

LARGE LUMPS OF GOLD.

As the largest bars of gold ever made, the *Seattle Mining News* gives the following: The Spring Valley mine, California, made one some years ago worth \$90,000. At Helena, Mont., a few years since one was cast valued at \$100,000. The largest of all was that of the Bloomfield Gravel mine, Nevada county, California, in 1882, which weighed 511½ pounds, troy, and the value of which was \$114,000. It was from a single cleanup of the North Bloomfield mine. The gold in those days was shipped by Wells, Fargo & Co's express and carried by stage to Nevada City. On one occasion the stage was "held up" when within a mile of that town, and the highwaymen took possession of two bars of bullion and for a short time had a fortune. They soon discovered, however, that they had too much of a good thing, the bars being so heavy that they could not carry them, and were obliged to cache them in order to make their escape from the officers, whom the stage driver had sent in pursuit. The express company recovered the gold.

IMPORTANCE OF THE GENERAL MERCHANT IN SMALL TOWNS.

"Inexperienced traveling men are apt to underestimate a country merchant, simply because he is located at some insignificant point a dozen or so miles from the nearest railroad," says an eastern merchant. "The older men on the road, however, well understand that there are merchants so far off from the larger towns that they are seldom heard of, except by the concerns they deal with, but whom we know do an enormous business, despite their apparently unfavorable surroundings. As a matter of course, such merchants run general stores. They handle everything, almost, that is needed in the house, from the kitchen to the parlor; and everything needed on the farm, from a pair of boots to a harvesting machine. They are nearly always desirable customers; they control almost absolutely a good trade; have known their customers for many years, and know just how far it is safe to credit a man. It is true they often grant credit on what would seem long time, but they are so sure of their money that they are safe in doing so. Many a time have I made a trip of twenty-five or thirty miles over an almost impassable road, paid a big price for a rig and driver, only to visit one such merchant, and many a time have I taken an order from him that was worth as much to me as a half-a-dozen or more orders secured in the larger towns. The country merchant is a fixture. He caters to a peculiar trade, and while it may seem to us that he is far removed from civilization, nothing could be farther from the truth. Many of his customers are well-to-do and fairly well educated farmers, who enjoy life just as well as the millionaire in the city. They have their own ways of enjoying themselves, and are not afraid to spend a little money for luxuries as well as for necessities.

A LIFE INSURANCE PROBLEM.

M. B. Curtiss, the actor who earned fame by his character acting in "Samuel,

of Posen," insured his life two years ago for \$10,000 in the Equitable Life Assurance Company. Last September Mr. Curtiss was arrested in San Francisco, charged with killing a police officer, Alexander Grant. He was indicted for murder in the first degree, tried, the jury disagreed, and he is now awaiting a second trial. His case brings up the interesting question whether or not the insurance company is liable for the policy if Curtiss should be convicted and executed. When the fact that Curtiss had a large policy in the Equitable was explained to the New York officers of that company, they were surprised at the problem they might shortly have to solve, as to whether they were liable for a policy taken out on a man's life without consideration of his dying at the hands of the law. W. E. Johnson, the mortuary registrar, through whose hands all death claims must pass, said he never knew of a similar case. The most interesting thing in this connection is the Maybrick case. Mrs. Maybrick was convicted of killing her husband, and sentenced to life imprisonment. When the company which had a policy on her life wanted to know what should be done with her money the court decided that she was dead in the eyes of the law, and, although she was the beneficiary, the judge appointed a guardian over her children and turned the money over to him. Now, then, if that opinion holds good in the States, and if Curtiss should get off with a sentence of imprisonment for life, he will from that day be a living corpse, and the company holding a policy in his life must pay the \$10,000 to his heirs at once.

PROTECTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

Wade's Fibre and Fabric contains the following definition of protection:—"Within the borders of the United States all manufacturers are on an equal footing, all pay rent and taxes under one government, hence we have absolute free trade among ourselves. But if we should admit the goods of another people into our country free of duty, we should favor the government under which that people lived, and to whom they paid taxes, to the extent of the surplus we took from them. We should favor the manufacturers of that country to the extent of the difference between the cost of manufacture in their country and ours and carriage to our shores; hence the difference comes in the cost of labor chiefly, which is what we must protect to equalize the product of the two countries. Then arises the question, should our government get a revenue out of such importations? and to what extent will such importations bear taxing?"

A joint reciprocity commission is proposed for the United States and Mexico.

Steps are being taken to invite the Geological Society of America to Ottawa in December next.

Dr. David Rogers Atwell, the Hoboken physician who was indicted by the New York grand jury a few days ago for bigamy, is missing. It is supposed he has gone to Canada.

UNDESIRABLE IMMIGRATION.

An interesting article in a recent issue of the *London Economist* draws attention to the right of nations, under certain circumstances, to prohibit immigration. As a matter of fact, this kind of prohibition is being enforced at the present time in several countries, the most recent instance of the tendency to this class of legislation being afforded by the bill for the exclusion of the Chinese which recently passed the United States Congress. The question: Has any nation the right absolutely to forbid, or so discourage as to practically forbid, the entrance into its territories of the innocent subjects of a friendly power? is being answered in a drastically practical way by Germany and Austria at the present moment. The unfortunate Russian Jews, to the number of about 150,000, have been firmly informed that if they venture to set foot within the borders of either of those countries they will be turned back, and that in case they venture to disobey this edict they will be shot. Another instance is to be found in France, where the jealousy of French workmen has been aroused by the entrance into various branches of industry of Italian, Spanish and Belgian workmen. A parliamentary enquiry is going on there which it is believed will result in legislation which will be such a tax and annoyance to these immigrants, especially by subjecting them to conscription, that they will gradually get back to the land whence they came. Australia, too, loads the incoming Chinaman with repressive and heavy taxation, and in Russia German colonists are being driven out with a vigor that does not stop short of absolute persecution.

With regard to the Chinese, it is easy to understand the strong feeling of those who have felt the evils of this class of immigration. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and it may be said to be the first law of nations. These Mongolians do not and never will assimilate with our civilization. They know nothing of our institutions, and care nothing for them. They contribute nothing to our material prosperity or national wealth. They do not and never will adopt our customs or mode of life. But, worse than these things, they bring with them what has been called a moral smallpox, that is a lower ideal of morality which is apt to spread and a method of life which would lower the civilization of the country were they permitted to come in crowds. The *Economist* very properly remarks that a people is no more bound to receive guests to its own certain injury than an individual is. A man would be counted inhospitable who showed his friend the door without provocation. But he may utterly decline to receive even a friend who is suffering from an infectious disease. It is very easy in questions like that of the Chinese immigration to talk humanitarian generalities. But it is evident that, however wide may be our sympathies and our wish to be brotherly to the whole world, the same rules must govern nations as those which govern households. The determination to exclude the Chinese rises to a higher plane than mere selfish dread of competition.—*Toronto Mail*.