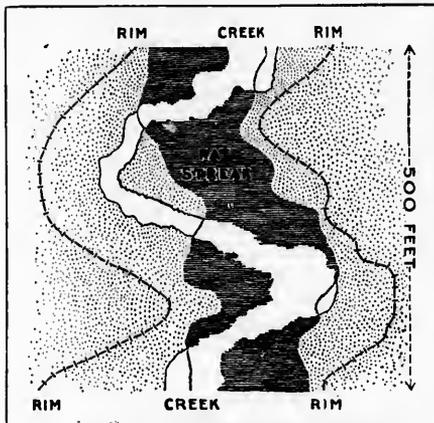


of the order was presented to Jack McQuesten, the president of the society. It had cost five hundred dollars; but no one knows what Jack's bar bill amounted to that night, at four bits (fifty-cents) a drink.

At Forty Mile a thousand men have been successful in making good wages; but the phenomenal strikes on Bonanza set men crazy, and good-paying claims were bartered



DRAWN BY C. S. VANDEVOORT, FROM AUTHOR'S SKETCH.

SAMPLE DIAGRAM OF THE PAY STREAK UNDER A STREAM.

for anything to get to the new diggings. But Forty Mile and Circle City, although today deserted and dubbed silent cities, will return to their own again. The «stuff,» as the miners say, is there. It is «pay,» and big pay, and all the world cannot have a big-paying claim on El Dorado, and so the rush will turn to the next best thing. The best claims about Circle City and Forty Mile are far better than the poorest about Dawson; they rank second to El Dorado and Bonanza, which means that they are far above the average of placer mines elsewhere. Many will come back to these places for this winter,—back to the cabins and safely cached food which they had abandoned,—and Circle City and Forty Mile will boom again.

Owing perhaps to the isolation of the country, and to the class of men who have come in, up to the present moment the miners' relations with one another have been marked by the most rigid honesty and fair dealing; and this is all the more remarkable when it is borne in mind that they represent an aggregation of almost every nationality and condition in life. The old-timers say that a man might leave his «grub» scattered along the trail to the mines for months and months,

and no one would touch it. In fact, a state of things exists to-day without parallel to those accustomed to the methods in vogue in the East; for the principal place of deposit for gold-dust is on a shelf behind the bars or counters, everywhere in the bar-rooms, where the precious metal lies in buckskin sacks, tied up, bearing the owner's name. No one thinks of disturbing them, and no losses have been sustained, so far as known. A sample of confidence and trust in one another was shown some years ago, when a cargo of goods was sent to Harper and Ladue, at Sixty Mile. The men were impatient for their outfits, and Harper told them to «sail in» and help themselves, and keep an account of what they took, and hand it in to him. There was a discrepancy of only six cans of condensed milk between the sum total of the taking of individuals and the entire amount of provisions called for by the manifest of the boat, and this might have been a mistake of the shipping-clerk.

Disputes, whether of contract or tort, miners' rights, claims, or what not, were, in the absence of any civil government, settled by miners' meetings. The aggrieved person called a miners' meeting, a chairman was appointed, and the grievance set forth. If the meeting saw fit to consider the question, it formed itself into a court by the appointment of a judge and a marshal, by the summoning of a jury, and by following out the forms of a court of law, so far as they knew them, and some of them were experienced men. The parties and their witnesses were heard, arguments were made, the jury were instructed, and departed to make up their verdict. This verdict was absolutely conclusive upon all the parties concerned; and in some instances judgments have been rendered for several thousands of dollars, which have always been paid. Whatever men learned in the law may think of such tribunals, the result undoubtedly has been that even-handed justice has been dealt out, without fear or favor, and a community liable to the most violent passions has been conducted without serious disturbances of the peace or infringement of the rights of others. No shooting scrape has occurred, except in a single instance, in which a man crazed with liquor, after a prolonged debauch, attempted to kill a saloon-keeper who refused any longer to sell him liquor. This disturber, after firing two shots, was killed by the saloon-keeper in self-defense. The latter was tried and promptly acquitted.

The «Father of the Country,» and a very