

rofa borealis flashed in his face, seemingly from the cavernous bed of the river, where he "could see the very roots" of the flaming brightness and "could look right through the swishing, sweeping, rustling light"; when "one instant the shaft shot straight up in the air and the next instant flashed apart, wide apart, closed, spread and closed, spread as you spread a fan"; when "the light lay low upon the waters, as the flickering of a great lamp"; when "it sprang high in the air and finally seemed to fall to pieces, and a fragment, a flower of this strange fire-blossom, drifted over the street and lay almost within reach, a bluish, transparent cloud, so fine and so thin that it was only for a moment visible." At length there came a time when the dim little ray of light came back, when the sun ventured nearer and nearer, showed his halo, then his forehead, then his full, brilliant face, and his smile rested on a mountain peak beyond the river; and the poet was glad and ran to meet the sunlight and exulted in it, till suddenly it was gone, and he turned sadly yet hopefully back toward his cabin to wait for another morning and evening.

As swiftly as they had shortened, the days lengthened and increased in heat till the ice was gone and the homeward journey begun, down the river, down the ocean, over the land. On June 22d, a little more than a year from the time of leaving, he placed his heavy-booted foot on his own doorstep, leaning lightly on his walking-stick, the trunk of a pine tree that had grown within the Arctic Circle, threw open his reindeer coat, slightly raised his furry Alaskan cap, and looked long and lovingly toward the Golden Gate. Home again!

## IN A KLONDIKE CABIN.

### WHAT A LONE MAN THINKS ABOUT.

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

AND you wonder what a lone man in a Klondike cabin does and thinks about, with nothing at all to read? Would it bore you if I took you into my confidence and told you, frankly and truly, what a live man really does besides hewing wood with a dull old meat ax and carrying water from the Bonanza in a gunny bag? What if I should tell you, heart to heart, soul to soul, what a thinking man thinks about where there are no books, no friends at hand?

It never crossed my mind before, but now in this dead calm that has followed a month of stormy stampedes and excitements I have a mind to risk the prude's displeasure and be a bit boyish—even childish. I have not plucked any roses for a long time; nor sat in the sunlight for months and months. I have only seen a single gleam of sunlight for a few minutes up at the mouth of El Dorado on a high hill-top opposite, and ran the very breath out of me to try and photograph it and keep it with me. But the sun is getting in his wedge of gold now a bit, just a little bit further in between these black blocks of night, every day. To my boundless delight, the sun at 12 m. to-day fell like a halo on the head of a great mountain peak across