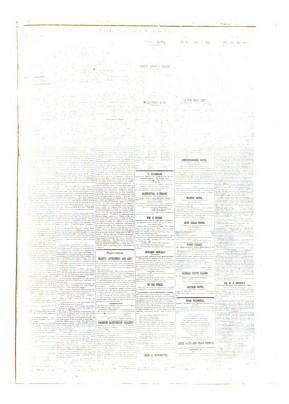
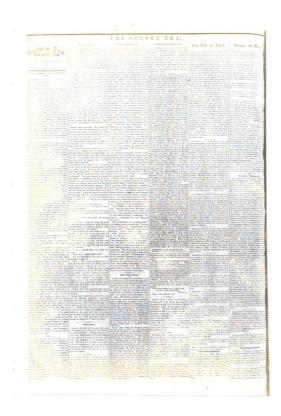


Plate 56

Vol. V, no. 27, page 3



Vol. V, no. 27, page 4



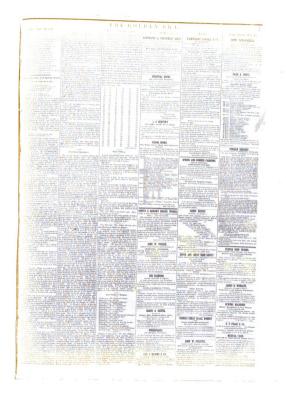
Vol. V, no. 27, page 5

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Vol. V, no. 27, page 6

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Vol. V, no. 27, page 7



Vol. V, no. 27, page 8

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## Plate 62

# Vol. VI, no. 32, page 1

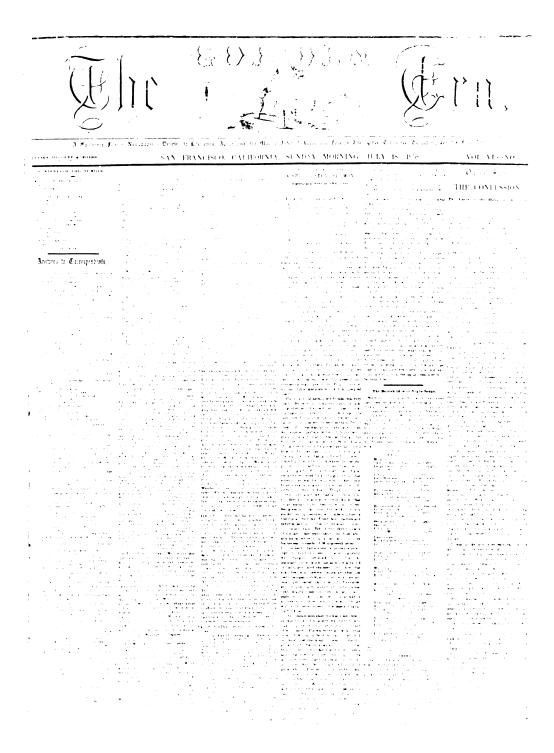


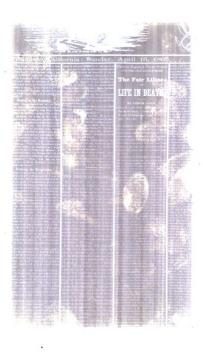
Plate 53

Vol. VIII, no. 26, page 1

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### 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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. 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, 0 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

<sup>1</sup> 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 gang-way 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 <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Era</u>, the use of poetry changed so that by 1860 what poems the <u>Era</u> 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, but usually these were poems which the editors declined for regular columns. The editors obviously had decided that they had more

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>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 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 <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>. 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 nonliterary 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. the patrons of the Golden Era did find this copy to their

liking, and the success of the <u>Era</u> argues that they did, then Mark Twain and others may have had a point when, in the 1860's, they turned from the <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>rules</u> 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 <u>Era</u>'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 <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Era</u> popular, it also contributed to the total success of the <u>Golden Era</u>.

# CHAPTER IV

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

The enlargement of the <u>Golden Era</u> did not bring any immediate change in fiction, as Daggett and Foard continued to employ it to give balance to the contents of the <u>Era</u>; 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. 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 <u>Era</u>, 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

<sup>&#</sup>x27;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 <u>Golden</u>

<u>Era</u> 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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>See Part II, Chapter 1 for discussion of new editor and name plate, also added with V, 27.

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

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. 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." 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 In the issue of November 29, 1857, Judges Jos. by two weeks. 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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>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.

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 through books 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. 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

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, the second series were written after Daggett had edited the <u>Golden Era</u> for almost six years and had made at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>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 <u>Golden Era</u>.

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 <u>Territorial Enterprise</u>, 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, <u>Braxton's Bar</u> (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. the folio period the Era featured articles on the discovery and settlement of California, such as the series by Filings and Juris Consult. 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. 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 1055. 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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>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. 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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>See Part I, Chapter V.

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 <u>Era</u> 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. 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 <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>, 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, ll). 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

<sup>1</sup> 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 <u>Golden Era</u> tended to see most things in San Francisco through rose-tinted glasses, quite likely the drama critic of the <u>Era</u> 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).<sup>2</sup>

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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>MacMirn states that Richard III was the favorite.

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 Fart 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 <u>Era</u> 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 <u>Golden Era</u>, 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." 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

<sup>1</sup> 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 <u>Era</u>, usually published on inside pages.<sup>2</sup>

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 dving 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.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>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 <u>Sac-ramento Times</u>, 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 <u>Golden Era</u> 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. 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.

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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.

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#### 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—0 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:

0 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  $\sqrt{\text{sic}}$  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?

#### 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

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 <u>dust</u>, 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

### 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: 0 '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

## 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.

#### BLOWING UP THE WIND

"The following lines possess an interest, not only from their poetical merit, but from the fact of their being the <u>first</u> original poetry published in <u>California</u>. They are copied from the second number of the <u>California</u> 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

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

## 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 sare 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 <u>Golden Era</u>

"Alpha.--'The Dark Hour' is filed for insertion next week. We like it much--it contains <u>poetry</u>.--'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

"'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 "we meet" 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

"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

"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

## APPENDIX B, PART 4

Criticism from the "To Our Correspondents" columns of poems rejected by the <a href="Golden Era">Golden Era</a>

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. 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 <u>grub</u> which his departed wealth might have purchased.

Dick Crmsby (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. 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, &e., &c., and finally wound up by asking the price of gold dust, provided a person night 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.

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 know 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 bedbugs, 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 wen'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.

#### APPENDIX C

# Sample selections written expressly for the <u>Golden Era</u> 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, 0, 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 you 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!"
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 /Harte7

#### 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

#### **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. 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. 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 <u>one</u> noble deed
By fellow mortals weak,
And feel, for <u>once</u>, kindly agreed
His failings not to speak?

Or does he <u>dare</u> 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.

#### 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;

<sup>----&</sup>quot;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.

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:

Editurs 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, kont-rackted 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.7

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 what 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 <u>Helen Hensley</u> 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 Flunderbuss

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," "vingtun, " "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. 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 wellknown 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. 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 moon-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 finelooking 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 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 out 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 you 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 prick 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.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Are you ready?"

<sup>&</sup>quot;Yes!"

<sup>&</sup>quot;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 Ten years ago, you stole a young girl by the Listen. 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. 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 <u>promise</u> 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.

What Do We Live For? (A)  III, 44	
An Hour with an Old Bachelor (S) IV, 10	
To My Mother (P) IV, 13	
A, A. The Good Time Coming (P) III, 15	
A, G.	
Woman's Love (P) III, 2 The Reunion (P) III, 3	
The Reunion (P) III, 3 California Literature (A) V, 21	
A, G. H.	
The Dead Child (P) I, 51	
The Student's Choice (P) II, 25	
Abbott, John S. C.	
Napoleon: or, the Battle of the Pyramids (S) I, 2	
Adams, W. H. Davenport The First Printed Book (P) VI, 51	
The Death Toilette (S) VII, 50	
Adonis & Co.	
Chinese Camp (A) VI, 30	
Advent	
Our Sonora Correspondence (A) II, 24	
A Miner's Experience, an O'er True Tale (P) II, 29	
From Sonora (A) II, 35 Aldrich, S. B.	
Prayer (P) III, 15	
Angels in the House (P) III, 35	
Song (P) VII, 17	
Alexander, A. G.	
The Turkish Harem (S) VII, 52	
Alice	
Indian Summer (A) IV, 44 Allyne, Miss S. W.	
The Best Methods of Conducting a Primary School (A)	
III, 4	

Alp To Emma (P)	IV, 28
The Two Faces (A)	IV, 29
An AcrosticTo Miss Arabella J. (P)	IV, 36
Pitt River Ladies on the Tramp (A)	IV, 43
A Literary Experiment (A)	<b>v</b> , 48
California (P)	VI, 18
The Phantom Maid (P)	VI, 27
Alpha	
Recollections of the Azores (A)	I, 3, 4, 5
The Worlds Above (P)	I, 4
The Dark Hour (P)	I, 42
Love and Art (P)	I, 44
Words and Deeds (P)	I, 45
A Jaunt in the Azores (A)	II, 10-13, 15
The Vision (P)	II, 10
Life in California (A)	II, 11
Scenes in Madagascar (A)	II, 16, 17
We Watched Her Silently (P)	II, 19
The Convict to his Mother (P) The Miner's TrialsA Correct Picture (A)	IV, 36
The Miner's TrialsA Correct Picture (A) Amanda	v, 4
Trust (P)	III, 33
Amelia	111, <i>)</i>
The Fatal Gift (S)	VI, 21
On the Mutual Progress of the Mind and Matter	
011 0110 1111 01112 1110 0111 0111 0111	ΫΙ, 21
An Allegorical Vision (A)	VI, 27
Truth (A)	VI, 30
Justice (A)	VI, 37
Skeletons of the Heart (S)	VI, 46
The Trial of Cupid (A)	<b>VIÍ,</b> 26
Grandmother's Drawers (S)	VIII, 2
Ames, Mary Clemmer	·
No Longer Young (P)	VII, 46
Amigo	
The Head and the Heart (P)	<b>v</b> , 9
Religion (P)	V, 13
Trust Thou in God (P)	V, 16
Anacreon	
Give Me a Kiss (P)	III, 7
Anderson, Hans Christian	
Story of a Mother (S)	III, 47
The Bundle of Matches (S)	VII, 26
Andrews, Mrs. E. S.	•••
The Dying Californian to his Mother (P)	VI, 3
Andrews, Lyme H.	Tit he
The Miner's Dream (S)	IV, 45

Anna	
Leeda Breton; or, A Stray Leaf from Life (S)	VI, 15-17
Annie The Peasant's Song (P)	<b>V,</b> 20
Anthony, J. P.	.,
They Tell Me of Thy Sadness (P)	III, 52
Boyhood Dreams (P)	IV, 1
Aristides Bloods Operation of the Redwood Rangers (sic)	(A)
	ÌIÍ, 32
Atlee, R. E.	TV 40
The Quaker and the Robber (S) Augustine	IV, 40
The Texas Tarantula (A)	I, 33
Austin, F. B.	<b>TT</b> 00
The Indian's Lament (P)	II, 20
В	
Travelling Correspondence from Diamond Spring	(A)
Red Bluff's Hanging Affair (A)	II, 15 III, 12
B, Elsie	111, 12
Farewell to Scotland (P)	I, 5
B, H. M.	V 20
Incidents in Mining Life (S) B, R. L.	V, 29
Can'st Thou Forget (P)	IV, 44
B, T. A.	·
A Four-Horse Letter (A) B, W. F.	v, 6
Life (P)	II, 51
Bachelor	•
California Bachelor's Appeal (A)	<b>v</b> , 8
Backwoodsman Adventure in the Rocky Mountains (S)	<b>v,</b> 9
Bagnet	•
A Scene in the Arena (A)	VIII, 10
Balt, Slender Random Reminiscences; Cabin Pastimes (S)	VII, 12
Balzac, Honore de	·
The Mystery of the Mansion (S)	V, 50
Bancroft  First Pottle of the Povelution (A)	VTT AR
First Battle of the Revolution (A) Bancroft, George	VII, 48
Extracts from an Oration (A)	III, 6
Banks, G. L.	TT 1:0
What I Live for (P) Banter, W.	II, 49
The Cross (P)	II, 2

Doublet Tout sous	
Baptist, Louisana The Swell-head Disease (A)	IV, 46
Barber, Joseph Peace and War (P)	VII, 37
Bard of Rincon Point	, _ , _ ,
To Silent Star (P)	III, 46
Bard, Sierra	1.0
Eldethlmoin, the Barbarian (prose poem)	VII, 12 VII, 13
Sunny Years (P)	V11, 13
Fancy and Reality (P)	VII, 14
Barrington, F. Clinton	WTTT 3.5
The Night Descent of the Lachine Rapids (S)	VIII, 15
Barthelemy (D)	WIT OO
A Patriotic Poem: America (P)	VII, 20
Bates, Morgan	T 00
Prayer for the Fourth of July (A)	I, 29
Bell, Currerpseudonym, see Brontë, Charlotte	
Bell, Mary B.	TST II
Golden Moments (P)	IV, 4
Belto Poetry (A)	IV, 10
Bennett, Emerson	11, 10
The Gambler's Victim (S)	VI, 17
Benton, Ruth	·-, -,
If We Knew (P)	VIII, 5
Beranger	•
The Cottager and Napoleon (P)	v, 49
Berkshire	_
Correspondence from Jacksonville (A)	<b>V</b> , 27, 28,
	30, 31, 33
Best, Margaret	
My Cousin Harry (S)	VII, 23
Beveridge, J. H.	
The Child and the Sunbeam (P)	II, 31
Beveridge, James A.	<b>TT</b> 30
Water for Me (P)	II, 18
Beverley, Fred	TV OO
The Yankee and the Grizzlies (S)	IV, 29
Billings, Thomas S.	Manniahad
New Discovery in Mining: How to Save Fine and	
Gold (A)	VII, 37
Blacksmith, Oliver	WT 1
The Rain (P)	VI, 1
Block, Oldpseudonym, see Delano, A.	
Blount, Marguerite H.	VII, 33
One Hour of Many (S)	VIII, 14
Mona Lisa (S) Blunderbusspseudonym, see Daggett, Rollin M.	****, 17
Didinger on pa bacadoriam, see paggett, motiting.	

