

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY AUGUST 7. 1897.

## JUST OVER THE DIVIDE.

IS WHERE THE MINER HOPES TO FIND RICHES.

His Outfit as a Prospector and His Plant as a Mine Operator—An old Story That will be Repeated so Long as Man Loves Riches—The Difficulties of Quartz Mining.

The story of the hunt for gold is a tragedy. It is an ancient yarn and not yet told to the end, for while it commenced with the dawn of man's intelligence, it will only end with civilization. It is a tragedy, for countless lives have been destroyed in the openings of each chapter, but no tale of horror has deterred its progress. It is ever new. Its promises of life, wealth and happiness, 'just over the new divide,' are as alluring to-day as yesterday or the day before. No sooner is one bubble exploded, one reef robbed of its glittering particles, than another bubble is blown, another reef is discovered, the mad rush starts, and the story is told again.

The world's production of gold has increased amazingly each year, and yet from day to day it buys more of what man needs to make him comfortable in this vale of tears. In 1847 the United States produced only \$939,085 in gold. This increased a million or so a year until 1890, when over \$100,000,000 in American gold was turned into the marts of the world. Then came the decline in silver. The silver miners abandoned their claims and joined the army of the gold hunters, and in 1896 the product of the gold mines of the United States was \$120,000,000. Nearly all of this gold came from Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, South Dakota, New Mexico, and Arizona.

Going down into Mexico it will be found that the gold mines of that country are only a continuation of the great mineral reef which ribs this continent from the Behring Strait to the Isthmus of Panama. In places where the army of gold hunters has been concentrated the most gold has been produced, but as the pioneers have left the beaten trails prospected the gulches the gold may have spread its confines until no man shall say that where the internal fires of the earth have heaved the great granite ledges to the surface no gold shall be found sprinkled through the quartz veins which are coincident or the beds of streams which have crumbled the quartz ledges into rolling pebbles.

For many years past the advance couriers of this army of gold hunters have been pushing toward the North Pole. The mines are always richer 'in the next gulch' to these restless spirits. British Columbia first felt their influence and profited thereby. Gold mines have been discovered there, and fortunes are taken from the ground every year. The true miner, the Forty-niner, or his descendant, wants no rocky ledge which requires capital to work. He wants free play, where he can build his own primitive plant and put his gains in an empty sack or a bushkin sack at the close of each day. To do this he must have placer diggings. So on they pushed to the furthest point of northern land over which floats the American flag. Here the great valley of the Yukon winds from the sea around behind the tremendous ranges of mountains which stand as guardians over a land already well protected by its interminable winter and everlasting snows. Following its winding course for thousands of miles these hardy pioneers found reward for their labors, and when in 1894 Alaska added a million dollars in gold to the world's supply, she obtained rank as a mineral State, and the mining world assumed an expectant attitude as to what might come from beyond those snow-capped hills. In 1895 more fortune seekers entered the Yukon valley. The story of their homecoming is the story of the day, for the first ship has brought more gold than came from Alaska in all the years preceding. Another gold reserve has been discovered which will stagger the strongest combine to 'corner.'

The history of the discovery of all the great gold districts of the world is alike. The climate, environment, and character of the people may cause enough variation to give each discovery a character, but as a rule the process is the same. The great desire of all prospectors is to discover a placer mine. This is called the poor man's mine, for with a few dollars in equipment and plenty of hard work he can secure the gold that lies therein. The vast bulk of all the gold in the world is carried in veins of quartz which lie in various kinds

of 'country rock,' as the surrounding material is called. This is generally granite. As the ground upheaved, the quartz veins were sometimes exposed to a disintegrating influence of some kind, generally water. The quartz is oftentimes 'rotten,' or soft, and readily yields. Crumbling away, it was washed down the mountain streams, carrying the small particles of gold with it. These, being heavy, settled to the bottom, and if the bottom was loose gravel or sand, they gradually washed down to 'bed rock,' or some impenetrable strata, which may be rock, or possibly a tough clay. These particles may finally come to rest many miles from the ledge from which they were broken, and the ledge may be entirely destroyed or may partially remain to be discovered later on and become a mine.

The seekers after placer gold generally travel in pairs, though many an old-time prospector has spent months or even years with only his pack animal for company in his lonely search for wealth, and has avoided his fellow man as he would a pursuing vengeance. His outfit is simple. It complete he rides a horse or mule—where he can. Upon another animal is packed his outfit. The old saw buck pack saddle is still the best and upon it is put a roll of blankets, a "war bag," a seamless sack, containing a change of shirts, a frying pan, a coffee pot, a few tin dishes, and such provisions as he has, which are usually flour, bacon, coffee, baking powder, and salt. All these are covered with a canvas tent or sheet. On top are strapped his pick, shovel and "pan," which looks like a large-sized copper wash basin.

