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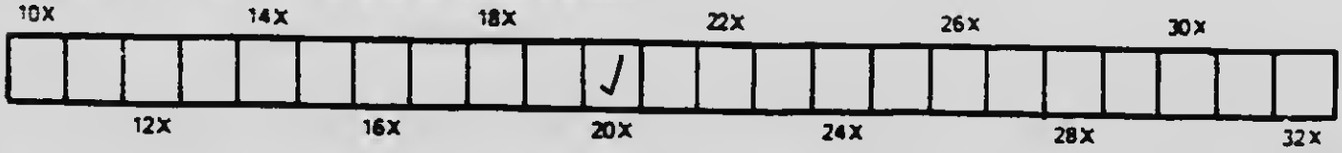

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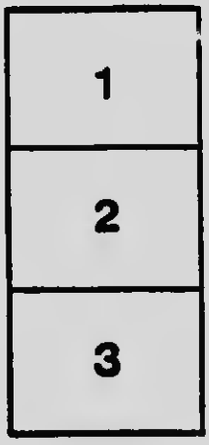

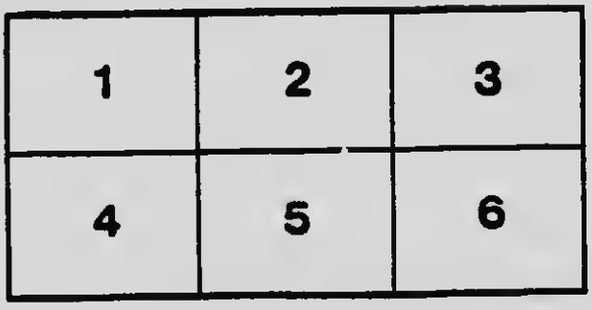

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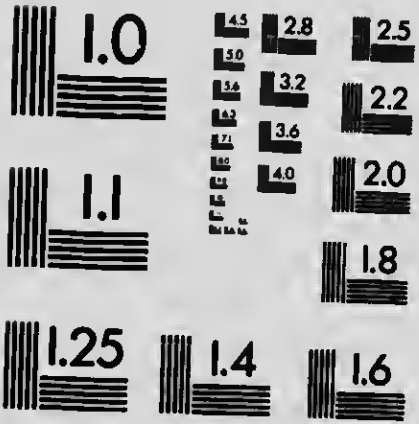

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THE GOLD MINERS

A Sequel to The Pathless West

BY

FRANCES E. HERRING

With a Preface by Judge F. W. Howay

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PREFACE

No page of history is more replete with varied incident than that which records the story of the Pacific slope from 1849 to 1875. It was a mad race for gold. In this hurly-burly, British Columbia occupies a very prominent position, though the conditions were totally different from those prevailing in California, not only politically and climatically, but socially. Without its golden magnet, California had, for years, been drawing a steady draft of population across the praries; British Columbia on the other hand, was the fur-preserve of the Hudson Bay Company, and such it would doubtless have remained, until in the gradual process of evolution our race should have advanced beyond the praries and through the mountain wall.

In the spring of 1858, news spread abroad that the nameless region, through which flowed the Fraser, contained Andavari's hoard. Nothing could have been more opportune.

In California, the days of placer mining had passed away. They had been succeeded by quartz and hydraulic mining—in which the individual miner has no place. Stagnation reigned. Dissatisfaction and despondency possessed the mining population. Very joyfully therefore they hailed the rising of the new yellow star in the North.

The remoteness, the mere inaccessibility of the Fraser with its golden sands, added a charm—were in some strange way regarded as evidence of a rich region,—for the North ever lured the miner, as the West lured the mariner.

At once began an inrush of eager fortune hunters. Within three months some thirty thousand persons crowded into the unorganized territory then loosely called New Caledonia. By every kind of conveyance on land and water they hurried to El Dorado. No nation was unrepresented in that gathering. Oh! what a motley crowd they were! eager adventurers blown from the four corners of the earth. Thirty thousand moths fluttering "round a yellow candle!"

In an instant the whole face of British Columbia was changed, as though Aladdin had rubbed his lamp and bidden its obedient Genii to people the land. Up the Fraser the miners made their way, testing and trying with pan and rocker every bar and every bench upon its banks. The awful and forbidding canyons deterred them not. Upward, still upward, with unabated zeal, toiled the more adventurous, remorselessly, relentessly following the trail of the Gold. Close upon their heels came the trader and the packer; and behind them the representatives of law and order.

Within two years the Gold had been traced to his lair amid the mountain fastnesses of Cariboo. In that region of

"Crags, knolls, and mounds confusedly hurled,
The remnants of an earlier world,"

he made his last stand. Hidden sixty and seventy feet below the surface, he thought himself safe. But with indomitable perseverance the search went on, and soon the glittering metal was dragged from his hiding place to reward the toilers and serve the purpose of man.