Blunt, Mrs. Ellen Key The Homeward Bound (P)	V, 2
Boggs John Chinaman (P)	III, 2
Bolton, Ada	<b></b> , <i>-</i>
The Love of Schiller (A)	<b>VII,</b> 52
Bostwork, Helen L.  Meet Lizzie at Six (S)	VI, 31
Branch, Julia	VI, JI
A Mother's Poem (P)	VII, 47
Brenan, Joseph	
To My Wife (P)	<b>v,</b> 38
Bretpseudonym, see Harte, Bret	
Brevitos Hum Dming (A)	WTTT Q
Hum-Drums (A) Britton, J. J.	VIII, 8
Dawn of Day (P)	IV, 46
Brock, Harry	_,,
The Village Bell (P)	VII, 4
Brontë, Charlotte	
as Currer Bell	<b>T</b> 50
Evening Solace (P)	I, 52
Brooks, C. T. Mountain and Valley (P)	<b>VI</b> , 42
Brown, Baptist	<b>12</b> , 12
An Incident in the Rocky Mountains (S)	III, 43
Brown, Frances	
Losses (P)	III, 40
Browne, Emma Alice	TTT he
Bessie Bell (P)	III, 45
Bryant, William Cullen The Burial of Love (P)	II, 7
Old Hundred (P)	IV, 2
The Constitution (P)	IV, 26
Odes for the Whole People (P)	IV, 35
The Groomsman to his Mistress (P)	IV, 40
Song of the Greek Amazon (P)	VI, 41
The Land of Dreams (P) Brythan	VI, 43
When the Evening Silent Gliding (P)	III, 29
Little Catharine (P)	III, 30
Little Agnes (P)	III, 45
Bubblespseudonym, see Paige, E. G.	
Buchanan, T.	
The Song of the Western Settler (P)	III, 22
Buckingham, Henry A.  A Tale of New York (S)	T 20
Buffum, E. Gould	I, 29
California in 1848 (A)	III, 12, 13
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	,, -/

Bullock, A. J.	
A Thousand Miles a Minute (P)	V, 44
Burke, Edmund A Perfect Wife (S)  Burket Bur	I, 33
Burleigh, W. H. The Pilgrim Fathers (P)	III, 8
Burns, Robert My Heart's in the Highlands (P)	III, 33
Burritt, Elihu Why I Left the Anvil (S)	v, 49
Buster, Phil. A. A Night Surprise in Feather River Country	(A)
Buttes	`IÍI, 41
Spring (P) We're Children all our Days (P)	III, 26 III, 29
Byrne, Waller A Physician's Story (S)	VIII, 19
Byron, Jr. Notes from Calaveras (A)	V, 2
Byron, Lady Farewells (P)	VI, 25
C	, ,
Age (P) Come, Fill up the Bowl (P)	V, 23 V, 33
C, C. F. For the 4th of JulyOur Constitution (P) The Age We Live In (P)	II, 29 II, 30
C, D. H. Love (P)	II, 38
Song of the Gold Fiend (P)	III, 11
C, J. Song (P)	III, 43
C, J. P. Low Bridge (A)	II, 29
Forget Thee (P) C, M.	III, 37
The Emigrant's Farewell to his Brother (P)	IV, 5
Cy, M. Anecdote of Washington (S)	III, 49
C, M. E. My Children (P)	I, 13
C, O. A Fragment (P)	II, 30
Cadez-Orionpseudonym, see Stiles, H. R.	- <b>-,</b> )
Caernarvon To (P)	III, 14

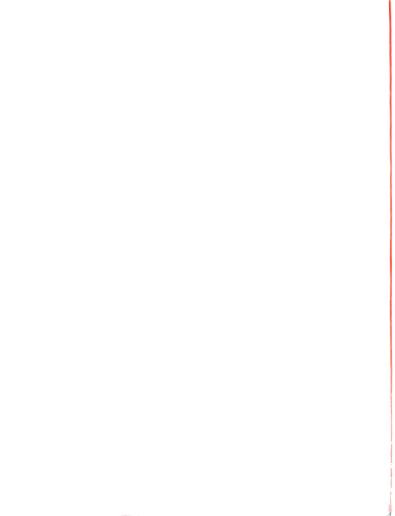
Californian, A.	
A Bear Story (S)	IV, 18
Californians  Fencycli to Mining (1)	TV OO
Farewell to Mining (A) Californicus	IV, 22
A Star Among the Clouds (P)	TV. 11
New Yearnings (P)	IV, 11 IV, 14
A Walk Among the Flowers (A)	IV, 25
To My Sister Mary (P)	IV, 30
Callinus	**
Lines: On the Death of a Stranger (P)	V, 42
To Bennie (P) Song (P)	V, 43 V, 46
Nostalgia (P)	v, 48 v, 48
Monody (P)	v, 50
Little Carrie (P)	<b>VI.</b> 6
The Insect Gathering (P)	VI, 8 VI, 11
Wandering Thoughts (P)	VI, 11
The Confession: or, the Curse of the House of	
mus Datas (D)	VI, 32, 33
The Dying Chief (P)	VI, 33
The Saxon Captives (P) By the Sea (P)	VI, 38 VI, 47
Camden, Walter	<b>71</b>
The Golden Cross (S)	VI, 8-11
Campbell	·
To My Mother (P)	IV, 14
An Acrostic (P)	IV, 36
The Maid's Remonstrance (P)	IV, 44
Canning, Geo.	TT 30
Riddle (P) Carew	II, 30
Disdain Returned (P)	III, 14
Carleton, William	<b>,</b> - ·
An Irish Wake (S)	VI, 52
Carlton, Eugene	
Pride and Vanity (P)	IV, 51
Ideal and Real (P)	IV, 52
Woman's Rights (P) The Cottage Home (P)	V, 1 V, 3
The Cottage Home (P) Caro, Verrum	<b>v</b> , )
Angeline O'More, a Song (P)	v, 39
Carolan, Chas. C.	, , ,
To Nellie (P)	III, 32
Carpenter, J. E.	
Mother, Can This the Glory Be? (P)	III, 20
Carson	VIII OZ
Peg-Leg Smith, the Trapper (S)	VII, 27

Carter, S. L. The Wagoner (P)	V, 20
Cary, Alice How I Came to be an Old Maid (S)	VIII, 16
Cato	,,
Springfield vs. Cosmos (A)	VI, 44
Caxtonpseudonym, see Rhodes, William H.	· <b>- ,</b>
Chameleon	
Quartz Prospects in Touloumne (A)	VI, 9
Word from Chameleon (A)	VI, 11
Chandler, Ellen Louise	•
Go Back, Rose; You're too Little to Come (S)	<b>V,</b> 28
Cheever, Rev. Geo. B.	•
The Love that Lasts (P)	VII, 4
Chelor, B. A.	
Welcome, Ye Breeze (P)	IV, 27
Chillon, Bessie J.	_
The Treasure Seekers (S)	VII, 45
Chinquopin	
An Episode of California Life (S)	III, 42
Chrysalis	
About Chinese Camp (A)	<b>VI</b> , 18
Chinese Camp (A)	VI, 21
Cilly	
A Perilous Adventure Crossing the Sound in a	WTT 70
Canoe (S)	VII, 32
Ciprico, George	TT 39
Curiosities of the Hair (A)	II, 38
Barbers and Barbers' Poles (A)	III, 2
A Brief History of the Bath (A) Shall Americans Wear Beards (A)	III, 7 III, 15
Clara	111, 17
Spectacles (P)	VI, 6
The Wild White Rose (P)	VII, 29
Clarence	<b>111</b> , 29
Spiritualism (A)	IV, 29
Clarington, Celestia	
Death in a Strange Land (A)	VI, <i>3</i> 3
Clavering, Eugene	
Fire-Fiend of the Prairies (S)	VII, 26
Clayton, Joel Horses in California (A)	I, 13
Cobb, Cyrus	-, -,
The Duel (S)	V, 29
Cobb, M. H.	
The World Would be Better for It (P)	III, 9
Cobb, Sylvanus, Jr.	W 70
One of a Thousand (S)	V, 30
Coggins, James	V OT
The Shadowy Land (P)	V, 27

Coleman, J. Sumner, M.D.	
as Jack, Jr. (pseudonym for Coleman) Knight's Ferry (A) The Printer and the Poet (A) A Few Words about Birds (A) First Gun for Texan Liberty (A) The Siege of San Antonio (S) The Massacre of Fanning (A)	V, 15, 33 V, 19 V, 20 V, 22 V, 24 V, 26
Collins History of Kentucky: Legend of Harpe's Head	(S)
Collins, Wilkie	VI, 50
The Dead Secret (S)	<b>V</b> , 27-49
Comfort, John A.  The First Game of Euchre (S) Comminipaw	VII, 23
The ShakespeareA Reminiscence (A) Literary Reminiscences: The Dramatists (A)	VI, 52 VII, 2
Cone Honesty (A)	IV, 42
Cone, Spencer W. A Curious Question (P)	V, 22
Consecrate The Two Misers: A Narrative of Miracles (S)	VIII, 5, 6
Consue Gallimaufry (A)	V, 27, 32 34, 35
Consult, Jurispseudonym, see Ryan, R. F. Cook, Ella	J <sup>+</sup> , JJ
Write Soon (P)	VIII, 7
Cook, Eliza Parting Song (P) The Poor Man's Grave (P)	II, 21 IV, 13
Never Hold Malice (P) Cornish	V, 42
The Step-Mother (S) Our Coon (S) The Cholera Victim (S) Washoe: Thither and Hither (A)	VI, 34 VI, 37 VI, 51 VIII, 19
Cornwall, Barry A Prayer in Sickness (P) A Petition to Time (P)	I, 31 I, 31
Cosmographer	
Correspondence from Jacksonville (A) Cosmos	I, 23
Affairs around Columbia (A)	VI, 41; VII, 12
Cousic, Mary Carleton The Captive Knight: A Tale of the Crusades (	(s) VII, 39

Cowper, W.	
Prayer (P)	III, 15
Cowslip, Kate Girls and Matrimony (S)	I, 10
God Help the Poor (A)	II, 2
Crayon Serenade (P)	I, 6
Crockett, Col.	1, 0
Col. Crockett's Bear Hunt (S)	VIII, 1
Currier, Mrs. Sophrosia Blessings in Disguise (S)	IV, 12
Curtiss, G. E.	<b>-</b>
The American Aladdin (S) Cutter, Capt. G. W.	IV, 5
The Song of Steam (P)	VI, 5
Cypress, J., Jr.	•
Subterranean News (A)	III, 1
D	
Our Theme for Song (P)	IV, 18
The Miner's Dream (P) My Mountain Home (P)	IV, 23 IV, 32
The Dream of Youth (P)	IV, 34
D, C. G.	•
Review of a Spiritual Work (A)	IV, 12
Passing Away (A) The True Castaly (P)	IV, 19 IV, 21
D, C. H.	<b>1</b> , 21
Circassia and Circassian Women (A)	IV, 51
To the Unknown (P)	V, 10
D, C. M. The Plaint of a Bachelor (P)	v, 35
D, Count	•, 22
The War (P)	III, 3
D, J. Perilous Passage of the Brickbat (S)	TV 10
Perilous Passage of the Brickbat (S) D, J. M.	IV, 10
Reminiscences of a Miner (S)	I, 44
D, Q. A Story of Early Times (S)	V, 22
El Dorado (A)	v, 28
D, S. T.	-
My Harp and Heart (P)	v, 6
D, T. S. The Miner's Dream (P)	IV, 31
Daggett, Rollin Mallory	T 33
From Grass Valley (A) California (P)	I, 11 III, 8
oalitornia (1)	, O

```
as Blunderbuss (pseudonym for Daggett)
      Mining Recollections of '49-50 (A-S)
                                                   II, 37, 39-
      44, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, III, 1, 3
      Death of Roe's Murderer, or the Miner's Revenge
                                                        (S)
                                                   111, 5
111, 6
      Tom Emmet's Frozen Jack (S)
      My Cooking Experience
                                                   III,
      Adventures of Mike Markland (S)
                                                   III, 13
      Billy Morgan's Love Adventure
                                                   III, 28
      Lucky Bill, the Thimble-Rigger (S)
                                                   III, 29
      The Valley of Death, a Night on the Plains in 1849
                                                   III, 4
V, 44
      The Devil's Backbone (S)
                                                   VÍ, 40,
VII, 1
      The Blacksmith of Fenton
      The Young Misanthrope (S)
                                                   VII, 6
      The Captain's Story (S)
                                  (S)
      A Restaurant Acquaintance
                                                   VII, 19
                                                   VII, 21
      The Old Cartman (S)
                                                   VII, 35
      The Duel by Candle-Light
                                                   VII, 39
VII, 41
      Simon Dinkelspiel (S)
      The Hunter of Cedar Canon (S)
                                                   VII, 46
      The Mysterious Lodger (S)
                                                   VIII, 1
      The Trapper's Wooing (S)
                                                   VIII, 4
      Fu, the Conjurer
      The Hero of Taku
                                                   VIII, 11
      Waiting at Los Angeles (S)
                                                   VIII, 14
   as Korn Kob (pseudonym for Daggett)
      Korn Kob Turned Poet (P)
                                                   III, 27
                                                   III, 41
      Korn Kob's Opinion on Matrimony
      One Day a Newspaper Reporter (A)
                                                   IV, 16
                                                  (A)
      Korn Kob on the Crisis, He Scenteth Blood
                                                   IV, 28
                                                   IV, 40
      Grand Complimentary to Korn Kob (A)
      Theatrical Intelligence Extraordinary
                                                   IV, 42
   as Miles Quinton (pseudonym for Daggett)
      The Lost Letters: A Voice from the Wilderness (S)
                                                   I, 44-II,
                                                   III, 1-24
D' Al by
   The Gamester's Doom
                        (S)
                                                   VIII, 5
D'Alembert
   Duello-Mania, and Its Cure (A)
                                                   IV, 6
Dallas, Mary Kyle
                                                   VI, 45;
   A Sanguinary Deed (S)
                                                   VII, 39
D' Arc
                                                   II, 41
   The Trail (S)
                                                   II, 42, 50
   San Francisco in Early Times (A)
                                                   III, 4, 5
   San Francisco in Early Days (S)
```



The Grizzly (S) Eureka (P) The Pestilent Ship (S) The Four Creeks (S) What I Love (A) The Lost Cabin (S) Dana, H. T. Lines on the Departure of a Lady for Californi	
Dante A Tragedy in One Act (S) Darling, Leah	v, 37 v, 27
A Chapter on Old Bachelors (A) Dashwood, Dollypseudonym, see Fry, Mrs. Davis, Thomas	V, 31
Affairs as They are in Nicaragua (A) Davis, William H.	V, 3
San Francisco Fire Department (A)	II, 26
An Exhortation to Californians (A)	III, 22
Delano, Alonzo as Old Block (pseudonym for Delano) A Chapter on Noses (A) A Reminiscence of Hoosier Land (A) Drunken Ashley (S) A California Writer: An Account of John Roor Yellow Bird (A) Old Mississippi, Being a Chapter on Colds A Soft Spot in the Heart of Old Block (A) Presentation Extraordinary, Old Block Remem McDonald (A) A Will and a Way (S) Destruction of the Earth, June 13 (A) Trading Among the Indians (A) Hydropathy vs. Allopathy; or a Night in a Signature. A Trip to the Farallones (A) Delia	IV, 20 (A) IV, 21 IV, 31 bered (A) IV, 36 IV, 37 V, 5 V, 24 V, 28
Memory (P) Delta	VII, 50
Mining Legislation (A) Valentine Duval (S) Denison, Mrs. M. S. A.	IV, 11 IV, 15
The Timely Warninga Lesson for Young Ladies	(S) I, 4
The Dead Wife (S) My Willie (S) Where's the Difference (S)	I, 18 VI, 19 VII, 32

