

priest—to narrate his early adventures. These prove to have been of a sort by no means consonant to the Olympian calm of his mature years. In youth, with an Indian girl whom he loved, he had joined a band of Indians, had fought in their cause, and had been imprisoned. The girl seeks him out in his durance, but cannot obtain access to him save at the price of her chastity. Loathing the wretch who demands this sacrifice, she nevertheless consents, but with a firm resolve not to survive the desired moment when her lover shall be liberated. This result is eventually obtained; and the Indian heroine, revealing her shame and her self-devotion, stabs herself to the heart. The future Alcalde, after this catastrophe, vows revenge; and prowls about with a vigorous and successful intent to murder, which would have done credit to the Southern chivalry enrolled in the Ku-Klux Klan. At length, however, a scene of rural domestic bliss promotes milder thoughts. The outlaw returns within the pale of civilization, and enters on the career which has at last made him an Alcalde. When the enlightened but too confiding jurist has revealed thus much, the wily advocate starts up, denounces him, and orders his instant seizure: but to no avail. The Alcalde, who at the moment “seemed taller than a church’s spire,” declines to be handled, and grinds his drinking-glass to powder; and then

“He turned on his heel, he strode through the hall,
Grand as a god, so grandly tall,
And white and cold as a chiselled stone.

He passed him out the adobe door
Into the night, and he passed alone,
And never was known or heard of more.”

We now come to the last of the poems—the semi-dramatic composition named *Ina*. It is a curious *guazzabuglio* (to use an expressive Italian term) of picturesque perceptions both of external nature and of the human heart, along with a chaos of the constructive or regulative powers of the understanding. Every now and then there is a sort of titanic and intrinsically poetical utterance in it which reminds one of Marlowe; a like splendor and far reach of words, with a like—or indeed a greater—contempt of quiet common sense, and

overstraining of the framework. Ina is a passionate young woman, in love with Don Carlos, but resolved upon marrying in faithful espousals, a suitor of heavy purse and advanced age, with the scarcely disguised motive, however, of afterwards enjoying, in the arms of the ardent Carlos, a youthful widowhood which is distinctly forecast as a very early contingency. Carlos does not quite “see it,” and goes off in disgust to lead a wild hunting-life in the mountains—rough good-fellowship mellowed by misogyny. Ina soon realizes the summit of her ambition. Her aged bridegroom dies; she joins the hunting party in the disguise of a young mountaineer; and, after hearing from her companions various salvoes of story-telling to the dishonor of the serpent woman, she reveals and proposes herself to Don Carlos. The Don tells her that he cannot think of demeaning himself to a lady who comes to him second-hand; and the Donna, plucking up her spirit, as well as a vigorous modicum of good sense which has from the first endeared her to the reader athwart the coarseness of her own plans and the fantasticalities of her surroundings, informs him that he may make himself easy without her, once and for all.

Such, reduced to a *caput mortuum*, are the materials of this striking book, through whose veins (if we may prolong the figure) the blood pulsates with an abounding rush, while gorgeous sub-tropical suns, resplendent moons, and abashing majesties of mountain-form, ring round the gladiatorial human life. The reader will hardly need, after our summary, to be told that Byron is the poet whose spirit most visibly sways and overshadows that of Joaquin Miller. The latter is indeed a writer of original mind and style; and there is a weighty difference between a Californian who has really engaged in, or at least had lifelong cognizance of, all sorts of wild semi-civilized adventure, and a noble lord to whom the like range of experience forms the distraction of a season or the zest of a tour. Still, the poetic analogy is strikingly visible, and has a very mixed influence upon Mr. Miller's work. On one side, taking interest as he does, like Byron, in adventurous picturesque personages, with the virtues and