The Cariboo region lay some four hundred miles beyond Yale, the head of navigation on the Fraser. To enable access to be obtained to its rich creeks, the Cariboo road was constructed. Built in three years by an infant colony at an expense of over a million dollars, through a region some portions of which scarcely afforded foothold for a goat, it was alike the pride of the colony and a source of wonder and admiration to its visitors. Along that mighty highway a tide of restless humanity serged forward and backward, to and from the great gold fields.

The story of those days is as Joaquin Miller says:

"A tale half told and hardly understood,
A tale it is, of lands of gold
That lay towards the sun."

The bald facts, the bare statistics of the time are only the dry bones—the skeleton—of the story. The local color which is necessary to make that strange, rough, yet gentle, life, understood by those of to-day, can only be given by one who has lived and moved in that time and amongst that people.

The author of this book has been for many years a resident of British Columbia, and has enjoyed an unique opportunity of becoming acquainted with that life, by personal contact with many of its principal actors, who have long since stepped off the stage.

"Old timers" will recognise, even through the veil, many of the incidents she mentions. For instance, Chapter IV. will recall to their memory the trial and conviction of one Barry for the murder of his travelling companion, a trial which owing to the peculiar evidence, attracted much attention at the time.

JUDGE F. W. HOWAY.

New Westminster, B.C.,

April 9th, 1913.

THE GOLD MINERS

CHAPTER I

HERDING CATTLE

WHEN we last heard of Billy he had just returned from his enforced sojourn among the Northern Indians of British Columbia, was dressed in the queer conglomeration of garments given him by the sailors on board the southbound Hudson's Bay ship, and he was looking for work.

With the few dollars which had been collected for him on board he replaced the more glaringly conspicuous articles of his dress, and with the assistance of his old friend Mrs. Ackers, who, it will be remembered declined to put on "French and frills," some even of these were made to do service.

It was one of the very hard winters occasionally experienced here, and Billy was glad to get employment from a butcher till the "spring broke" which was then the sign for activities to be renewed.

As these activities consisted in mining, clearing land, making roads, surveying and mapping out the new country, those so employed, naturally flocked to the little city for the winter, where some semblance of private hospitality and public amusement could be obtained.

Men went out in large parties to their different employments in May, and naturally they required big supplies of beef, so it occurred to the butcher for whom Billy worked, to drive a band of cattle out into the country, where there was any amount of grass to be had for nothing, to kill his stock as it was required, and make the cattle "pack themselves" to the scene of their slaughter.

Billy was promised twenty-five dollars a month if he would go along as general handy man or boy.

The offer was tempting, and the lad accepted it with something of misgiving. A herd of range cattle was brought out over the Hope Trail, and driven to a point along the river, whence the beef could be easily distributed by steamboat or trail.

It was a long and arduous drive, and they had but one pack horse to carry tent, blankets, pots, kettles and provisions.

The butcher was a large, heavy man, but he frequently burdened the quiet old mare with his own weight, promising Billy they would ride, turn and turn about; for the lad was by this time bare footed and limped painfully along. But Bill's turn and turn about was infrequent and of short duration.

They journeyed very slowly in order to let the animals feed as they went, and stopped early enough to collect the band, and give to each a handful of salt, as they seldom left the spot where this much desired delicacy had been served until the sun rose next morning, usually lying down till then.

A good sale of dressed beef having been made to the Government road party, the butcher made it an excuse

INDIAN POTLACH AT CLINTON, B.C.

to go to town for supplies; as indeed they were running pretty short.

The Indians of the different tribes used to plant their potatoes in the most easily worked patches of land on their reservations.

These potato patches were surrounded by fences of split cedar some six feet high. As they had no knowledge of the use of nails, they sharpened the split cedar at one end, drove them into the ground, usually at any angle that came easiest, and to any depth for the same reason. The effect of this rude construction can be imagined.

They left the old men and squaws to look after these attempts at cultivation, and also to catch, dry and smoke salmon, gather berries, which, like the salmon, they dried in the sun for winter use.

The younger ones took their families and camped near the saw mills and logging camps, where the stalwart braves earned good wages while the inclination for work was upon them.

The Siwash never went on any excursion for work or pleasure, without his squaw and papooses. You would see the Fraser River Indians coming down, their canoes piled with all their household goods and chattels, even to the dogs and chickens. Camping where night overtook them, or, if the weather was bad, making for the community house of some friendly tribe.

As Billy and his Boss journeyed back from delivering their beef, they came upon a potato patch, and helped themselves to some of the tubers.

The Boss, in all probability, had imbibed sufficient whiskey at the road camp to make him morose, for he

rode the mare all the way, making Billy chase the cattle into line.