Denizen, Snow	
Friendship (A)	<b>v</b> , 9
Moral Influence of Memory (A)	v, 15
Denny, S. T.	<b>v</b> , <b>1</b> )
To the Stormy Petrel (P)	V, 44
Desmarais, Chas.	<b>v</b> ,
The Judgment of Heaven (S)	IV, 45
Desultory, Dick	1V, 7J
How We Poor Devils Live (S)	III, 14
Marin Views (A)	III, 19
My First California Guard (S)	III, 20
Devil	111, 20
Latest from the Spirits (A)	II, 42
Dhu, Frank	11, 72
The Destiny of California (A)	III, 21, 37
The Rain-Drop (A)	III, 24
Dick	111, 27
A True Story (S)	III, 9
Dickens, Charles	111, 9
His Sowship (S)	I, 48
The Smuggler's Cave (S)	IV, 45
The Gringe Family: A Tale of Troubled Conscien	
Diomed	VII, 31
Sonora (A)	V, 34
Dion	<b>'</b> , 2 <sup>-</sup>
I'm Going Home to Die (P)	VIII, 10
In the Swing (P)	VIII, 17
D'M, L.	· , -
Dead-Head and Dead Head (S)	III, 36
Doctor	,
A Running Letter from Leon (A)	III, 20
Doesticks	<b>111</b> , 20
Doesticks sees a "Modern Classical Drama" (A)	TTT. 11
Doesticks on a Target Excursion (A)	III, 12
Doesticks Attends a Rehearsal of his Feature N	
Docotions hotolide a holical sal of his foatale h	IV, 50
Doesticks' New Play (A)	IV, 51
Doesticks Bets on Pennsylvania (A)	IV, 52
Doesticks' Lager Bier Experience (A)	V, 1
Founds a Great Moral Institution (A)	v, 3
Thanksgiving Dinner (A)	v, 5
Goes to a Spiritual Picnic (A)	v, 7
Goes to a Surprise Party (A)	V, 3 V, 5 V, 7 V, 8 V, 9
Don't Do Military DutyThen He Does (A)	v, 9
Encounters Grim Death (A)	v, 13
Wants Religion but Can't Afford It (A)	v, 15
Determines to be Garrotted (A)	v, 17
Among the Fancy: He Puts on the Gloves (A)	v, 21
	· ,

```
Is Shaved by a Patriarch (A)
                                                     V, 22
                                                     V, 23
V, 24
   Is House Hunted (A)
   Thinks about the Comet (A)
                                                     √, 25
   At Damphool's Club (A)
                                                     v, 26
v, 27
   Damphool In Love (A)
   Helps Move (A)
                                                        28
   Watches Jones Make Garden (A)
                                                     ٧,
   Visits Y.M.C.A. (A)
                                                        29
                                                     V, 30
   Sees a Cricket Match
   Doesticks' Letters (A)
                                                     VI, 5
                                                     (A)
   Tearful Tactics of Mrs. Keziah Jan Doesticks
                                                     VÍ, 7
VI, 8
   Letters (A)
   Burglars and Pretty Servant-girls (A)
                                                     VI, 9
                                                     VI, 10
   Letters (A)
Donovan
                        (A)
   Light and Darkness
                                                     IV, 19
Door, C. H.
   Ancient Thieves and Modern Financiers: a Satire (P)
                                                     V, 17
Doran, Dr.
   Female Players (A)
                                                     IV. 40
Dorothea
   Dorothea's Dinner Party (A)
                                                     VIII, 5
VIII, 6
   Dorothea's Advice to Young Ladies
                                         (A)
   Dorothea in a Corner (A)
                                                     VIII,
                                                           7
   Dorothea not Appreciated (A)
                                                     VIII, ८
                                                     VIII, 9
VIII, 11
   Dorothea's Affectionate Reply
   Dorothea to Betsy Lousia (A)
   A Word from Dorothea (A)
                                                     VIII, 12
   My Beaux (S)
                                                     VIII, 13
Door, C. Herbert
   Passing Away (P)
                                                     III, 21
   Song of Death (P)
Away Down East (P)
                                                     V, 3
                                                     v, 29
v, 49, 51
   Mammon: A Satire (P)
                                                     VI, 9
VI, 47
   Meditations (P)
   Kate and I
                (P)
                                                     VI, 50
   The River of Time (P)
D'Orville
                                                     IV, 37
V, 4
V, 8
   To Miss Arabella J. (P)
   A Love Song (P)
   Alone (P)
                                                     v, 18
                (P)
   Bella Dowe
                                                     V, 22
   More Light
                                                     V. 44
   My Soul (P)
   Marysville Correspondence
                                (A)
                                                     I, 16
Dot no. 2
   Nevada Correspondence (A)
                                                     II, 1
```

Rough and Ready Correspondence (A) Interesting Correspondence from Georgetown (A	II, 2 ) II, 5
Doughboy, Caleb Random Shots from an Old Gun (S) Doughty, Mrs. S. P.	VIII, 18
Two Rides with the Doctor (S) Douglas, Charlotte	IV, 13
Lines (P) Douglass, Amandy Minnie	<b>VI</b> , 9
Ben Bold and Sweet Alice (A) Dow, Ada	II, 8
California (P) Dow, Jesse E.	II, 37
The Last Revolutionary (P) Dow, Jrpseudonym, see Paige, E. G.	III, 29
Dowling, C. L. Alone (P)	IV, 15
Downer, Mrs. S. A. A Vision (A)	I, 30
Downey, Joe as Filings (pseudonym for Downey) Reminiscences of San Francisco (A) 11. 15-	I, 4-8, 10, 21, 26-29
The First Steamboat in the Harbor of San Fra	
December	1, 40
Dreamer Chronicles (A)	VI, 32
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A)	-
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A) Drumor, Buck To My Dear (?) Old Uncle (P)	VI, 32 IV, 21 IV, 23
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A) Drumor, Buck To My Dear (?) Old Uncle (P) Dumas Our Old Grandfather (S)	VI, 32 IV, 21 IV, 23 IV, 36
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A) Drumor, Buck To My Dear (?) Old Uncle (P) Dumas Our Old Grandfather (S) Dunior, Jow, Esq. A Short Sermon to Californians (A)	VI, 32  IV, 21  IV, 23  IV, 36  III, 10
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A) Drumor, Buck To My Dear (?) Old Uncle (P) Dumas Our Old Grandfather (S) Dunior, Jow, Esq. A Short Sermon to Californians (A) Dunlap, Col. Uncle Joe in Court (S)	VI, 32  IV, 21  IV, 23  IV, 36  III, 10  IV, 47
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A) Drumor, Buck To My Dear (?) Old Uncle (P) Dumas Our Old Grandfather (S) Dunior, Jow, Esq. A Short Sermon to Californians (A) Dunlap, Col. Uncle Joe in Court (S) Dunne, E. F. Disappointment of Genius (S)	VI, 32  IV, 21  IV, 23  IV, 36  III, 10  IV, 47  III, 18
Chronicles (A) Driver, Quill California as it was, and is to Be (A) The Gambler's Death (S) Sunday in California (A) Drumor, Buck To My Dear (?) Old Uncle (P) Dumas Our Old Grandfather (S) Dunior, Jow, Esq. A Short Sermon to Californians (A) Dunlap, Col. Uncle Joe in Court (S) Dunne, E. F.	VI, 32  IV, 21  IV, 23  IV, 36  III, 10  IV, 47  III, 18  VIII, 7

Dyer, Sidney The Grave of Lilly Dale (P)	III, 33
E, H. W. The California Lion (A) A Vision (S) A Night's Adventure (S) E, L.	IV, 44 V, 10 V, 18
Ascent of Monte Diablo (S)	VII, 12
Eagle, Double Our Philadelphia Correspondence (A)	II, 19, 21 2 <b>3,</b> 26, 28
Eagle, N. J. An Eloquent Rebuke (S)	IV, 13
Earo	1, 1
My Bonnie Highland Home (P) Eaton, W. O.	VII, 31
Mary Stray, the Blind Girl (S)	V, 25
Eddy, J. F. Despondency (P)	v, 48
Edward	·, /
Boyhood Recollection (A)	IV, 24
Edwards, Blair Notes in the South (A)	VIII, 15
Edwards, H. D.	<b>+111</b> , 1)
Life Scenes Aboard a Whaler (S)	VI, 43
Elanor	T11 7
Eternity (P) Elfin, Elfie	IV, 7
Dale Cottage (S)	V, 4
California Literature (A)	V, 23
Song (P)	V, 24
Eileen (P) Autumn Breeze (P)	v, 38 v, 51
A November Lyric (P)	vi, i
Come, Love, I'm Waiting (P)	<b>VI,</b> 8
Stray Leaves from Coolnook: Anseleme (A)	VI, 23
Gossip About Flowers (A)	VI, 35
Little Rose (S) Stray Leaves from Coolnook (A)	VI, 36 VI, 41
The Picture (P)	VII, 10
Stray Leaves from Coolnook (A)	VII, 11, 16
The Lake of Death (P)	VII, 15
The Blossomed Wild (P)	VII, 42
The Blue October Day (P) Think for Yourself (P)	VII, 43 VII, 45
Memento Mori (P)	VIII, 14
Elliott, E.	
The Poet Burns (A)	I, 4
The Death Feast (P)	II, 22

Emile	
Stray Thoughts (P) Emilie	IV, 36
Reminiscences of Childhood (S) Emma	III, 37
A Sketch of Real Life (S) Ephriam, Uncle	II, 52
A Miner's Grave (S) Erinvale	I, 9
The Violet (P) Evening (P) Lines Written by a Laborer on a Spring Morning	IV, 22 IV, 38 (P) V, 13
Escalapius Stealing a Kissand Repentance (P)	III, 36
The Supreme Power (A)	<b>v,</b> 48
Everett, Richard A Scene on the Battle Field; in Incident of the War (S)	e Mexican V, 5
Exile To Miss Arabella J. (P) The Infidel's Prayer (P)	IV, 32 IV, 48
F	
Observations at Amador (A) State FairMarysville (A)	VI, 6 VI, 38
Fader, Annie K. H. The Butterfly (P)	VI, 38
The Blue of the Olden Times (P)	VI, 39
Freedom (P)	VI, 40
Lines Composed in the Dark (P)	VI, 40 VI, 44 VI, 48
Endless Bliss (P)	VI, 48
We Live in Air (P)	VIÍ, 8
When I would Die (P)	VIII, 8
Falt, John The Rising of the Waters (S)	II, 21
Farmer, N. E.	
It Isn't all in Bringing Up (P)	II, 43
Faustin, Edwin	,
New Éra in Literature (A)	V, 16
Ferguson, Charlie	
Lines to <u>Joe</u> on Leaving California (P)	I, 40
Fern, Fanny	<b>-</b> 0
Summer Days (S)	I, 8
Lights and Shadows (S)	I, 9 I, 12
The Model Baby (S) Romance (S)	⊥, ⊥∠ T 13
The Infidel Mother (S)	I, 13 I, 28
Fanny Fern to the French Empress (S)	I, 38
Sing Me a Song (P)	ĬĬ, 3

Filingspseudonym, see Downey, Joe	
Finem, Ad Visiting in the Mountains (A) Fisher, A.	v, 43
Genevra (P) Fitzgerald, Hardress	II, 41
The Foster-Brother's Revenge (S) Fitzgerald, John H.	I, 45
Adventures with Joaquin, the Mountain Bandit	(S) V, 18
Elmira; or the Mason's Daughter (S) Flamingo-pseudonym, see Greeley, R. F.	V, 20
Fluke A Dream (S) Ford	V, 25
Bridal Song (P)	III, 6
The Hunted (S)	<b>V,</b> 2
Forest, Green Life Pictures (A) Mail-day in the Mountains (S)	V, 4
Working Out a Dead Horse (S) Beautiful Allegory (S)	V, 7 V, 10 V, 13
Practical Hints for Miners and Mining (A) Forgotten Claude	v, 21-27, 32
To Annabel R. (P)	IV, 3
Forrester, Fanny Ministering Angels (P)	IV, 18
Forty-niner Placerville Correspondence (A)	II, 3
Foodick, William D.  Home in the West (P)  Foodick William W	II, 25
Fosdick, William W. The Rivulet (P)	V, 23
Foster, Stephen C. Oh! Comrades, Fill no Glass for Me (P)	V, 23
Foxton, E.  Light and Darkness (P)  Francis, H. E.	III, 25
The Key to Greatness (P)	V, 35
Francis, Walter The Shadows of the Past (P) A Question (P) Dead Hopes (P)	VI, 27 VI, 38 VI, 42
Frank Lines, on Receiving my Sister's Daguerreotype	(P) VI, 15
French, C. Virginia Legend of the South (S)	III, 23

Fry, Mrs.	
as Dolly Dashwood (pseudonym for Mrs. Fry) Deborah Grey: A Life Sketch (S) Madeline: The Heartless (S)	V, 41 V, 52; VI, 1-3
Kate Clifton (S)	VI, 18-21
Furioso, Orlando	•
Dissipation (A)	VI, 16
An Apology for Swearing (A) November (P)	VI, 17 VI, 21
The Drooping Vine (P)	VII, 6
The Grandeur and Beauty of Nature (A)	VII, 11
G	
To a Cigar (P)	I, 48
Lines (P) G, Mrs. A. V.	I, 52
Come Home (P)	V, 34
G, E.	
Pauline Arlington (S) G. J. B.	V, 17
To an Absent Brother (P)	III, 27
Gage, Frances D. The Old Door Stone (P)	I, 22
The Last Letter of a Drunkard's Wife (S)	I, 42
A Home Picture (P)	IÍI, 36
Geneo Incidents of a Trip up the Missouri (A)	IV, 26
George	21, 20
Georgetown Correspondence (A)	II, 14
Gerald To Lina of Y (P)	II, 28
Gerry, Mrs. C. F.	
Genefrede; or, the Pine Woods of St. Gautier Giles, Rev. Henry	(S) VIII, 15
The Life of an Actress (A)	IV, 33
Gilmore, P. S. Good News from Home (P)	V, 2
Glycus Christmas (P)	IV, 2
Goethe	14, 2
Haste NotRest Not (P)	III, 52
The Bride of Corinth (P) The Dance of Death (P)	VII, 18 VII, 22
Gold Digger	ے میں اور الحم <del>اد</del>
The Rain Has Come (P)	V, 3
Goma, Grattan Julia Watson, or the Choice of a Husband (S)	VI 27
bulla habbon, of the onotice of a hubband (b)	• 4, 61

```
Goodwin, Edward
   Golden Memories (A)
                                                   VI, 32
  Mountain Correspondence (A)
   Correspondence from Clinton
   Correspondence--No. Mines (A)
Gould, H. F.
               Come Home!
                           (P)
   Come Home!
                                                   IV, 3
Granice, Miss Rowena
  Rosalie Irving; or Life Scenes in the City of New
  Blanch Blakely; or, the Curse of Beauty (S)
  The Two Wives: A Tale of Domestic Life in California
      (S)
                                                   VI, 17,
                                                   VIÍ, i4
  Four Months at Honolulu
  The Painter's Affianced
                                                   VII, 16
Gray, Nelly
                                                   I, 52
  How to Get a Husband (A)
Greeley, Robert F.
                     (S)
                                                   II, 36-40
  Pike County Bill
                                                   II, 41
  Chronicles of the Vigilance Committee
                                           (A)
                                                   II, 42, 44
  Days of the Vigilance Committee (A)
                                                   II, 43
  Doe Hernet (A)
   Incidents of the Trail
                                                   II, 45
  On the Wrong Scent (S)
                                                   II,
                                                       47
  Inesilla: A Tale of the San Jose Valley (S)
                                                   II, 48
  Desert: or Mormon Saints and Yankee Sinners
                                                  (S)
                                                   VI, 20-28
                                                   VI, 31
  The Midnight Revenge (S)
                                                  VI, 33-39
VI, 42-45
VI, 47
  Revelations of Yerba Buena
  The White Wampus (S)
  The Isle of Treasures (S)
                                                  VI, 49
  The Night Escape (S)
  The Gold Ingot (S)
                                                   VI, 50
                                                  VI,
  Light in Dark Places (S)
                                                       51
                                                  VI, 52
  Two Centuries Since (S)
                                                  VII, 4
  A Pilgrimage for Love
                                                  VII, 5
VII, 8
  Nat Morgan's Refuge (S)
  The Lady of the Mission (S)
  California Adventure (S)
                                                   VII, 14
  The Price of a Husband
                                                   VII, 20
                                                   VII, 24
  The Grayback Cottage
                                                   VII, 26
  World Wearied (P)
  The Four Meetings: A Ballad (P)
                                                   VII, 28
  The Rain of the Icara: or the Adventure of Harry Dalvel
                                                   VII, 29
  Standing for Office: A Sketch in Time
                                                   VII, 31
                                                   VII, 36
  The Lady of Cedar Glen (S)
  The Indian Mound (P)
                                                   VII, 38
```

```
Crime and Atonement; or the Last Error of Richard St.
                                                   VII,
           (S)
                                                    (s)
   The Hunted Dell, notes of an Actual Occurrence
                                                         40
                                                   VII,
   Greenmantle: A Romance in Little
                                       (S)
                                                   VII,
                                                         42
                                                   VII,
   A Family Feud
                  (S)
                                                        44
                                                         47
   Castles in the Air
                                                   VII,
   Retrospection (P)
                                                   VII, 49
   Francisco Arroyava
                                                   VII, 51
   The Four Suitors (P)
                                                   VIII, 3
VIII, 3
   Fritz Kloster's Legacy
  Winning and Losing (S)
                                                   VIII, 9
                                                   VIII, 12
   Time's Pilgrimage (P)
                                                   VIII, 13
   Luti-Laputee (A)
   as Flamingo (pseudonym for Greeley)
      A Duel in Fifty-three; a California Reminiscence (S)
                                                   VI, 19
      Oromania (S)
                                                   VI, 20-23
                                                    27, 29, 32
      The New Utopia: or a Wild-Goose Chase to Frazer's
                                                    VI, 27
         River (S)
      The Midnight Revenge: or, Lady of the Attic
                                                   (S)
VI, 31
                                                   VI, 34
      The Day at Oakland (S)
                                                   VI, 34-39, 46
      Dolores Ranch (S)
                                                   VIÍ, 3
VII, 6
      Doing the Collector
                           (S)
      The Vengeance of the Amazons (P)
      Spiritualism at Humbug Flat (S)
                                                   VII, 10
                                                   VII, 12,
                                                             14
      California
                 (A)
      Gazateer
                                                   VII, 16
            (A)
                                                   VII, 17
      Dream
                                                   VII, 32
      A Trick on the Highway (S)
      War of the Loaves and Fishes (P)
                                                   VII, 36
                                                   VII, 51
VIII, 1,
      Legend of Raccoon Straights
                                    (S)
      Vagaries of Flamingo (A)
                                              4, 5, 10, 11, 17
      Startling Discoveries in the Moon
                                          (A)
                                                   VIII, 15
Green, Mary A. E.
   The Swiss Shephardess: A Legend of the Alps
                                                   (S)
                                                   VII, 35
VIII, 12
   Uncle Fred's Story (S)
Greenhan, G. J.
                                                    I, 45
   My Home (P)
Greenhorn
   My Last and Only Bet, Wherein a Mule was a Party (S)
                                                    IV, 52
Greenwood, Grace
                                                   V, 22
   The Household Baby (P)
                                                   V, 44
   Story of Grace Darling (S)
   Discovery of the Pacific (A)
                                                   VI, 35
```

