

can rides by, with gayly decorated saddle, on his long-tailed pony. Chinese women hobble on their small shoes into an iron-mongery shop. The adjoining saloon is called "Zur goldenen Trauben;" and at the door of it a red-haired Irishwoman is stormily quarreling with an angry but silent and sulky negress. Over this seething admixture of population dwell the twelve patrician families of Denver, shining apart like stars in a silent heaven of their own. We are not permitted to gaze upon any one of these—unless—unless? Those two people who stood on the steps of the hotel after dinner? They were distinguished-looking persons, and much bediamonded. The lady wore beautiful colours, and the red-faced gentleman had a splendid gold chain round his neck; and thus—so far as we could make out—they spake:

"Jim," said the lady, "don't you remember that hop of Steve Bellerjean's that he giv after he run away wi' Dan Niggles's gal, to make up all around, when he found pay gravel and married the gal?"

"No," said the other, reflectively, "I disremember."

"Well, that woman in yaller fixins that stared at me all dinner, I could swear was Steve's woman."

"But Steve ran away from her," said the gentleman, who seems to remember some things, if not the hop. "She didn't pan out well. Tried to put a head on him with a revolver—jealousy and rum. Steve went to Sonora to bust the government; and the Greasers ketched him with a lariat, and his chips were passed in."

The gentleman in the gold chain had suddenly grown melancholy.

"Yes; Steve's chips were called," chimed in his spouse.

"That's what's the matter with all of us," continued her companion, in a sad tone. "That's what no Fifteenth Amendment can stop; the chips must be paid. That's what I told the boys down at Gridiron Bend when I giv my experience and jined the church, and Euchre-deck Billy heaved that rock into the christenin'-place; sez I, Boys, sez I, life gen'rally begins with a square deal, leastways outside the idiot asylum. 'Cordin' as you play your hand, will the promises be kep'. Sure enough, some has aces, and some not, and that's luck; and four aces any day is as good a hand as the Ten Commandments. With four aces, I'd buck agin the devil. But

we don't have four aces in the first deal, unless mebbe the Czar of Russia or the Prince of Wales, or some of them chaps; and so life and religion is pretty much as we play the hand we've got."

The lady seemed to put another aspect on these moral truths.

"Hosea Kemp," said she, practically, "that pig-skinned Mormon fraud, diskivered that when you raised him ten thousand, and raked in his pile; and he had a full, and you were only king high."

"That was before I knowed better, and I hadn't seen the vanities," said the repentant sinner. "But when I played, I played my hand for all that it was worth; and that's what's the matter with me. You kent fool away your hand and keep the chips; and that's what you find in the Commandments. That's the idee." What the idea was we were rather at a loss to discover; but we were not exactly in search of conundrums at this moment.

Indeed, our arrival at Denver had put an end for the time being to our idling and day-dreaming. First of all, there were the letters (there were no telegrams for any one, so we imagined that Balfour had not yet reached New York); and in the general selfishness of each seizing his or her own packet, no one noticed the expression with which Lady Sylvia broke open the only envelope addressed to her. There was a turmoil of news from home, mostly of a domestic and trivial nature, but none the less of tremendous importance to the two mothers. And when they turned to Lady Sylvia, she was sitting there quite calm and undisturbed, without any trace of disappointment on her face.

"So Mr. Balfour has not reached New York yet," said Queen T——, in her gentle way.

"I suppose not," was the answer. "I was calculating on the very shortest time possible. This letter was written some time before he left England. It is only about business affairs."

It was not until that evening that Lady Sylvia communicated the contents of this letter to her friend, and she did so without complaint as to the cold and formal manner in which her husband had written. Doubtless, she said, he was perfectly right. She had left him of her own accord; she deserved to be treated as a stranger. But the