



Judge Perrier, of Hills Bar.

IN the spring of 1858 rumors of the discovery of gold in the nameless region where flowed the Fraser, drew to that unorganized Northland great numbers of the adventurous and discontented miners of California and Oregon. Never in the migrations of men, as the Rev. R. C. Lundin Brown phrased it, had there been seen a rush so sudden and so vast. As these Argonauts ascended the Fraser they prospected the various bars for gold. These bars are low-lying and sometimes submerged sandy flats, occurring in the river bends. For ages the river, rushing madly through the Cascades, had torn away masses of rock and gravel and, crushing them in its natural arrastre, had deposited the gold with its accompanying metallic sand in the eddies in the bends and covered it with worthless debris.

The first bar that gave satisfactory indications to men who had washed the rich gravels of the Yuba and the Stanislaus was that known as Hill's Bar. It was about five hun-

dred yards in length and was situated on the left bank of the Fraser about two or three miles below Fort Yale. All summer long, from dawn till dusk, it pulsed with pioneer energy; here and there scores of men working in couples with the primitive rocker, and scattered over the whole bar dozens of lines of sluices, each discharging its "tailings" and its discolored water; one thought, one desire permeated the workers—to obtain the yellow root of evil.

On Christmas Day in 1858—the first Christmas in British Columbia—a miner named Farrell, who had been working on Hill's Bar, determined to pay a visit to Yale. At that time Hill's Bar was famed in the colony not only as the richest but also as the "toughest" bar on the Fraser. Its population consisted largely of refugees from the rough-and-ready justice of the San Francisco Vigilance Committee. Farrell, like many of his neighbors on the bar, had had a successful season, and now sought relaxation and an opportunity of celebrating his success. That relaxation and celebration consisted in visiting in turn each saloon in Yale and indulging in a large number of "John Collins'" and various other mixtures of liquors of different degrees of badness. In a short time he was in a fighting humor. Then he began to look around for trouble. While engaged in this easy occupation he chanced to notice a negro, Dickson, standing at the door of his barber shop. The sight at once raised the heated "race question" of the day and in his condition Farrell regarded it as an outrage that a negro should dare to breathe the same air as a free and independent American citizen.

He, therefore, demanded from the negro an explanation of his conduct, pointed out to him the grievous wrong he was committing in not having, as Sir Anthony Absolute says, an atmosphere of his own; and to enforce his precepts in an unmistakable manner, he pro-