Gregory, Isaac M. Round the Corner (S)	VII, 47
Grenville	•
Little Ella (P)	IV, 23
Griffith, Mrs. Auralia Kate Kinney (S)	IV, 35
Groveland	<b>1</b> , 22
Spring Time (A)	VI, 16
Grullo, Don	<b>TTT</b> 0
Honeymoon Difficulties (P) The Miner's Dream (P)	III, 2 III, 46
Life's Pathway (P)	IV, 10
The Miner's Love (P)	IV, 20
Gun, Pop	
Paper Wads from Pop Gun	III, 13
н, а. к.	
Water Privileges (A)	IV, 11
H, F. G.	
Homesickness (A)	II, 37
H, H. E. The Requiem of Hope (P)	VIII, 7
н, Ј. Ј.	,,
Vain Ambition (P)	VI, 10
Love's ConsolationA Fragment (P)	VI, 15
Analysis of a Day (P)	VI, 16 (P) VI, 19
Lines on Being Presented with a Pen-knife Domestic Happiness, a Pastoral (P)	
mus Darkla of Manage (D)	VI 2n
'I'ne leath of Moses (P)	VI, 26 VI 40
The Death of Moses (P)	VI, 49
OdeTo Spain (P)	VI, 49 VI. 51
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P)	VI, 49 VI. 51
OdeTo Spain (P)	VI, 49 VI. 51
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P)	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P)	VI, 49
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W.	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39 VIII, 9
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P)	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W.	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39 VIII, 9
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VIII, 39 VIII, 9
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A)	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39 VIII, 9
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A) H, R.	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39 VIII, 9 V, 14 II, 31 III, 12
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A) H, R. On the Death of a Miner (P)	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VIII, 39 VIII, 9
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A) H, R. On the Death of a Miner (P) H, T.	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39 VIII, 9 V, 14 II, 31 III, 12
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A) H, R. On the Death of a Miner (P) H, T. To my Brother's Spirit (P) H, T. O. M. O. T.	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VIII, 9 V, 14 II, 31 III, 12 III, 13 VIII, 3
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J. W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A) H, R. On the Death of a Miner (P) H, T. To my Brother's Spirit (P) H, T. O. M. O. T. A Few Facts about Writing (A)	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VII, 39 VIII, 9 V, 14 II, 31 III, 12 III, 13
OdeTo Spain (P) Fragment (P) Love Laughs at Locksmiths (P) Lyric (P) SongPut on a Smile (P) The Lover's Petition (P) H, J, W. Regeneration of Ireland (P) H, L. L. Notes from a Mountain Lassie (A) H, Lem Things in and Around Downieville (A) H, R. On the Death of a Miner (P) H, T. To my Brother's Spirit (P) H, T. O. M. O. T.	VI, 49 VI, 51 VII, 1 VII, 35 VII, 37 VIII, 9 V, 14 II, 31 III, 12 III, 13 VIII, 3

```
Hackett, John J.
   The Philosophy of Absence (P)
                                                    VI, 4
                                                    VI, 7
VI, 8
   Farewell (P)
   The Dying Dolphin (P)
   The Muse-Forsaken Bard (P)
                                                    VI, 9
Hale, Mrs.
   The Light of Home (P)
                                                    III, 23
                            (P)
   Bury Me in the Morning
                                                    VII, 9
Harland, Marion
   The Fountain in the Dell (P)
                                                    III, 50
Harte, Bret
   as Bret
            (pseudonym for Harte)
      The Valentine (P)
                                                    V, 12
                                                    V, 15
      Lines Written in a Prayer Book
                                        (P)
                                                    v, 18
      Love and Physic (P)
                                                    V, 20
      The Fountain of Youth (P)
                                                 (P)
      The Student's Dream--Knowledge is Power
                                                    V, 26
                                                    V, 28
      The Homestead Barn (P)
                                                    V, 29
V, 33
      Trysting (P)
Mad River (P)
                                                    V, 42
      The Fog Bell (P)
                                                    V, 44
      Jessie (P)
                                                    V, 44, 47; VI,5
      A Trip up the Coast (A)
      Pantagonian Lyric (P)
                                                    VI, 46
                                                    VII, 1
      The Bailie O'Perth (P)
Hawthorne, Nathanial
                                                    II, 34
   The Two Widows
Hayden, Anna Keith
                                                    V, 22
                   (P)
   Heart Thoughts
                                                    V, 39
V, 46
   My Faded Wreath (P)
   New England Ladies (P)
                                                    VÍ, 3
   To My Brother Jamie (P)
                                                    vī, 7
vi, 8
   Katie Gage (P)
   Rest (P)
                                                    VI, 12
   Immortality (P)
Hayne, Paul H.
   Ode to Sleep (P)
                                                    III, 37
                                                    V, 16
   The Village Here
                                                    VI, 50
   The Presentiment
Headley, J. T.
   Macdonough's Victory on Lake Champlain (A)
                                                    II, 15
Heath, Hattie
                                                    V, 43
   Morning Visions (P)
Heber, Bishop
                                                    V. 41
   What is Religion (P)
Hedderwick, James
                                                    V, 26
   First Grief (P)
Heine
                                                    V, 23
   Death and the Rider (P)
```

Helmer, C. D.	
A Century (P) Hemans, Mrs.	IV, 21
Light and Shadows (P)	I, 7
Come Home (P)	ĪÍ, ˈδ
Henrie, Jack	TV or
An Incident of a Whaling Cruise (S) Henriquez	IV, 25
A Convict's Vision: A Sketch of Life at the S	tate
Prison (S)	II, 51
Hervey, Thomas K. The Cottage Door (P)	I, 47
Cleopatra Embarking on the Cydnus (P)	III, 32
Higgins, S. G.	<b></b> , /-
The Discovery of the Gold Mines (A)	IV, 8
Hill, Vernon	VT 11
The Prairie Grave (P) Hittell, John S.	VI, 11
The Execution: A Tale of the Peninsular War	(S)
	I, 10
The Story of the Spanish Language (A) Progress of Civilization during the Past and P	I, 13
Quarter of a Century (A)	I, 15
Hoffman, Charles Ferno	<b>-,</b> - <i>)</i>
Monterey (P)	VI, 47
Holmes Album Poets (P)	V 10
Holmes, John K	V, 10
The Fireman's Song (P)	I, 6
Holmes, Oliver Wendell	/2
My Aunt (P)	IV, 38
A Sea Song (P) The Living Temple (P)	VI, 20
The Two Armies (P)	VI, 26 VI, 37
The Crooked Foot-Path (P)	VIÍI, 11
Home (P)	WTTT 12
Know Thyself (P) Hood, Thomas	VIII, 13
Love Land (P)	II, 41
A Funny Duel (P)	II, 48
A Sea Horse is a Sea Horse (P)	IV, 50
Death's Rambles (P) The Dream of Eugene Aram (P)	V, 7 VI, 30
A Sunday Poem (P)	VIII, 13
Hortescue, C.	
Remember Me (P)	I, 46
Hosmer, Mrs. Margaret The Name of Smith: A Few of its Celebrities	(A)
THE HOME OF DMITOH. A FEW OF TOO DETERMITED	VII, 36
To Mrs. A. M. S. (P)	VII, 44



Howand P D	
Howard, E. D. The Drunkard's Home (P)	I, 52
Howard, R. H.	TV 6
Sketch of California Life (S) Howe, Chas. E. B.	IV, 6
The Survivor: A True Sketch (S)	IV, 35
The San Joaquin (S)	TV 30
San Francisco in Early Times: The Assassin (S) The Shoemaker of Long Wharf (S)	IV, 39 IV, 44
The Shoemaker of Long Whari (S)	IV, 45
San Francisco in Early Times: The Tambourine	IV, 47
The Wife Purchase (S)	v, 5
Notes from the Valleys (A)	<b>V, 24,</b> 26
The Miser and His Daughter (S)	<b>VI</b> , 52
The White Rose (S)	VII, 13
The Whittler, a Legend (S) The Little Old Woman in Black (S)	VIII, 7 VIII, 9
San Francisco, A Contrast (S)	VIII, 16
Success (S)	VIII, 17
Howk, Ordell C.	•
Leaves from Pine Forest (A)	VIII, 2, 10
Hubbard, Dr. Lorenzo Travels in Southern Oregon (A)	IV, 9, 14,
Travers in Southern oregon (A)	18, 21
Hubbell, S. DeWitt	_
The Leaves are Sighing (P)	VII, 46
Hugo, Victor	3777 J.J
The Prayer for All (A) Hunt, Leigh	VII, 41
The Treasure Grove (S)	I, 26
Huron	•
Stanzas (P)	v, 45
An Extract (P)	V, 47
The Tempest (P)	V, 52
The Lost at Sea (P) The Plains (P)	VI, 4 VI, 7
Death (P)	VI, 13
The Inspiration (P)	VI, 17
Lethe (P)	VI, 20
A Vision (P)	VI, 32
The Lover's Watch (P)	VI, 39
Shadows (P) The Orphan (P)	VI, 46 VII, 6
The Warning (P)	VII, 12
To the Comet (P)	VII, 15
Epicedium (P)	VII, 20
The Napoleons (P)	VII, 39
Acrostic (P)	VII, 40
Rose (P)	VII, 42
Lines (P) A Dirge (P)	VII, 45 VIII, 6
y prige (1)	∪ وعمد•

Hylton, Theodore What Are Your Thoughts (P) Man's Destiny (P) A Retrospective Thought (P) Farewell to My Baby (P) May Hours (P) A Fragment (P) What Will the Spirit Think? (P) Woman's Smile: a Song (P) This World is Beautiful (P) The Deceived One (P)	VII, 6 VII, 8 VII, 10 VII, 14 VII, 24 VII, 43 VII, 47 VII, 49 VIII, 8
<pre>I, J. T.   Lines to My Harp (P) Ichabod   Sarah (P)   The Last Farewell (P)   The Advance of Winter (P)   As Tolls the Bell (P) Ike   To Miss R***********************************</pre>	IV, 31 V, 27 V, 37 V, 45 V, 47 I, 2
Ingraham, J. H. War (S) Inverask Scottie (P)	VI, 37 VIII, 6
Irving, Helen The Belle; Or Love Under the Rose (S) Irving, Mary A Beautiful Story (S) Irving, Washington A Haunted Ship (S) The Romantic Story of Jane McCrea (S)	VII, 15 III, 5 II, 19 IV, 52
J, F. H. Lines to Mary (P)  J, J. E. My Steed (P)  J, J. K. The Mother's Gift (P)  J, M. Arabella The Way I'd Have Thee Woo (P)	V, 47 IV, 2 IV, 20 IV, 30
What is Love (P)  J, Maria  To William (P)  Jack, Jrpseudonym, see Coleman, J. Sumner, M.D  James, G. P. R.	IV, 33 III, 21
The Pure Spot in the Heart (P) James, L. P. The Old Hearthstone (P)	I, 1 IV, 20

```
Jamie
  Home Memories (P)
                                                  IV, 27
   I've A Sweet Little Cousin (P)
                                                  V, 29
                                                  V, 34
   Going From the Ball (S)
Jockey
                                                  v, 36, 38
   Chinese Camp (A)
   Search for Gold (A)
                                                  V, 39-42
                                                  VÍ, 2
   The Executions at Sonora (A)
                                  (S)
                                                  VI, 14
   An Australian Mining Incident
  Mountain Gossip (A)
                                                  VI, 43
Joe
   Song of the Expressman (P)
                                                  II, 28
John, St.
   Life in a Harem (S)
                                                  I, 14
Johnson
  Marcus Tully Cicero Johnson's Sermons (A)
                                                  III, 27
Johnson, Ben (sic)
   The Grace of Simplicity (P)
                                                  III. 6
Johnson, P. F.
   A Prince Without a Kingdom (S)
                                                  VI, 39
   Love and Religion: An Event in Buenos Ayres
                                                  (S)
                                                  ví, 48
                                                  VII, 3,
   Water-Drops from the Stream of Life (A)
                                                  VII, 5
               (S)
   The Rosebud
   Gleanings from the Past (P)
                                                  VII, 12
                                                  VII, 15
   A Chapter on Tables (A)
   The Expatriated: or Zelema and Gazul
                                          (S)
                                                  VII, 29
Jones, Laura
   A Mountain Pastime (A)
                                                  VIII, 10
Jonsing, Ben
   Description of a Waltz (A)
                                                  II, 34
Josh
  Man of the Mountains and Plains (S)
                                                  IV, 8, 10, 12
Joslyn, S. E.
                                                   IV, 10
   Thou Warble (P)
   Stanzas to M (P)
                                                  IV, 12
   California (P)
                                                  IV, 14
                                                  IV, 17
   To Zatile (P)
  Alice (P)
                                                  IV, 22
                                                  IV, 27
   The Retrospection (P)
                                                  V, 7
         (P)
   Lines
                                                  V, 22
   A Soliloguy (P)
                                                  V, 32
V, 38
   Stanzas (P)
   Lines to Truckee Lake (P)
   Remorse--A Reminiscence (P)
Josselyn, Benj. F.
   as Urbano (pseudonym for Josselyn)
      William Herberton: A California Story (S) VII, 43, 45
```

```
Jostle In
   Incidents of a Stage Ride in California (S)
   The Fatal Campmeeting (A)
Jules
   A Tale of Blood (S)
                                                     III, 9
   An Execution on the Plains (S)
                                                     III, 21
                                                     III, 30
   First and Last Game at Faro
                                                     III, 32
III, 35
   A Coincidence (S)
   Cyril, a Reminiscence (S)
Juvenis
   Reminiscences of the California Stage (S)
                                                     III, 8
K, E. H.
   A Mountain View: Sonora and Vicinity
                                             (A)
                                                     VI, 2
   Promiscuous Rambling (A)
                                                     VI, 7
Kachula
   The Destiny of California (A)
                                                     III, 25
   The Miners of Summer of '50 (A)
The Miners of California (A)
                                                     III, 28
                                                     III, 33
                                                     III, 44
   The Miners of the Winter of '50 (A)
Kaleidoscope
   Kaleidoscopic Views (A)
                                                     IV, 39
   California: Its Past, Present, and Future
                                                  (A)
                                                     III, 28
Kate
                                                     III, 33
III, 35,
   I Am Weary (P)
   The Hidden Shrine (P)
                                                     III, 37
   If I Lose Thee (P)
Keats, John
   Dying Poem (P)
                                                     I, 20
   To Autumn (F)
                                                     VI, 50
Kemble, E. C.
                                                     III, 12
   Sutter's Fort (A)
   Blowing Up the Wind (P)
                                                     III, 12
Kendall, George W.
   Bill Dean, the Texas Ranger (S)
                                                     VII, 20
Kendall, W. A.
   as Comet Quirls (pseudonym for Kendall)
                                                     VII, 45
      Bring Roses and Ruby Wine (P)
                                                     VII, 49
      Our Sages Cry (P)
                                                     VII, 51
VIII, 2
      Give Me a Song (P)
      Hope of My Soul (P)
                                                     VIII, 3
VIII, 4
      US (P)
      As the Shadows (P)
                                                     VIII, 6
      A Planetary Squabble (P)
      Flesh (P)
                                                     VIII, 14
                                                     VIII, 15
VIII, 18
      Free Will
      Eloquence
                  (P)
      A Terrible Extremity (P)
                                                     VIII, 19
```

