

God in fact, but who is brought by certain events just transpiring, to the conclusion that there must be *something* in the belief of the devoted Christian after all. Mr Hay's heroes do not scoff at religion, they only "don't go much" on it, they have an indistinct, unclear idea that it is a strange subject, hard to understand and wholly beyond their narrow comprehension. There is something quite startling, at times, in the form of expression used. "Little Breeches'" father, gathered from the conversation of strangers no doubt, that Angels had their habitation near the Throne of the Most High, and glad hosannahs fell perpetually from their pure and holy lips. He thought it strange when, one night his little four year-old son was saved from the harrowing storm, and in his joy at finding the little chap safe and warm in the old fold of the fleecy lambs, he knelt down and prayed. Circumstances forced him to the belief that God and the Angels had a hand in restoring to him his boy; but he spoils the glowing metaphor by the crude assertion that the deed just done by the Angels was

"A derned sight better business
Than loafing around The Throne."

The spirit of selfishness is seen here. It creeps out through his very joy. He seems to consider it no more than his rightful due, that his child, a most promising young scamp, who has learned to swear and chew tobacco like his father, should be saved, and thousands upon thousands of other children better and more worthy to live in every way, are dying a thousand different deaths. It is Human Nature after all, and wonderfully, most wonderfully have these two deservedly popular authors depicted it. Selfishness lurks beneath or behind the outward show of gratefulness.

Mr. Francis Bret Harte's earlier life is similar to most of our more famous literary men. Of course his father was a poor school-teacher, and at his death left young Bret almost penniless on the broad earth. He is of Dutch descent, and high authority gives to Albany the distinction of being the city of his birth, which took place in the year 1837. Mr. Harte, up to his seventeenth year filled various positions, from school-boy to clerk in a New York store. At that interesting year of his age, he and his widowed mother sailed for the Pacific Coast, and shortly afterwards they settled down in California. The dreams of ardent seekers for gold reached his ears, and the pick and digging implements searched in his hands for the yellow treasures. Though he toiled long and laboriously his exertions were unrewarded, and he took up the uncongenial task of a school-master. He left San Francisco on foot one fine summer's morning, and walked to the Mines at Sonora. Golden colored pears and luscious grapes were his food, and with a light heart and lightened spirits made buoyant with the thoughts of success, and the trilling notes of joyous singing birds, he entered Sonora, and immediately thereafter opened his little school. In this pursuit also he failed, and after spending a couple or more weeks as a teacher he "pulled up stakes" and went to Eureka, and entered a small newspaper office as a compositor. During the temporary absence of the Editor he wrote an article for the journal which so exasperated a few of the ruling spirits of the town, that the Editor, returning, was forced to make some very humble apologies indeed, and