Arriving at a ravine which looks promising, the miner gathers in his pan some of the finer sand along a solid bottom, and by repeated washings, which are performed with a rotary motion, the coarser particles are sluiced over the sides. He then has in the bottom a little gray-black sand, and if he has 'struck it rich' he can see with the naked eye the particles of gold mixed with it. They may be so fine that it takes a glass to determine the presence of a 'color,' or very fine grain. If then he feels encouraged he stakes off a claim, digs down to bed rock, and investigates more thoroughly. If he has struck pay dirt he hurries away to the Recorder's office, files his claim, obtains help to work it, either with money, if he has it, or by taking in a partner. He sinks a shaft to bed rock and 'dredges' up along the real bottom of the gulch. If his tales of gold to be had are encouraging, others follow him back to his location, stake out mine claims, and, if the gold is there, a 'stampede' is on, a new Eldorado heralded, and men are made rich or poor as they may play the cards.

As soon as the existence of pay dirt has been established more permanent works are built. Long, narrow wooden boxes, called sluices, are built, with narrow cleats across the bottom. Water is turned into this and the gold-bearing gravel shoveled in at the head. The heavy particles of gold drop to the bottom, the dirt is washed in and out at the lower end. At night the water is turned off, and a clean-up of the boxes is made, and upon the results depend the day's earnings. The plant is mostly labor, hence placer mining is called the poor man's mining.

These later comers pay for their claims, and where water is scarce is must be bought. In California as much as \$400,000 has been paid for water enough to run the sluices. When the placer ground is all taken up search is commenced for the quartz lode from which the gold came. Snafes are sunk, stamp mills for crushing the rock are built, and the pulp is washed for gold, much on the same principle followed by the miner with his pan. This has been the history of the discovery and progress of every mining camp in the United States.

Who shall tell, however, of the years of weary days spent in fruitless panning—horses getting weak, grub getting low, and man's hope exhausted, and still no gold in sight? It is here the strange fascination of the hunt for gold comes in play. From early sun up the miner toils for the pan full of gravel which will tell the story. Hardly stopping for a breath, he delves on. The sun sinks below the tops of the pines far up on the mountain top above him. The long shadows creep across the gulch. An owl hoots somewhere from the black shadows. Eagerly scanning the bottom of the pan for that he seeks, he fails to find it. His labor is for naught—but there is another gulch just over the hill, and there is still another day. With aching limbs he lies down on his hard bed, rolls the blankets tight around him, and with his war bag for a pillow sleeps undisturbed and

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dreams of pans of gold too heavy for him to lift, nuggets greater than those ever found before, and to the accompaniment of the wind in the pines, the derisive hoot of the owl, and the distant scream of a mountain lion which scents an intruder in his domain. That is the story of the gold mines of the West, but what of Alaska? There a thousand new features are encountered. No patient horses to carry the miner's pack, but a handeled upon unfathomable snows. A fortune in a bag of flour, nine months of winter and three months of cold, wet summer. Five thousand miles to get there, and 5,000 miles to get back. The cream of the fortune skimmers are there, and only the leavings for those yet to come. Multiply the difficulties by a thousand, the disappointments by ten thousand, and you will have the story of the Klondike mines. —Kansas City Star.

**SALVING THE DEAD.**  
It is a Pretty French Custom That is Very General.

Off the northwest coast of France there is a region of wild waters, dotted here and there with islands of grim aspect and tragic history, about which cling more legends and superstitions than are found, perhaps, in any similar spot in the world. From the earliest times it has been a place of shipwreck and death. One of its bays is believed by many of the people who live on the mainland of Brittany and upon the islands to mark the site of the sunken city of Is, whose ghostly church bells the mariner, if he but listen intently enough, may still hear ringing from the depths far beneath his keel as he passes above the spot at the hour of the angels.

Standing upon the summit of the headland of Cornouaille, which juts far out into the Atlantic, one is, though two hundred and sixty-two feet above the water, not beyond the reach of its spray, and the ground is felt to shake as the mighty waves dash against the promontory. Into the Enfer, a great hollow at the foot of the cliff, the waves dash with a sound like thunder, and at the bay of Trepasses, not far away, the people fancy that they perpetually hear the cries of the drowned rising above the tumult of the waters.

This sound was familiar to the pagan inhabitants of Brittany. They believed it to be the voice of a god, and sent nine Druid maidens to propitiate the divinity by a life of devotion on the stormy island of Sein, near by.

To the neighboring island of Ushant, treeless and shrubless, and scarcely less desolate than Sein, there recently came an English naval party on a romantic and picturesque errand.

In June, 1896, the British packet, Drummond Castle, returning from the cape of Good Hope with a large number of passengers, struck a rock off the Island of Molene, and in a few minutes went to the bottom. Two hundred and fifty lives were lost, and but a single passenger was saved.