Keon, Gerald	
The Wedding Ring: a Ghost Story (S)	VII, 43
Kernworth	77 <b>-</b> 7 li
Clouds and Rainbows (A) Home (P)	V, 3, 4
Yo Semite (?)	V, 19
Eureka (P)	V, 30 VI, 1
Romance of the Seasons (P)	VII, 7
Keyte, George Sheridan	VII, (
I'll Tell Thee What I Love (P)	VII, 15
King, Katie	· + + , + ,
The Wind Spirit (P)	IV, 20
My Room (S)	IV, 22
Kingsbury, Miss Lydia A.	,
The Miner's Grave (P)	II, 41
Kinney, Coates	•
Rain on the Roof (P)	IV, 1, 50
Knickerbocker, N. Y.	
A Detective Expert (S)	VII, 29
Knowles, J. Sheridan	
Woman's LoveA Tale Founded on Fact (S)	VI, 44
Korn Kobpseudonym, see Daggett, Rollin M.	
L, A. F.	
The Traveler's Travails, Three Days without Wat	
	III, 41
Laborious	
A Glance at the Old Cabin (S)	VII, 30
Cabin Tribulations (A)	VII, 34
Labree, Lawrence	V 25
Why Doubt (P) The Binst and Last Thenksgiving (S)	V, 25 VII, 8
The First and Last Thanksgiving (S) Laidlaw, A. H.	VII, 0
The Free Press (P)	VIII, 15
Laighton, Albert	VIII, I)
The Missing Ships (P)	VI, 20
Violets (P)	VII, 30
Lake, E. T.	, ) .
Southern Mines (A)	I, 52
Lancaster, John of	•
A Night of Horror on the Amazon (S)	IV, 31
Lariat, Poet	
A Note on the Times (P)	VI, 6
Lawrence, J. E.	
Derivation and Definition of the Names of sever	
Counties of California (A)	I, 3
A Visit to Marysville (A)	II, 51
Lawrie, Mrs. A. L.	т 16
The Dying Girl to her Mother (P)	I, 16

Lea, Lyly	
Return (P)	IV, 47
Thou Art Growing Old, My Mother (P)	V, 13
My Mary (P)	VI, 11
A Story of the Heart (S)	VI, 15
Leaf, Chosen	
About the Wives (A)	VI, 30
Leather-Head	W 00
Cacheville (A)	V, 28
Lee, Arnon	TT 22
To My Sister (P) Lee, Frank	II, 22
A California Widow (S)	II, 19
Lee, Lora	11, 19
To Hinda in her Grave (P)	II, 33
To Hinda: In Memoriam (P)	II, 34
Song of the Sea-Bird (P)	II, 43
Happy New Year (P)	IIÍ, 6
I Wait for Thee (P)	III, 11
Lelia	
Aeolus (A)	III, 4
Lenita	
From Our Mountain Lassie (A)	II, 46
Autumn Reveries (S)	II, 48
A Chapter on Beards (A)	III, 43
Lenaum	17 <b>7</b> 5
Serving on a Grand Jury (S)	v, <i>3</i> 5
Leonore A Death on the Plains (P)	TV 35
The Mountain Avalanche (S)	IV, 35 IV, 39
The Broken Heart (P)	IV, 46
The Trysting Tree (P)	IV, 51
Lines, Inscribed to the Memory of Miss Susan M	
(P)	V, 11
Lesdernier, E. P.	•
Ada's Trial; or, The Actor's Dream (S)	v <b>,</b> 6
Levy, Dan'l	
Paul Leroy (S)	IV, 46
Lewis, Ellen	<b>-</b> 1
Home Again (S)	I, 45
True Content (P)	IV, 33
Lieber, D.  Interesting Letter from (ustralia (A))	T 17
Interesting Letter from Australia (A) Lightheart, Frank	I, 13
The Cabin (S)	II, 35
Linderwood	1.1, JJ
Morning Reflections (P)	III, 42
Linen, James	,
I Feel I'm Growing Ault, Gude Wife (P)	VT OO
	VI, 20
The Mystic Tie (P)	VI, 20 VII, 52

1.
IV, 4
IV, 40
V, 1
III, 16
III, 35
, <i>)</i>
V, 51
, -
Lovers
VIII, 17
_
I, 24
TTT 10
III, 19
st bia
st his V, 3
۷, )
VII, 37
·, ),
VII, <i>3</i> 5
, , ,
IV, 11
IV, 35
VI, 40
VII, 11
VII, 17
TW 10
IV, 10
VII, 42
V = 2 ,
l in
II, 51
VII, 27
II, 10
V, 39
T 77
I, 33
VI, 39
・エ,フラ
II, 14
<b>, _</b> ·
II, 31

```
To Shirley--A Tribute (P)
                                                   II, 38
   To S---- G---- (P)
                                                   II, 40
   Deacon Jones (P)
                                                   II, 43
   Wreathe the Goblet (P)
                                                   II, 51
   Without a Dime (P)
                                                   III, 4
                                                   III, 27
   My Thoughts--To Frances Anne (P)
   To Frances Anne (P)
                                                   III, 50
   Time
        (P)
                                                   IV, 1
   A Scene on the Yuba (P)
                                                   IV, 27
                                                   IV, 30
   A Resurrection of Christ
                            (P)
                                                   IV, 35
IV, 37
   Fanny Lee (P)
   Believe (P)
                                                   IV, 46
   Come Home From O'er the Sea (P)
   The Wife's Remonstrance to her Husband in California
                                                   VI, 9
VI, 10
   Be Patient, Man, the Day will End
                                        (P)
Lyons, James Gilborne
                                                   I, 48
   The Bard O'Conner (P)
Lyra
   The Child-Angel (P)
                                                   VII, 52
Lytton, Sir Edward Bulwer
   The Lawyer who Cost his Client Nothing (S)
                                                   VI, 38
M, E. L.
   From a Lady Correspondent (A)
                                                   VII, 17
M. G. W.
   A Life-Like Picture (A)
                                                   I, 44
   A Trip to Oakland, or Contra Costa (A)
                                                   II, 1
M, H.
   Wooden Minds (A)
                                                   III, 40
M, J.
                                                   II, 19, 38
   Forbestown Correspondence (A)
                                                   VI, 10
   The Canary (P)
                                                   VI, 16
   The Cost of Living (P)
   The Starry Sphere (P)
                                                   VI, 18
   The Lights of Life (P)
                                                   VI, 49
                              (A)
                                                   III, 38
   Letter from Murphy's Camp
M, O. P.
   Mormonism and its Origin (A)
                                                   V. 42-45
   Louisa Simpson, a True Story of Eastern and California
      Life (S)
                                                   III, 49
M, T. B.
   The Grave of my Mother
                           (P)
                                                   IV, 32
                                                   IV, 6
   A Rainy Day (P)
                                                   V, 45
V, 48
   Birthday Recollections
                           (P)
   The Sabbath
               (P)
McCluer, C. E.
                                                   VI, 44
   The Old Printer (P)
```

McCutchen, J. S.	
as Felix Snob (pseudonym for McCutchen)	
On the Legal Profession (P)	II, 21
Felix Snob as a Politician (A)	II, 41
Felix Snob on the Capitol Question (A)	II, 47
Lobby MembersHow they Legislate (A)	III, 16
The Tender PassionHow it Affected Felix S	nob (A)
Pews, Preaching, and Piety (A)	IV, 1 IV, 3 IV, 14 IV, 17 IV, 31 IV, 52
Money: Money: (A)	IV, 14
Scientific Description of the Loafer (A)	IV, 17
Auto-Biography Gone Mad (A)	IV, 31
Excitement and Matrimony (A)	IV, 52
Felix Snob's Legislative Suggestions (A)	V, 5 V, 7
The Snob Gathering (A)	V, 7
Letter (A)	v, 8
The Horrors (A)	V, 14
Following the Ideal (A)	V, 15
All About Heads (A)	v, 18
Fashionable Etiquette (A) Confessions of an Ex-Editor (A)	V, 19 V, 48
McDonald, Mrs. Estelle	v, 40
Passages in the Life of an Actress (S)	VI, 31
MacDuff, Thomas J.	VI, )I
I'm Going Home (A)	II, 7
Ode to the Sacramento (P)	ĪĪ, 8
McGichrist, John	,
The Capture of Constantinople by the Turks (S	)
	IV, 11
Mackay, Chas.	TTT 07
What Might be Done (P)	III, 23 III, 46
Little at First, but Mighty at Last (P)	111, 40
The Builder (P)	IV, 18
A Vision of What Might Be (P) Sceptre, Crown and Throne (P)	V, 12 VI, 5
Maffit, John Newland	VI, 5
The Eloquence of the West (A)	III, 50
Maggie, B. W.	111, JO
The Returned Californian (S)	VIII, 6
The Old Love (P)	VIII, 16
Maginn, William	,
The City of the Demons (S)	I, 27
Mahew, Henry	•
Balloon Traveling (A)	IV, 39
Manhattan, Peter	
Conversational Letter from New York (A)	II, 34
Maria	
California Women (A)	VI, 20
Marsh, Jenny	TT 36
To H on his Departure for California (P)	11, 10

Martial, George Courtship by Letter (S) Massett, Stephen	VIII, 9
Lilly BellA New Ballad (P) as Jeems Pipes of Pipesville (pseudonym for Ma My First Claim (S) Cabin Scenes in '49 (A) Jeems Pipes of Pipesville (A) The Lament of the Irish Gold Hunter (P) Jottings and Things (A)	IV, 23 assett) II, 3 II, 7 II, 26 II, 29 II, 37,
Lines to One Who Can Best Understand Them (	P) III, 43
<pre>Impromptu Lines (P) Letter from Col. Jeems Pipes of Pipesville</pre>	IV, 41 (A) VI, 48, 50
Massey, Gerald	
Lilybell (P) God's World is Worthy Better Men (P)	II, 42 IV, 48
Mattie	•
From a Lady Correspondent (A)	III, 30
Maud The Indian Maid's Revenge, a True Story (S)	VI, 7
May, Clarence	VI, /
Ferdinand De Soto (S)	II, 3
Mc	
Youth's Fairy Scenes are Far Away (P) The Death of Fontanelle (P)	III, 36 III, 48
Meredith, Owen The Chess-Board (P)	VII, 39
Merville	· , //
All About Stocktona Model Letter (A)	II, 21
Metcalf, Mrs. Emma J. B.	
The Cannibal Feast (S)	VIII, 14
Metlar, George W. Northern California (A)	IV, 25
The Miner (A)	IV, 25
Mildred, Julia	, -,
Darleen (P)	VIII, 2
Miles, Edward	TIL LO
Changing Scenes (P) The Evening Hills (P)	IV, 47 V, 40
Sonnet to a Rose (P)	VI, 3
The Sere Lea (P)	VII, 21
Miles, Martha	
The Buried Treasure (S)	VII, 43
Miller, J. C.  A Vision of Youth (P)	т бі
A Vision of Youth (P) Miller, U.	I, 51
To the Stanislaus River (P)	II, 39

```
On The Death of a Son
                                                   II, 42
                        (P)
                                                   III, 1
   The Old Willow Tree
                                                   IV, 12
   A Sylvan Home (P)
   The Child and the Flower
                                                   IV, 21
   The Rain (P)
                                                   IV, 26
   My Lady Waits for Me (P)
                                                   IV, 29
Miner
   Ella Robb (P)
                                                   III, 8
   To Katy (P)
                                                   IV, 38
                                                   IV, 45
   Far Away (P)
                                                   v, 38
   Mooney Flat (A)
Minstrel, Wandering
   A Ballad (P)
                                                   VI, 6
Mitchell, Andrew
                                                   VIII, 15
   A Night on the Ice (S)
Mitchell, Benj. B.
   Little Frock and Shoes (P)
                                                   VII, 14
Modesty
                                                   III, 44
   Love and Law (S)
                                                   III, 45
   Illustrated Advertisements (A)
                                                   III, 47
   An Episode in the Life of Modesty (S)
                                                   III, 49
   Information on Barney O'Finnegin
                                      (S)
                                                   III, 52
   My First Client (S)
   Reminiscences of an Eccentric Character
                                                   IV, 1
   Random Recollections and Candid Confessions of a
                                                   IV, 3
IV, 5
IV, 6, 8, 9
      Would-be Author (A)
   A New Feature in Spiritualism (A)
   Sketches from Cockneydom (A)
   Moments of Inspiration
                                                   IV, 11
                                                   IV, 13
   Strong-Minded Women (A)
                                                   IV, 15
   Odds and Ends
                 ( A )
   Modesty's New Charming Novel (A)
                                                   IV, 17
   Five Minutes Later, or the Loafer Turned out
                                                  (S)
                                                   IV, 19
                                                   IV, 21
   Advertisementiana (A)
   The Fatal Dish, or the Mysteries of the Dining Room
                                                   IV, 24
   Mosquitoes and other Blood Suckers
                                                   IV, 26
   Traveling Experiences (A)
                                                   IV, 28
   Sketches from Cockneydom--Open Air Exhibitions and
                                                   IV, 29
      Amusements
                  (A)
   A Dentistical Novelette (S)
                                                   IV, 32
                                                   IV, 32
   Traveling Experiences
Modows, Maude
   My Mountain Home (P)
                                                   III, lo
Momus
                                                   V, 21, 23, 40
   Letter from Columbia
   Indians and Fashions
                                                   VI, 21
```

```
Mont
   We Did not Part as Lovers Part (P)
                                                   VI, 41
   Love's Fatal Hour (P)
                                                   VI, 42
   The Dreaming Beauty (P)
                                                   VI, 43
   To My Mule (P)
                                                   VI, 44
   Cold Were the Lips the Lover Pressed
                                                   VI, 45
   The Last Farewell (P)
                                                   VII, 2
                                                   VII, 12
   The Light Guitar (P)
   Song of the Suicide (P)
                                                   VII, 13
   Fancy's Fairy Isle (P)
                                                   VII, 19
Montez, Lola
   Life of Lola Montez
                                                   VI. 40
Montgomery, James
   What is Prayer
                                                   II, 20
Montrose, Vara
   Napoleon the Exile (A)
                                                   VI, 49
Moore, George
   My Grandmother and the Sea Monster (S)
                                                   VIII, 9
Moore, Thomas
   Ballad (P)
                                                   IV, 44
Moore, Tom
   The Day Dream (P)
                                                   I, 37
III, 12
   Sweets in Tears (P)
Moose
                                                   III, 21
   The Miner's Farewell (P)
Morford, Henry
                                                   VII, 49
   Thirty-five
               (P)
   Under the Willows
                      (P)
                                                   VIII, 17
Morne
                                                   IV, 36
   She Could not Stay Behind (P)
Morris, George P.
                                                   IV, 9
   A Song for the Season (P)
   My Lady Waits for Me (P)
                                                   IV, 25
                                                   VII, 28
   Come to Me in Cherry Time
                              (P)
M' Quillan, Jas. B.
                                                   IV, 10
   Our Sister's Grave (P)
   Life's Evening (P)
                                                   IV, 11
                                                   IV, 13
   Friends Far Away (P)
                                                   IV, 16
V, 44
   For an Album (P)
   To Ina (P)
                                                   v, 49
   Gently O'er the Breeze Came Floating
                                          (P)
Mulford, Mrs. E. L.
                                                   III, 47
   Edith Linwood or the Avenged (S)
                                                   IV, 4
   The Foundling on the Ocean (S)
   The Sister's Misfortune (S)
                                                   IV, 17
   The Fatal Shot (S)
                                                   IV, 19
   The Unwilling Bride, or the Indian Lover (S)
                                                   IV, 41
                                                   v, 48
   The Loss of Central America (A)
                                                   VI, 29, 30, 51
   The Misfortunes of an Heiress (S)
                                                   VII, 49, 50
   The Lost Daughter (S)
```