But Billy had one small help, and that was the colt; it would follow its mother, and poor tired Billy hung on to its tail and made it pull him up hill, and over the roughest places.

They stopped for the mid-day meal, and as they had but one pot which was intended for the making of tea or coffee, they had to cook some of the purloined potatoes in it first.

The Boss undertook this delicate operation himself, while Billy brought up wood, and fried the bacon.

Re-arranging his fire, the Boss overturned the kettle and its contents, sending a cloud of steam into his face and eyes, and putting him into a rage, he kicked the unfortunate kettle over the precipice, and then began to wonder how they would get any tea.

He ordered Billy down after it, but Billy, creeping to the edge, looked down at the little black speck away below, and declined to essay the venture. It was in vain to threaten to chuck Billy after it.

In that case the Boss had to meander down after it himself.

This put him in an evil temper for the day, and when they started again, he rode the mare and Billy hung on to the tail of the colt.

They came to the last steep descent before their final camp by the Fraser, and the Boss sent Billy ahead to urge the cattle to cross a ford in the stream which rushes down to join the main river.

One animal, with great branching horns and staring eyes, seemed to have taken a special antipathy to Billy,

and instead of going towards the ford, turned and chased the boy, who thought not only his last hour, but his last minute had arrived.

With the instinct of self-protection, Billy saw a huge log ahead of him with a hollow beneath. He threw himself into this and rolled under just as the bull's horns made an impact upon the fallen monster. Over went the bull, and in his astonishment, forgot Billy.

All the cattle were taken over, the provisions and blankets carefully carried by the Boss to keep them dry, and the old mare had been repacked with it all, when a terrified whinny came from the colt, which had been forgotten.

The mare called and the colt started to swim over, but came into contact with the forked limb of a huge tree which had fallen into the creek, and there, with its head over the fork and its feet frantically pawing the water, it whinned for help.

They knew it would be of no use to try to get the mare to go off and leave her colt, so saying many unpleasant things, the Boss sent Billy to crawl along the tree trunk and extricate the little animal.

In his own excitement, the Boss let go the mare, and away she started pack and all into the deep water after the colt. She managed to release the poor little creature and swam back to shore with it.

But alas for her pack, the blankets were soaked, the sugar had disappeared, the flour and tea were wet,—only the salt, or part of it which was packed upon the top being left. The rage of the Boss was beyond control, he seized a butcher knife and racing after the colt threatened to kill it, but the colt kept out of his

reach, and they arrived at their final camping place, set up camp, and the Boss got upon one of the river steamboats and made his escape to town.

Billy, left alone with the cattle, pitched his tent near the trail on the edge of the forest, and every night went and laid handfuls of salt in a circle on the ground. Soon he would see a pair of horns push their way through the underbrush, then others, till the circle seemed enclosed by branching horns and staring eyes, and Billy, as he cooked his supper by the lone camp fire, shivered as he looked. Then the animals would venture into the open one by one, and the stillness was broken as each crashed out and took up its stand where the salt had been placed, and in the morning the ground would be licked into a hole, by which the animals had laid down and slept till dawn.

One evening Billy was cooking his supper, and with it some of the stolen potatoes, when a form appeared, coming up out of the forest trail.

It came silently on and others followed. They stopped at his camp, took off the kettle of potatoes, fried all the bacon that was left, squatted round and eat everything they could lay hands on. Billy knew enough of the Indians not to cross them, and he stood by, only hoping they would leave something for him.

Supper finished they searched his camp, took the blankets and even the battered kettle, and were marching off, when one of them spied Bill's waistcoat.

Now Billy loved red, and among his winter purchases had been a red wool waistcoat, as they were then called. The Indians made a sign for him to take it off. Very slowly the lad complied, and was left with no garment

but his cotton shirt upon him, and that his good friend, Mrs. Ackers, had made out of flour sacks, and the Indians disdained it.

Fortunately an old coat of the Bosses was left hanging up under the tree where the apparyo and bridle for the mare had been placed, and Billy rolled himself in that and went supperless to sleep, congratulating himself upon the fact that the Indians had left the tent.

But his troubles were not over for the night. As he slept he became conscious of a rumbling noise, and then the ground seemed to shake under him, and when he opened his eyes the stars were shining above him, and fleeing forms were passing down the forest trail in wild confusion.

The cattle had stampeded.

After the last hoof had passed Billy followed a little way down the trail and came upon what was left of his tent.

Reflecting that the cattle could not go far in this direction, and it would be useless to follow them, he put up his tent as best he could to shelter him from the heavy dews and slept till morning.

Searching his camp ground he found a few potatoes and a little rice. The latter was useless as he had nothing to cook it in, and he roasted some potatoes for his breakfast.