The calamity was so sudden that the hardy people of Molene and Ushant could do nothing to save life; but they turned out en masse to rescue the bodies of the dead from the 'eater of man,' as they call the sea, and performed acts of great bravery in this work.

In recognition of the service, the English queen ordered that medals should be struck and given to the people of Ushant and Molene who had a part in it; and lately the British man of war Australia carried these medals to Brest, the nearest large port. From there the officers and men charged with the duty of distributing

the medals were taken taken to Ushant by the French gunboat, Epervier.

On the way, not far from the lowering shores of Molene, the Epervier's pace was slackened, while the officers of the gunboat regarded with interest a space of sea. The French admiral, Barrera, who was in command, advanced on the bridge and gave the order: 'All hands on deck!' Instantly every man was at his post, the guard of mariners under arms the gunners at their pieces. The English officers, grouped together, could be seen to look with moistened eyes at the preparations for what they knew was coming; and their breasts heaved visibly.

The admiral took off his hat and all the rest of the officers followed his example. 'My friends,' he said, addressing the men of the Epervier, 'last year, in the month of June, a great British ship, returning from a long voyage, almost at home, was lost at this spot. The sailors of all nations are brothers. To honor those who died here, we shall salute them and say a prayer.'

The officer of the watch commanded: 'To prayer!' Every sailor uncovered and bowed his head. A simple helmsman repeated impressively the Lord's prayer and the Ave Maria.

Then three times the cannons of the Epervier boomed out in salute of the dead, and the gunboat moved on.

At Ushant all the population of the island had come to meet the expedition. The simple ceremony of the presentation of the medals was soon over. The village priest and his two assistants, all of whom were among those who received medals, chanted the De Profundis at the church, and the graves of the victims of the wreck in the churchyard, were strewn with flowers.

**CURIOSITIES OF LIGHTNING.**  
Dangers from a Stroke Greater in Country Than City.

When Benjamin Franklin determined the character of lightning and invented the lightning rod he made a great discovery, but since then other investigators have added much to the store of knowledge on the subject.

The matter of lightning rod has received a great deal of attention from scientists in recent years and a number of popular fallacies have been exploded. Various mystifying characteristics of lightning have been explained and other freaks of the electric current are more or less understood. Some years ago there was an international conference on the question of lightning rods in England, and the report of that gathering, based on the observation and experience of the members, is the most valuable contribution to the literature of the subject ever made.

While it is generally conceded that lightning rods offer protection to buildings, it is admitted that under certain conditions the most carefully erected rods will prove unavailing. There are many instances in which buildings have been struck by lightning rods. In most of these cases the rods were not properly constructed and connected, though in other cases the rods were as nearly perfect as human ingenuity can make them. The lightning that missed them and struck the building can be likened to an avalanche that is so powerful as sweep away all obstacles and go on its way regardless of man and his constructions.

From a report issued by direction of the Secretary of Agriculture, it seems that the average death rate from lightning in the United States is a trifle more than 200. Practically all of the fatalities occur in the months of April, May, June, July, August and September. The maximum death rate occurs in June and July. There have been a few people killed in November and December, but the Weather Bureau has no record of a death from lightning in January or February.

The financial loss from fires caused by lightning for eight years averaged a trifle a trifle more than one and one-half million dollars per year.

Lightning has a preference for some soils. Thus, where the soil is of a chalky formation, lightning will strike but once-seventh as often as where the soil is sand. Clay soil will be struck twenty-two times to once in the chalk formation.

The bolts also have a preference for certain trees. Oaks are struck more frequently than any other tree, and the birch is rarely a victim. It does not seem possible that oak trees are struck more than fifty times to one beech tree, but the Weather Bureau reports show such to be the case. Pines are struck about one third as often as oaks.

The danger from lightning is much less in the city than in the country, the ratio being about one to five. In a record of 18 deaths due from lightning, one was killed inside a building, eleven were outdoors and six were under trees.

As a rule, lightning that strikes a tree does no further damage. In only three cases out of one hundred did the bolt jump from one tree to another.

One of Its Forms.

Doubtless there are many who can sympathize with the victim of a certain peculiar malady, one of whose ways of manifesting itself is here set forth.

'Did you ever suffer from writer's cramp?' asked a bookkeeper who was conversing with a friend of some literary pretensions. 'Writer's cramp?' echoed the other. 'I've suffered from it for years and years! The papers I write for are nearly always "too cramped for space" to use any of my stuff.'

## How Old are You?

It makes no difference whether you answer or not. It is always true that "a woman is as old as she looks." Nothing sets the seal of age upon a woman's beauty so deeply, as gray hair. The hair loses its color generally from lack of nutrition. If you nourish the hair, the original color will come back. That is the way that the normal color of the hair is restored by

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