Murray, Lieutenant Imorene, the Spanish Peasant Girl (S) The Unknown Guest, or the Spanish Peasant Girl	VII, 9 (S) VII, 34
N, W.	TV 0
Our Separation (P) Nantie	IV, 2
The Spinster's Dream (P) The Old Year (P)	IV, 3 IV, 4
Naphtha The Miners' Meeting (S)	TV 27
Manuscript found in a Deserted Cabin (S) Westward the Star of Empire Takes its Way (A) The Deserted Husband (S)	IV, 27 IV, 30 IV, 31 V, 8
Narod Our Boarding House (A)	V, 51
Neal, Alice B. The First Quarrel (S)	IV, 36
Ned	14, 00
North Branch Correspondence (A)	II, 7
Nedler, Chas. Flower of the Wood (S)	I, 38
Neville, Kate	•
Trials of an Editor (P) Nicholas, Mrs. S.	IV, 37
He Wants a Wife (P)	I, 3
Nimrod A Trip to the Southern Mines (A)	V, 17
Note from Nimrod (A)	V, 20, 22
Nobles, Geo. A., M.D. Poor Lucy, or the Blind Child (S)	II, 1
Nono	11, 1
A Vision (A)	VI, 28
Man and Philosophy (A) Nontbar	VI, 44
Stanzas to Olive Oatman (P)	V, 21
Norab Various Views of Vagabondizing (A)	III, 50
Nordhoof's	•
Hippopotamus Hunting (S) North, Walter Savage	<b>v</b> , 6
The Bell Ringers (P)	VII, 23
Goldalbert, the Harlequin (S)	VIII, 18
Norton, John C., M.D. Spiritual Writing (A)	IV, 20
Notle, Oemor	TTT 15
Rifa de las Animas (S) Now, Henry K.	III, 15
The Battle of Trenton (P)	V, 15

Nyack An Eight-Hour System of Labor Desirable (A) From Nevada (A)	V, 5, 10, 1 <sup>1</sup> V, 6
O, J. Wing Local SketchA Fragment from a Ramble (S) O'Brien, Fitz James The Diamond Lens (S) Observer Chinese Females (A) O'Laugherty Letter from O'Laugherty (A) Old Blockpseudonym, see Delano, A.	I, 19 VII, 40 V, 25 VIII, 8
Optic, Oliver A Run of Luck (S) Orion Lines to (P)	VIII, 4 IV, o
O'Ripperous, M.D. The Bar of Soap (S) Orne, Caroline Imogen Musgrave: A Tale of the Old Dominion	VIII, 15 (S) VIII, 10
Orr, Orion Blue Eyes (P) Faith, Hope, Energy (P) Oscar	VII, 31 VII, 32
Alabama Bill; A Gambler's Fate (S) Osceola Nevada Correspondence (A) Owens, R. D. The Rescue (S)	III, <i>3</i> 6 II, <i>3</i> 9 VIII, 15
Oyer An Unpatented Sermon (A)	VIII, 10
P Rum, an Incident (S) P, C. E. Commodore Mervine and His Card (A)	II, 9 III, 49
P, D. W. C. The Indian (P) P, F. A. First Adventure with a "Grizzly" (S)	I, 26 III, 24
P, F. W. Passo Del Norte, A Reminiscence (S) P, G A. Caught in his Own Trap (S)	III, 37
The Yankee's Fog Horn (S)  P, H. J.  Love's Trials, Incidents from Real Life (S)	III, 21

```
P, H. N.
    Fiddletown Correspondence
                                                                 II, 39
    A Miner's Thoughts (A)
                                                                 VI, 23
                                                                 VI, 35
    A Dream in Oberon's Court
P, J., of P.
    Stanzas to Heloise (P)
                                                                 III, 29
P, S. C.
    Earth No Dream More Bright Than This (P)
                                                                 I, 51
Pacific
    San Francisco (A)
                                                                 II, 9, 12
Paddy
    A Voice from British Columbia (A)
                                                                 VII, 5
    as Bubbles (pseudonym for Paige)
                                                                 VI, 9, 10,
       Notes and Cogitations (A)
       20, 26, 29, 31, 36, 38, 40, 42, 46, 48, 50, 52; VII, 2, 10 12, 14, 16, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45,
        47, 49
    as Dow, Jr. (pseudonym for Paige)
        A Short Patent Sermon (A)
   III, 21, 23, 25, 27, 32, 33, 35, 36, 39-IV, 2, 5-17, 19-28, 31-34, 36-41, 43-V, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 37; VI, 7, 11, 15, 17-19, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 39, 41, 47, 49, 51; VII, 3, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 51-VIII, 1 as Soaker, Sol (pseudonym for Paige)
                                                                 III, 20
III, 48
       Getting Over a Spree (A)
       Notes-Unendorsed (A)
       Observations and Cogitations (A)
                                                                 V, 18, 20,
        22, 24, 26,
       Notes and Cogitations (A)
                                                                 V, 28, 30,
36, 39, 47, 48 Palmer, E. P.
   Little Jim (P)
                                                                 IV, 52
Palmer, William Pitt
   Light (P)
                                                                 VII, 22
Pamphill, Capt.
   Lower California (A)
                                                                 I, 10
Parburt, George R.
                                                                 VI, 44
   The Wine Cup (P)
    It is not all of Life to Live (P)
                                                                 VII, 2
Parker, David
   Only She and I (P)
                                                                 VII, 40
Parker, Jenny Marsh
   When My Ship Comes Home from Sea (P)
                                                                 VI, 20
Patton, Major G. W.
   The Maniac's Vision (P)
                                                                 I, 15
                                                                 I, 20
    California Stanzas (P)
                                                                 I. 34
   The Past (P)
```

Paul, Almarin B. Legends of the Pioneers (A)	<b>VI</b> 2 0 10
Paul, Kesketh	<b>VI,</b> 2, 9, 10
Legend of Stayne Castle (S)	VIII, 13
Pay-Dirt	, - <i>-</i>
A Word from "Pay-Dirt" (A)	II, 43
Pearson, S. O.	
Evening (P)	I, 5 I, 7
Thou Art Not Here (P)	1, /
From Sacramento (A) To the Sacramento (P)	I, 9-11
Persevere (P)	I, 10 I, 19
Percival	<b>-, -</b> <i>j</i>
A Trip to Oregon (S)	VI, 38
First Appearance in Public (A)	VI, 42
Recollections of 1855 (A)	VI, 44
In Love with a Widow (S)	VI, 47
A Battle on the Ditch (S)	VII, 1
A Lesson in Horse Racing (S)	VII, 8
Killing the American Eagle (S)	VII, 21
Peleg Southern California (A)	II, 38
Penn, Billy	11, 00
The Gold Dollar (P)	V, 46
Penrose, Golding	.,
A Bridegroom's Vision (P)	I, 42
Perrin, M. F.	•
Tom MacDonough, the Press Gang's Victim (S)	VIII, 1
Perry, Nora	
The Love Knot (P)	VI, 11
Peterson, Charles J.	VII C
Vengeance is Mine (S) Peverelly, Charles A.	VII, 5
Robert Emmet, the Irish Patriot (S)	VI, 31
Philo	· 1, /1
A DreamTo "Lue" (P)	II, 6
Pike	•
The Miner (P)	V, 4
Pipes, Jeemspseudonym, see Massett, Stephen	
Pleiades	77 10
For '54 (P)	II, 10
To LizzieOn Her Marriage (P) American River Correspondence (A)	II, 13 II, 16, 22
To the Lady Who Disliked "Low Miners" (P)	II, 10, 22
Plumas	<b>11,</b> 19
Stray Leaves in the Life of an Old Pioneer (S	)
	´II, 36
A Miner's Life (P)	II, 37
My First Fandango, a Reminiscence (A)	VI, 29

Podgers Podgers' Journeyings (A)	TTT ha bh
	III, 43, 44 51; IV, 1, 3
Podgers on a Journey (A)	VI, 33, 35
Podhammer, P. Joining the Mormons (A)	<b>VI</b> , 10
Poe, Edgar Allan	<b>V1,</b> 10
The Raven (P)	IV, 20
The Tell-Tale Heart (S) The Conqueror Worm (P)	IV, 37 V, 44
The Masque of the Red Death (S)	vi, 29
Poetaster	
I've Come to This Conclusion (P) A Night in California (P)	II, 11 II, 15
A Song (P)	II, 17
Written in Sickness (P)	II, 22
Address to the Pipe (P) Sympathy (P)	II, 27 II, 30
El Rio de Los Plumas (P)	II, 32
Pollock, Edward	
Poem (P) To Inez (P)	IV, 40
Logan Forney: A Tale of the Mountains (S)	V, 24 VI, 4-7
Orea: A California Dream (S)	VI, 12, 13
Pop Toot Model Type (P)	מד וב
The Last Model Jury (P) Potosi	VI, 15
Oregon Hill, Yura County (A)	v, 36
Prentice, Caroline	TTT 11
Our Childhood (P) Hazel Dell (S)	III, 11 VIII, 12
Prentice, George D.	<b>1111</b> , 11
To an Absent Wife (P)	I, 21
Written at my Mother's Grave (P) The Closing Year (P)	III, 43 VII, 3
Proctor	<b>VII</b> , /
To an old Playmate (P)	<b>V</b> , 20
Proctor, Adelaide Anne Because (P)	VII, 2
Proctor, Joseph	<b>VII</b> , 2
The Father's Curse: An Old Man's Story (S)	VIII, 11
Proteus, Jr.	V 15
Letter Writing (A) Peube	V, 15
The Miner's Midnight (P)	I, 51
Punch  The Create Me Down (P)	TT ho
The Czar's Te Deum (P)	II, 40

Q, O. P.	
Oh: Weep Not (P)	II, 42
Quaint, Timothy	
A Trip to California (S)	II, 50
Cuil, Jon	VT 30
My Ranch, My Reader, and I (A) Quimby, ରୁ.	VI, 32
The Two Visits (S)	IV, 9
Spiritual Rappings (A)	IV, 12
A Half Day in Church (A)	IV, 15
Jeremiah Zapaiero, a Picture (A)	IV, 17
Quinton, Milespseudonym, see Daggett, Rollin M.	
D.	
R To Ike (P)	I, 4
R, A.	<b>1</b> , 7
A Mother's Love (S)	I, 31
R, C. L.	-, /-
Wee Bessie (P)	III, 26
R, Clara	
Lines (P)	I, 1
R, G. Harry	<b>TT</b> 10
'Twas There (P)	II, 10 IV, 34
California Characters (A) A Character (A)	IV, 35
Modern Metrical Love: A Duet (P)	IV, 43
The World May Wag (P)	IV, 47
Wandering in the Dell (P)	IV, 48
Rambler	-
Town Jottings: A Week in a Fashionable Boardi	ng-house
(A)	IV, 14
Randall, Henry S.	TT '71
Extracts from the Life of Jefferson (A)	II, 31
Randall, Dr. John W. The Retrospect (P)	V, 11
Randall, Lucy A.	V, 11
Translation of the Patriarch (P)	VII, 51
Randolph, A. D. P.	,
Rich, though Poor (P)	VII, 26
Rankin, Rev. J. E.	_
My Sick Wife (P)	VI, 10
Rawlins, John F.	w oh
A Foundling (S) Reach, Angus B.	V, 24
The Thirteenth Chime: A Legend of Old London	(s)
The little desired of the Bollaton	VIÍ, 21
Read, T. Buchanan	, <b></b>
The Closing Scene (P)	VI, 19
Passing the Icebergs (P)	VI, 20
Poetic Wildflowers (P)	VI, 36

Reader, A.	V 00
California Literature (A) Redrow, John R.	V, 22
Don Pedro's Bar (A)	<b>V,</b> 32
Reed, Miron Genevra (P)	VIII, 11
Regan, Miss Margaret A.	
I Would Not Wish (P) Regan, Maria R.	1V, 27
My Last Request (P)	IV, 16
Reid, Captain Mayne	יי דער
Old Ike's Adventure (S) A Wild Adventure (S)	VI, 11 VI, 25
Adventure with a Buffalo (S)	VI, 27
Requier, A. J.	
Ode to Shakespeare (P) ReTort	VII, 36
Weatherford's Lament (P)	III, 32
An Adventure in the Mountains (S)	III, 33
The Trinity Mountains (A)	III, 37
The Lonely Grave in the Alleghanies (S) Death Scenes on the Isthmus (S)	III, 41 VII, 28
Reverer	<b>VII</b> , 20
The Gambling House (P)	II, <b>3</b> 8
Rhodes, William H.	
as Caxton (pseudonym for Rhodes) Witherward (S)	TTT 23
The Deserted School House (S)	III, 23 III, 46
Spiritism (A)	III, 43
Rhymster, Roaring	
Charming Carrie, A Song (P)	VII, 34
The Withered Rose-Bud (P) Ridge, John Rollin	VIII, d
as Yellow Bird (pseudonym for Ridge)	
The Indians of California (A)	II, 3
Digger Indians of California (A)	II, 6
Digger Indians (A) To L, on Receiving Her Portrait (P)	II, 9
To L, on Receiving Her Portrait (P) Of Her I Love (P)	II, 12 II, 15
A Night Scene (P)	II, 24
To a Star Seen at Twilight (P)	II, 27
The Sabbath Bells (P)	II, 35
A Song (P) The Harp of Broken Strings (P)	II, 45 V, 4d
Rigg, P.	<b>,</b>
Extracts from my Journal - 49 (A)	IV, 10
Ringgold, R. H.	VTT 20
For All But Me (P) Robberts, Mrs. Valentine	VII, 30
The Old, Old Story (P)	V, 40
• • • •	-

