

charmingly designed triumphal arches for us to pass under, all made of semi-tropical flowers and palms. Some of the party got into the cage, and descended 400 or 500 feet into the bowels of the earth. A few of the ladies declared they felt nervous; but there was really nothing to make them so except the total darkness. Arrived at the bottom, we found many miners with candles stuck in the front of their hats, and carrying lamps of the simplest construction—a piece of waste stuck into the spout of an ordinary can filled with what is called China oil (a decoction of mutton fat)—waiting to light us on our darksome path. Several trucks were



CATTLE CROSSING THE DARLING RIVER.

ready prepared, into one of which I got with the children, and we started, a large and merry party. On our way in we met all the miners coming out, for they leave off work at 3.30 in order to be at the pit's mouth at four, only working eight hours a day.

All mines bear a greater or less resemblance to each other, whether they contain black diamonds, like the one in which we then found ourselves, white diamonds, gold, silver, tin, copper, gypsum, or any other mineral. There is the same descent in a cage, the same walk through workings—higher or lower, as the case may be—or ride in a trolley or truck along lightly-laid rails, and the same universal darkness, griminess, and sloppiness about