

REMINISCENCES OF SAN FRANCISCO, IN 1850,

BY FRANCESCA.

I well recollect my impressions, as we entered the harbor of San Francisco, after a voyage of twenty-two days from Panama. It was on the twentieth of June, and one of those disagreeable, foggy mornings, which give a sad and desolate look to everything. But just as we entered the Golden Gate, the sun burst forth and gave us little glimpses of the city now and then, as if there was really something worth seeing concealed behind what T. Butler King calls the "dry fog of California." Safely landed, we made our way up Clay Street to the old "St. Francis," then in its glory; and first sitting down in the long, dark parlor without any fire, till somebody could be persuaded to give up his room and sleep on the dining-table,—or perhaps under it for the sake of "the ladies,"—we were at last ushered up stairs.

This famous old "St. Francis" had been compiled out of the original twelve cottages with which the owner set out from New York, and which, finding land so dear, he had been obliged to put together in as good shape as possible; but sharp were the turnings, and narrow the way by which we reached our sleeping apartments. Under a front window of the third story I noticed an immense coil of rope to which was attached a large hook; and with some surprise I asked what it was for. The attendant replied, "O, in case of fire you will fasten that hook on to the window-sill, and slide down the rope to the ground!" I was prepared for original expedients in this rapid country, but this was entirely beyond my expectations; and, my imagination instantly painting the remarkable figure I should make sliding backwards down that rope before an assembled multitude, I peremptorily declined a room in the third story, and was accommodated with one in the story below; where, by dint of great management and of ejecting all the chairs, I was able to "stow away" my three trunks and a handbox. However, anything was preferable to a state-room at sea, and, with some trouble to find a standing place, I dressed for dinner.

With a famous appetite I descended, hoping, rather than expecting, to find something eatable. But, what was my astonishment at seeing two long tables elegantly set, and glittering with glass and silver, with snowy napkins folded in the latest fashion,