Roberts, E. F.	
Stories of the Peasantry (S)	VIII, 3
How I Told My Love (S)	VIII, 19
Robinson, Dr. J. H.	<b>.</b>
The Tory Visit (S)	I, 1
Rock, Red	TT 7/1
Our Mountain Towns (A)	II, 34
Rogers, P. A.	VII 07
Rain Drops (P)	VII, 27
Rogers, Mrs. P. A. To Annie (P)	VTT 30
A Thought at Eve (P)	VII, 30 VII, 34
Rogers, P. H.	VII, 24
To My Sister Augusta (P)	VIII, 17
Rolyn, C. A.	<b>VIII</b> , I/
Treasures (P)	<b>V,</b> 10
Romer, Mrs.	,, 10
A Romance of Ronda (S)	VI, <i>3</i> 5
Rose	·-, //
A Sister's Request (P)	IV, 41
Rusticus	_ , ,
A Jaunt to the Valley of San Jose (A)	I, 22
Ryan, R. F.	•
The Pioneer (P)	I, 4
The Golden Erà (P)	I, ö
Events in the History of California (A)	<b>IÍ,</b> 10
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan)	,
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cr	
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan)	iminals; I, 26-50;
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cr	iminals;
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)	iminals; I, 26-50;
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A) S	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, <i>3</i> 7 VII, 8
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, <i>3</i> 7 VII, 8
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A)  S, E. Early Recollections (P)  S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A)  S, G. The Orphan (P)  S, G. S. Lines (P)  S, J.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Crior Shadows of the Past (A)  S The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cre or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cre or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P) S, J. T.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10 IV, 4
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P) S, J. T. The Valley and City of Salt Lake (A)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 5 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10 IV, 4 II, 9
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P) S, J. T. The Valley and City of Salt Lake (A) Notes from the Interior (A)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10 IV, 4
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P) S, J. T. The Valley and City of Salt Lake (A) Notes from the Interior (A) S, J. W.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 3 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10 IV, 4 II, 9 II, 23
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A)  S, E. Early Recollections (P)  S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A)  S, G. The Orphan (P)  S, G. S. Lines (P)  S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P)  S, J. T. The Valley and City of Salt Lake (A) Notes from the Interior (A)  S, J. W. For My Sister's Album (P)	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 5 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10 IV, 4 II, 9
as Juris Consult (pseudonym for Ryan) CaliforniaPast and Present; Judges and Cri or Shadows of the Past (A)  S  The Romance and the Past of Sacramento (A) S, E. Early Recollections (P) S, F. T. The Times We Live In (A) S, G. The Orphan (P) S, G. S. Lines (P) S, J. Alfiara, an Allegory (S) A New Year's Wish to Anna (P) S, J. T. The Valley and City of Salt Lake (A) Notes from the Interior (A) S, J. W.	iminals; I, 26-50; II, 1-12 I, 37 VII, 8 III, 11 VI, 1 VII, 10 I, 10 IV, 4 II, 9 II, 23 IV, 32



C M T	
S, M. J. The Closing Year (P)	IV, 3
St. Clair, Eugene	
A Dream of Heaven (P)	II, 44
St. John, Oak	11 <b>11</b> 202
My Cousin Bell (S) Salinas	VII, 17
Salinas Valley (A)	VI, 23
Salrech-eb-weho, Prof., A.M., D.D., L.L.D., etc.	V±, 2)
The Digger Indians of California (A)	IV, 24
Salt, Old	
Description of the Chincha Islands (S)	III, 7
The Anglo-Peruvian Slave Trade (A)	III, d
A Floating Wreck (A) The Money Diggers of Peru (S)	III, 10 III, 12
Sarah	111, 12
The California Mountaineer (P)	IV, 40
Sassacuss	,
The Duel: A Heroic (P)	VII, 44
Saunders, Prof. J. Milton	<b>T17</b>
500 Years Hence (A)	IV, 33
Saxe, John G. Wishing (P)	TT 7
I'm Growing Old (P)	II, 7 IV, 3
The Money King (P)	IV, 17
The Old Church Bell (P)	IV, 26
Pride (P)	V, 7
Signification of the Noses (P)	V, <i>3</i> 7
A Jolly Mariner, a Ballad (P)	VII, 5
Scalp, A. C.	37 30
Trying to Make the Hair Grow (A)	V, 18
Schottel The Seasons (P)	V, 11
Scott	·,
The Soldier's Rest (P)	III, 32
Scott, Walter	, )-
Song (P)	IV, 33
Scripsi	<b>1</b> 1 6
Literature in California (A) California Literature (A)	V, 6
Scripsi's Last (More on California) (A)	V, 7 V, 11
Scroggins, Reuben	<b>v</b> , 11
An Indignant Correspondence (A)	VI, 49
Letter (A)	VIÍ, 9
Sears, Rev. E. W.	
Little Willie Taken Up (P)	VII, 51
Selim The Crissly Change (S)	11 7h
The Grizzly Chase (S) The Suicide (S)	V, 34 V, 38
California: Its Past, Present, Future (A)	V, 50 VI, 45
our round and rubby recomb, rubble (h)	+ <b>-</b> , ¬J

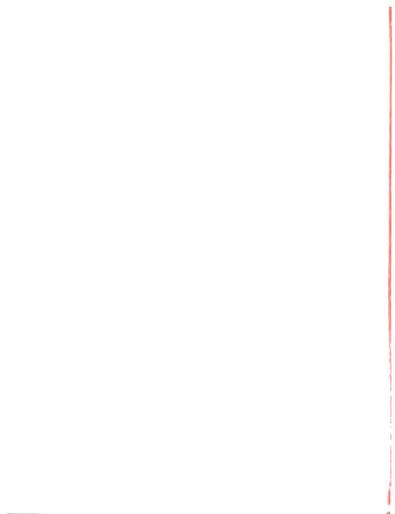
Seth	TYT 14 10
Lif'e Scenes in San Francisco (S) Settler, Canadian	III, 14-17
Hugged by a Serpent (S)	V, 33
Shadows	•, 22
Going Home (P)	III, 49
Spring (P)	IV, 8
Homeward Bound (P)	IV, 51
Olden Days (P)	V, 1, 2
Shakespeare	TT 10
Cleopatra (P)	II, 12
Shelley Amonica from Povolt of Islam (P)	TTT JUL
America, from Revolt of Islam (P) Sheridan	III, 44
Love for Love (P)	III, 6
Shiller	<b>111</b> , 0
The Worth of Woman (P)	IV, 2
Shirley, Mrs.	,
Cousin Frank's Grave (P)	III, 17
The Child's Requiem (P)	III, 23
Shirley, Mrs. F. P.	
The Midnight Visitor (P)	III, 2
The Digger's Vigil (P)	III, 6
Cradle Song (P)	III, 9
Sunset Vision (P) Shirley, Mrs. T. P.	III, 41
The Last Days of Winter (P)	III, 13
Clara Herrick (P)	III, 20
The Miner, the Spring, and the Brook (P)	IV, 2
The Mountain Hunter (P)	IV, 19
America's Triumph (P)	IV, 21
The Concave Mirror (P)	IV, 42
Shirt, Red	
Miner's Vision of Home (S)	IV, 25
Shore, Lee	11 ho
By the Sea (S)	v, 49
Shortfellow Whiskeyana: Anecdotes of the Camp (S)	VI, 38
Sierra	<b>V1</b> , 00
When We Were Friends Together (P)	IV, 15
Evening Music (P)	IV, 22
Storm in the Sierra Nevadas (P)	IV, 24
A Miner's Sigh (P)	IV, 31
Thoughts on the Times (P)	IV, 34
Saratoga (P)	IV, 41
Night Meditations (P)	IV, 47
The Rainbow (P)	V, 7
Sunset (P) Childhood (P)	V, 9
Childhood (P) To Nelly (P)	V, 23 V, 25
TO METTA (I)	ر ، د ا

Song (P) Dawn (P) Yo Semite (P) California Mountain Scenery (P)	V, 29 V, 31 V, 40 V, 42, 45; VI, 2
Pleasures of the Imagination (P) Spring (P)	V, 50 VI, 25
Sigourney, Mrs. L. H. Talk with the Departed (P) The Happy Farmer (P) The Church Bell (P)	IV, 12 IV, 25 VI, 26
Simmonds, James The Pen and the Sword (P) Yes and No (P) Look on the Bright Side of Life (P) The Last Appeal (P) Light and Shade, a Lyric (P)	II, 46 II, 47 II, 49 II, 50 II, 51
If my Time could come over Again (P) Contentment, a Ballad (P) Think 'Ere You Speak (P) The Spirit of Mercy (P) Let Us Speak of a man as We Find Him (P)	II, 52 III, 1 III, 2 III, 3 III, 5
Simms, W. Gilmore A Terrible Sketch (S)	V, 50
Sinclair, Harry Literary Nuggets (A)	I, 19, 21-23
Sinclair, Oliver The Torn Newspaper (S)	VIII, 4
Slingsby, Maurice The Murderer's Vigil (S) Sluice-Fork	VII, 11
Slingsby, Maurice The Murderer's Vigil (S) Sluice-Fork Prospecting (A) The Times (A) My Lady Waits (P) Columbia as it Is (P) Letter from Sluice-Fork (A) Notes from Sluice-Fork, Columbia (A) Letter from Sluice-Fork, Columbia (A)	VII, 11  IV, 26  IV, 31  IV, 37  IV, 38  V, 2 V, 5 V, 7 V, 8
Slingsby, Maurice The Murderer's Vigil (S) Sluice-Fork Prospecting (A) The Times (A) My Lady Waits (P) Columbia as it Is (P) Letter from Sluice-Fork (A) Notes from Sluice-Fork, Columbia (A)	VII, 11  IV, 26  IV, 31  IV, 37  IV, 38  V, 2  V, 5  V, 7  V, 8  V, 9  V, 10  V, 11  V, 13-16, 18, 20, 22
Slingsby, Maurice The Murderer's Vigil (S) Sluice-Fork Prospecting (A) The Times (A) My Lady Waits (P) Columbia as it Is (P) Letter from Sluice-Fork (A) Notes from Sluice-Fork, Columbia (A) Letter from Sluice-Fork, Columbia (A) Sluice-Fork and the Wine Bottle (A) Literature in California (A) Self-Cultivation (A) Observance of the Sabbath (A)	VII, 11  IV, 26  IV, 31  IV, 37  IV, 38  V, 2  V, 5  V, 7  V, 8  V, 9  V, 10 V, 11

```
V, 39
VI, 1
   The Burning of Columbia
   Taxing Mining Claims (A)
                                                   VI, 3, 4, 7, 8, 17
   Notes from Sluice-Fork, Angels' Camp (A)
                                                   VI, 21, 23
   Sluiceforkiana
                                                   VI, 22
   The Sunday Law
Sluice, George
   A Glance at John Bull and Brother Jonathan
                                                (A)
                                                   III, 17
Slung Shot
   Chinese Camp (A)
                                                   V, 19, 22, 26,
                                                   29, 31, 34
Small, Leviathan, Esq.
   The Merchant's Dog (S)
                                                   VII, 47
Smith, E. K.
                                                   I, 10
   Such Things Were (P)
Smith, Elizabeth Oakes
   Hokomok--a Legend of Maine (S)
                                                   III, 51
Smucker, Samuel
   Splendors of the Court of Napoleon I (A)
                                                   VII, 1
Snickleford
                                                   V. 40
   Chinese Camp (A)
Sniktaw--pseudonym, see Watkins, Jos. S.
Snob, Felix--pseudonym, see McCutchen, J. L.
Snoggles
   California Schools (A)
                                                   IV, 22
                                                   IV, 24
   Woman's Rights (A)
   Declaration of Independence (A)
                                                   IV, 26
   Snoggles on the Stump (A)
                                                   IV, 46
Snooks, Jr.
   Gaily Down Life's Silver Stream
                                     (P)
                                                   v, 8
Snooks, Q. Fitzgerald
   The Digger Nymph of Mount Diablo (S)
                                                   III, 48
Soaker, Sol--pseudonym, see Paige, E. G.
Solitare
   Shadows
   Evening
Solo
   Cabin Reveries (A)
                                                   V, 25
Somers
                                                   V, 3
   Letter (A)
   A Day Among the Whales in the Sea of Japan
                                                   V, 12
                                                   V, 21
   Visit to the Islands Roratonge (A)
   Fourth of July on the Coast of Chinese Tartary
                                                    (A)
                                                   V, 31
   Whaling in Seghalien Sea
   A Peep into the Forecastle (A)
Somerville
   San Juan Del Sud Correspondence
                                                   II, 41
                                                   II, 43
   From Abroad (A)
```

		;
		;

Sophocles A Short Course of Lectures: The First and Las	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Sophy, Phil O. Night Thoughts (P)	IV, 28
Southey, Robert The Uses of Adversity (P) Southwell, Robert	III, 22
Times Go by Turns (P) Spencer, Edward	VIII, 11
Ham Murdock's Confessions (S) Spencer, Ellen	VI, 37
Why She Came to California (S) Spikins, Peleg P.	VII, 25
Iowa Hill (A) Spray, Sylvia	V, 40
He Comes not Yet (P) Springer, J. T.	VI, 8
The Young Miner's Grave (A) Squilgee Tom Cottle and the Spectre (P)	II, 6
How to Get a Job (A) A Duel that Didn't Come Off (S)	II, 37 II, 38 II, 46
Stager, An Old The Mysterious Gambler (S) Stanhope, Frederick	VII, 14
Fremont, or the Ride of the One Hundred (S) A Winter in the Sierra Nevadas (S) Stanley, W. B.	III, 30 III, 41
Lights and Shadows of Life (S) Advertising for a Wife (S) The Strange Woman, an Adventure in the Mountain	VII, 2 VII, 9 ns (S)
Staples, R. G.	VII, i9
The Confession a Leaf from the Journal of a More Practitioner (S)	edical I, 30
Stephens, Mrs. Ann S. The Old Bridge (S) The Violated Vow (S)	VI, 39 VII, 51
Sterling, P. Columbia (A) Stiles, H. R.	V, 28, 31
as Cadez-Orion (pseudonym for Stiles) A Voice from the Mountain (A) Mountain Correspondence from Red Bluff (A) Mountain Correspondence from Colusi (A) Nevada Correspondence (A)	I, 33 I, 43 I, 44 I, 52; II, 16,
Sonnet (P) The Miners' Lamentations (A)	20, <i>3</i> 5 II, 3 II, 18



Rough and ReadyMarysville (A) Canvassing Reminiscences (A) Stabbing Papalone	II, 41 IV, 18
Stobbins, Penelope The Mugsbys, or California Aristocracy (S)	II, 48
Stoddard, R. H.  Recall for the Dead (P)	v, 27
Stone, J. N. The Drunkard (P)	VI, 49
Strudwick, Sarah Brook A California Grief (S)	11, 26
Strychnine Sacramento Suburbs (A)	VII, 23
Stuart, C. D.  Hymn to the People (P)	VII, 16
Summerfield, Charles	
The Gold Hunters, a Scene in California (S) The Duellist: A Thrilling Southwestern Sketch	IV, 46 (S)
The Gambler's Rescue (S) Scenes at the Southern Bar (S) Sumner, Charles, M.D.	V, 13 VI, 49 VIII, 13
Extraordinary Case of Needle Mania (A)	V, 18
Sunderland, Harry Kate's Valentine (S)	v, 48
Swain, Charles The Old Cottage Clock (P)	II, 47
What is Noble (P)	IV, 16
Imaginary Evils (P) Song for Thinkers (P)	IV, 17 V, 25
The First Couple (P)	v, 28
Swedenborg A Marriage of Angels (A)	IV, 15
Sweeny To Mary (P)	IV, 28
Sweet, J.	-
Today (P) The Wild Flower of California (P)	I, 52 II, 1
Song of the Miner (P)	II, 33
Sweezle, Jno	III, 50
The Misfortunes of a Candidate (A) Swift, Mrs. E.	II, 40
My Baby (P)	I, 17
Swivel, Sol The Mustache (P)	V, 15
T	
Home (P)	VII, 13
T, B. C. To O (P)	III, 52

Tantalus	
Pursuit of Pleasure Under Difficulties (A)	IV, 43
Tantalus Goes Prospecting (A)	V, 20
Tantalus in Clover (A)	v. 24
Tantalus' Journeyings Napa Valley (A)	V, 24 V, 30
Napa City (A)	v, 31
Tattler, T.	., /-
An Adventure on the Plains (S)	IV, 18
The Trails of Genius (A)	IV, 24
Melissa Montrove; or Love on the Plains (S)	IV, 49
Death on the Plains (S)	IV, 52
The Drunkard Guard (S)	v, 3
Taylor, Bayard	1, 2
The Groans of Etna (A)	I, 5
Ethiopia (A)	I, ŏ
Jerusalem, the City of Christ (S)	I, 12
Extract from Letters from India (A)	I, 38
A True Story (P)	<b>VIII</b> , 12
Taylor, Mrs. Jane	<b>*111</b> , 12
Contented John (P)	VI, 29
Taylor, Mart	<b>11</b> , 29
A Tale of a Tailor (P)	IV, 31
The Convention of Fishes (P)	IV, 32
The Vegetable Girl (P)	IV, 33
White Smith, Esq. (P)	V 42
The Country Editor (P)	V, 42 V, 44
The Village Bookkeeper (P)	v, 46
Matrimonial Joys (P)	V, 40
Lines to the Ladies (P)	V, 47 V, 48
Tennyson, Alfred	<b>v</b> , 40
	TT 30
Human Experience (P)	II, 30
Go Not, Happy Day (P)	III, 41
My Wife and I (P)	V, 22
Trodden Flowers (P)	V, 34
Song (P) The Wise Man and the Hamlet (P)	VII, 30
The Wise Man and the Harlot (P)	VII, 41
Tithonus (P)	VIII, 19
Thackeray (P)	TIT III
A Tragic Story (P)	VII, 45
Thomas, Wm. H.	T17 1
A Prospecting Tour (S)	IV, 1
Thomas, Wm. R.	10co (a)
The Gambler's Wife, a Sketch of California in	
Mh am an d	II, 46
Thomond (A)	7.7° 7 3 67
A Brief Paper on Nonsense (A)	VII, 17
Thompson, E., M.D.	3277 US
Chemistry for Girls (A)	VII, 41
Thorne, Myra	Tir ho
The Passing Away of the Gentle and Pure (P)	IV, 40

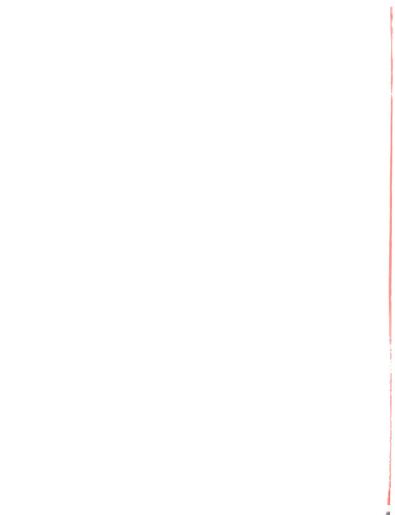
Thropp, Mary E.	11 767
Widow Leedom's Last Loaf (S) Thunder, W. G. E.	V, 37
A Mariposa Bear Story (S) Time	III, 2
Pencilings from Oregon (A)	II, 48, 49
Tingley, Mary Viola My New Bonnet (S) The Miner's Bride (S)	III, 46 VII, 17
Tom, Long Trailings from a Long Tom (A)	IV, 29, 33, 39, 44; V, 2
Tomes, Dr. Robert Ladies DepartmentWhom Shall We Marry (A) Towsley, B.	III, 1
The Breeze of Spring (P) Track	I, 23
Local Sketch: The Two Brothers (S) Trask, Dr. J. B.	VI, 22
Earthquakes in California from 1812-1855 (A) Earthquakes in California During the Year 1856	IV, 6 (A) V, 6
Traveler A Terrible Adventure (A)	VII, 14
Triangle The Monarch of the Woods (P)	I, 43
Trismegist The Miner's Dream (P)	II, 23
Tucker, Mary F. T. Maiden Resolutions (P)	V, 5
Tyler, Mary Frances Cometh a Blessing Down (P)	IV, 5
Tyro Spirit Rappings and the Burning Force (S) Spiritual Manifestations (A)	III, 51 IV, 7
Uhland Tell's Death (P)	v, 8
Un, the Old	
Friends and Fortune (S) Urbanopseudonym, see Josselyn, Benj. F.	III, 36
Vail, John Cooper The Last Note of Malibran (S) The Small Check (S) The Queen's Vengeance (S)	V, 45 V, 51 VI, 2
Vallecito, C. D. The Walla's Dance (P)	IV, 28
VanNess, Edward The Death-bed in the Wilderness (S)	VI, 48

Vau	ighan, Henry Sundays (P)	II, 47
Ver	ene, Margaret	11, 4/
	Abbie (S)	V, 23
Ver	The Warnell House (S)	VIII, 14
	The Miner's Story (S)	IV, 44
Vic	la	
Vi d	Reminiscences of the Illegitimate Drama (S)	I, 11
VIC	li, Veni Don Pedro's Bar (A)	V, 29
	Table Mountain (A)	v, 35
	Why Don't You Marry? (A)	v, 41
Vie	eux, Baron	TTT (
	The Opera in Sacramento (A) Reminiscence (A)	III, 6 III, 15, 16,
	Tempinistence (A)	19, 21
	A Legend of Lake Forlorn (S)	IÍÍ, 44
Vir	ginia (a)	L-
	The Broken Heart (S)	III, 41
W		
	Letter from the Contra Costa (A)	I, 13
	A Dirge (P)	V, 51
	A New Baby (A)	VÍ, 25 VI, 36
	Byron's Deformity (A) Where is Heaven? (P)	VI, 50 VII, 5
	where is heaven: (1)	V11, )
W,	A. N.	
	To My Sister (P)	IV, 3
W,		TTT 20 26
	The Subject of Miner Lands (A) A Hebrew Idyl (S)	III, 35, 36 IV, 12
W.	E. A.	14, 12
,	A Tribute to Queen Flora (P)	III, 18
	To Amelia on her Bridal Morn (P)	IV, 13
W,	E. E. The Lone Cloud (S)	V OI
W.	F. L.	V, 21
,	A Growing Town (A)	VI, 17
W,	H. S.	
1.1	Midnight Reverie (P)	III, 10
W,	Sabbath Evening (P)	IV, 40
	Would'st Happy Be (P)	IV, 43
	That Curl (P)	v, 3
W,	J. M.	····
1.7	A Run for Life (S)	<b>VIII,</b> 18
ω,	Mrs. J. M. Lines (P)	III, 33
	My Petry (P)	III, 48
	•	•

W, L. F.	
The Forty-Niners (P)	III, 3
The Wanderer (P)	iii, 5
The Miner (P)	TV. 26
We do not Want Them Here (P)	IV, 26 IV, 28 IV, 33
I'm Going Home (P)	TV 39
Little Emma (P)	IV, 42
W, M. A.	14, 42
Stanzas for Music (P)	III, 20
	111, 20
W, R. G.	T <b>TT</b> 75
If I Lose Thee, I Am Lost (P)	III, 35
W, W. F.	WITT Q
Spivins on a Bender (A)	VIII, 원
W, W, V.	TT be
Nicaragua (A)	II, 46
Wabash	3/ <b>TTT</b> 3.5
The Maid Washing her Feet in the Dew (P)	VIII, 15
Wacousta	1 5 1
A Grizzly Bear Fight in the Rocky Mountains	(S)
	VII, 38
Wainwright, J. H.	
Wed not for Gold (P)	<b>V,</b> 30
Walcot, William	
Incidents of the Battle of New Orleans (S)	I, 13
Walker, Wm. Sydney	
To A Girl of Thirtee (P)	I, 3
Wallace, William Rose	
A Song for an American Editor (P)	II, <i>3</i> 3
Hymn of the Sun (P)	V, 40
Wanderer	
A Brother's Retribution (S)	VII, 30
Running the Gauntlet (S)	VII, 33
The Bandit Client (S)	VII, 42
The Powder Mine (S)	VII, 44
The Peddler's Story (S)	VII, 45
The Bandit Chieftain (S)	VII, 49
Charming a Maniac (S)	VII, 52
The Will: A Village Tale (S)	VIII, 2
The Lost Son: A Tale of Wyoming (S)	VIII, 6
George Laustin (S)	VIII, 7
Ward, Artemus	V
Joy in the House (A)	VIII, 6
Warren and Son	<b>VIII</b> , 0
Agriculture and the Pacific Railroad (A)	I, 47
Warren, Dr. Samuel C.	±, ¬(
The Spectre (S)	VII, 50
Warwick, Dundas	VII, 50
	TV 07
Namla, the Mother of Solomon (S)	IV, 23
Ariston and Zeno (S)	IV, 26, 27
The City of the Sea (P)	IV, 29

```
IV, 33 IV, 34
   Communication from the Seventh Sphere (S)
   A Fearful Story (S)
   The Adventures of a Wandering Californian
                                                (S) VII, 20, 21
Watkins, Jos. S.
   as Sniktaw (pseudonym for Watkins)
      Sniktaw on California Poets (A)
                                                     III, 11
                                                    III, 25
III, 42,
      Humorous Sketch (A)
                                                              45
      Honest Miner on a Tramp (S)
                                                    III, 50
IV, 7
IV, 11
      California Loafers, Deadheads
      Genius, Poetry, Melody, and Bards (A)
      Genius and Newspapers (A)
      Love and Leap-Year (A)
                                                     IV, 13
      Final Blow at the Destiny of California
                                                 (A)
                                                     IV, 14
                                                     IV, 20
      Literature by Sections
                                                    IV, 28
IV, 31
      A Heterogeneous Letter
      A War Blast from Sniktaw (A)
                                                    IV, 31
      Jilted (S)
                                                    V, 19
V, 33
      Letter from Sniktaw (A)
      The Drama in Siskiyou
                                                    VIII, 12
      A Voice from the North (A)
Watson, Henry C.
   A Half-Forgotten Memory (P)
                                                    VI, 51
Watts, Alaric A.
                                                    II, 23
   The Grey Hair (P)
Wayward, Will
                                                     IV, 34
   The Baby (P)
Weaver, Jane
   All is not Gold that Glitters (S)
                                                    I, 10
Webster
                                                    V, 11
            (P)
   My Son
Weed, Miron
   Hope (P)
                                                    VIII, 13
Welborn, George T.
   The Captive Greek (S)
                                                     I, 14
Welby, Amelia
   Oh! Had We Only Met (P)
                                                    I, 6
                                                    IÍ, 9
   The Rainbow (P)
                                                    II, 23
   May (P)
Wells, L. F.
   Mary Brown
                (P)
                                                    VI, 38
Wendell, Frank
                        gn Lands (A) V, 7 9, 11, 14-19, 21-24, 26-28, 30-VI, 1
   Idealctypes of Foreign Lands (A)
   Quails in California (A)
                                                    VI, 50
                                                    VII, 2
   Rural Architecture
Wentworth, David
   The Works of Man (P)
                                                     II, 2
Weylam, Jack
   Washington's Birthday (P)
                                                    V, 11
```

Wheeler, Mrs. James M.	
Lera's Grave (P)	IV, 28
White, Caroline A.	,
Christmas and Its Customs (A)	IV, 2
White, Rev. J. W.	
Thoughts on HomeFar Away (P)	III, 52
Whittier, J. G.	T11 (
The Midnight Attack (S)	IV, 6
The Glorious Legacy of Toil (P) A Night Among the Wolves (S)	V, 26 V, 32
My Psalm (S)	VIII, 33
Whittler	V111, ))
Chips for the Era (A)	<b>VI,</b> 18
Whittlesey, Sarah J. C.	, _
My Darling (P)	IV, 24
Widow, California	•
In the Market (P)	III, 25
Wilber, Anne T.	
The Barber of Beaulieu: A Fanciful Tale (S)	VII, 30
Wilburn, Cora	
The Light of Other Days (S)	V <b>,</b> 37
Williams, John D.	VIII IIO
The Dead Resuscitated (S)	VII, 42
Williams, M. A. The Education of Youth (A)	III, 8
Willibrook, Dr.	<b>111</b> , 0
The Editor (A)	I, 25
Willis, N. P.	-, -,
Beautiful Legend (P)	IV, 14
A Bible Story for Mother (P)	VI, 15
Wills, Mrs. E. M.	
Pioneer Life in California (S)	IV, 23
Wilson, Ralph	
The Fairy's GiftConscience (P)	VI, 52
Winans, Mrs. J. E. The Wife of Cleambretus (S)	VT 20
The Wife of Cleombrotus (S) Life for the Good and Beautiful (P)	VI, 20 VI, 21
Wood, J. Q. A.	<b>↓</b>
Father's Growing Old, John (P)	VIII, 4
Wood, Miss M. E.	, ,
Come Away (P)	I, 43
Wood, Phoebe Ann	
Oh Give me Back my Girlhood Hours (P)	III, <i>3</i> 3
Woodbury, Blanche	***
America (A)	III, 29
Woodford, E. S. The Drupkendie Solilegur (P)	1/T 1/7
The Drunkard's Soliloquy (P) Woodhouse, James	VI, 17
The Delayed Comet (A)	IV, 45
The belayed bollet (h)	▲▼, マノ



Woodvale, Lida	
Musings (P)	III, 46
A Lesson (P)	IV, 9
Chimney RockA Reminiscence (A)	IV, 10
Woodworth, Eliza	
The Valley of Memory (A)	II, 3
Wooster, David, M.D.	
A Romance in Four Cantos (P)	IV, 40
Hadassah! Or How an Orphan Became a Queen (S)	IV, 41
What Shall We Eat? (A)	IV, 42
Fugitive Memories (S)	IV, 47-51
The Chemistry of Every Day Life (A)	V, 1, 7, 9,
	10, 11
The Story of Lilia Iraga (S)	V, 2
Wealth (A)	V, 14
Gold and Its Properties (A)	V, 16
Life and Death (A)	V, 17
Know Thyself (A)	V, 31-35
Know Thyself (A) The Prince of Cuzco; or the Last of the Incas	(S)
	VII, 25-38
Wordsworth	
Faith and Hope (S)	1, 15
Yellow Birdpseudonym, see Ridge, John R.	
Young, R. A.	
The Vcice of Time (P)	III, 42
Youth	
New Year Thoughts (P)	VI, 5
Yuba	
Cupid's Revenge (P)	VII, 21

### SUPPLEMENT TO INDEX

## List of Mark Twain Items in the Golden Era

### Volume 11

	Bigler vs. Tahoe How to Cure a Cold The Lick House Ball All About Fashions The Great Prize Fight On Murders Greetings to A. Ward Ingomar Over the Mountains	Number	41, 42, 43, 45, 51, 52,	Page	<b>3</b> 8 <b>3</b> 38485
Volu	me 12				
	A Tide of Eloquence Concerning Notaries Those Blasted Children Hors de Combat	Number	1, 13 17 22	Page	8135

# Volume 13

Washoe

In the Metropolis

Early Rising

*Mark Twain on the Colored Man	Number 34	, Page 2	2
Earthquake Almanac	47	1	L
*On Cats	48	3	3
*Grand Theatrical Barbeque	50	5	5
The Pioneers' Ball	52		5

Evidence in the Case of Smith vs. Jones

## Volume 14

*Coming of Grant to California	Number	6,	Page	1
*Policeman's Presents		6	_	5
New Years Day		7		8
What Have the Police Been Doing?		8		5
Fitz Smythe's Horse		8		5
The Kearny Street Ghost Story		9		5
Captain Montgomery		9		6
The Chapman Family		9		6
Miseries of Washoe Men		9		6



### Volume 14, continued

Busted and Gone Abroad	Number	9,	Page	6
Among the Spirits		10		5
Mark Twain, A Committee Man		11		5
The Signal Corps		12		5
Spiritual Insanity		12		ર્શ
Mysterious Newspaper Man		12		55588
On California Critics		13		1
A San Francisco Millionaire		13		1
On Fashions		13		8
The New Wild Cat Religion		14		5
Biographical Sketch of George Washing	ton	14		18585831
More Spiritual Investigations	•	15		5
On Boot-Blacks		15		8
Reflections on the Sabbath		16		3
*On the Turbulent Sea		21		í
*On Etiquette		22		ī
*At Sea		22		
*Mark Twain's Steed Oahu		23		5
*On the Sandwich Island Legislature		30		3255
*Endeavors to Entertain a Seasick Man		<i>3</i> 9		5
middle of miles than		ノフ		

## Volume 15

*Chambermaids	Number 10, Pa	ige 1
*The Winner of the Medal	24	1

<sup>\*</sup>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.