Then he made his way to the river, and signalled a passing boat, by hoisting his shirt upon a stick.

The Captain came in near enough to hail him, and hearing of his plight sent him several garments and some supplies ashore in a boat, and promised to take him

and the cattle to town next trip down, if the Boss had not put in an appearance by then.

The Savages had left the salt as it was away from Bill's camp, so he spread it round in hopes the cattle would remember and come back for it, which they did, but whether they were all there or not was more than he could tell.

When the Captain called on his way down the Boss had arrived with supplies, but Billy refused to remain with him and went down with the boat to town.

When confronted by Billy at the Captain's instigation with a bill for his wages, he declared he had only promised fifteen dollars a month, and this was all he would pay.

CHAPTER II

WORKING FOR THE JEW—INDIANS BUYING—INDIAN POTLATCH

Now if there was anything the "old-timers" despised, it was a Jew. One of these people had a store on the water front, and did a big trade with the Indians. He also possessed a squaw wife, to whom he had been duly married by the Priest who had lived among and taught her tribe, and there was a numerous family.

No one was more despised than the squaw-man, even by the Indians themselves, and Nathan Cons was also deeply abhorred by the whites. He was too successful for one thing, and for another, none of these simple minded people could put their wits against his in a business transaction; for Cons always came out ahead. As some said, they had the experience, but Cons had the cash.

Billy was just the person he was looking for, he could speak Chinook, and he understood handling the Indians. Time seemed to be an unknown quantity with them, and they would squat around for hours, making up their minds what they wanted, or perhaps only listlessly feeling an interest in the place or the stock, or the store keeper.

The only piece of advice Cons gave Billy was this:

"When Siwashes want to buy something, don't leave them. Make the first sale, even if you lose by it: for if they quit without buying what they start on, you'll likely get none of their trade; but if they make a start, you'll likely clean 'em out before they get away. Throw in a chunk of tobacco for the bucks, needles and thread for the squaws, and sticks of peppermint candy for the papooses."

The Indians were great for wearing charms against sickness. One day a big buck was standing round the store, and Billy became conscious of a strong odour of skunk. As it was nothing unusual for one of the animals to inhabit the roof of the one story shack, and chase the mice and rats over the calico ceiling, Billy took no notice for a time, but finding the proximity of the buck increased the unpleasantness, he noticed, when the Siwash let his blanket, the only covering he was wearing, fall back, that he displayed the pretty black and white skin of a skunk, like that of a kitten, tied round his neck.

Billy called his attention to the fact. He grinned and remarked, "Na-wit-ka. Hyas shookum humm. Halo shick tum tum." (Yes, big strong smell. No sick heart me.)

Billy thought if smell had anything to do with preserving him, the Siwash had a good chance to escape infection of any kind; for the smell of the skunk is particularly nauseating; people have been known to collect woosted and woosted rags and burn them in a closed room, thinking the odour, unpleasant as it is, preferable to that of the skunk.

But Billy had made a hit with the man, who returned

with a number of his tribe, headed by a decrepit, malodorous old squaw, whose tatters would not have covered her, had she not worn the usual blanket, fastened at the nether with a huge bone pin, such as the Indians carved out for themselves.

This lot stood around for a while, and then squatting in a circle, made Billy understand they wanted blankets.

Following Cons' instructions, he handed out sticks of candy to the papooses, and passed around soda crackers to the elders. They held the crackers in their hands and looked at Billy, who was at a loss to know what was lacking. When one of them said "mel-ass" (molasses) and he handed them a jug of "black strap," as the special brand of molasses these people affected, was called.

They regaled on the crackers till the jug of molasses, which they kept passing round, was exhausted; then, wiping their hands and mouths on their blankets and clothes, they proceeded with the business which had brought them to the store.

The decrepit old squaw, who sat at the head, intimated that a bale of blankets must be opened. They would not think of buying a whole, unopened bale at once, as they would be perfectly incapable of adding up the sum total for one thing, and for another, the joy of the barter would be of too short duration.

Billy opened a bale of blue Hudson's Bay blankets. No; the squaw wanted red. He passed the first one to the woman. She examined its ends, sides and middle, and passed it on around the squatting circle. The blanket, being without flaw, was accepted; and the squaw, diving among her rags, brought out the price.

So it went on for hours. Cons looked in once, and fearing to break the spell, went noiselessly out.

Having obtained all the blankets she required, the squaw proceeded to lay in a stock of crackers and molasses, tea, sugar and so on for a potlatch. She had no doubt been saving all the money she could lay hands on for many years, in order to give this great potlatch to her tribe, and die as its chief.

She handed out the price of each article in silver half dollars, as it was approved of and passed to her collection.

The Indians were doubtful of paper money. Two of them were being paid for work done. One had earned fifteen dollars, the other six. The white foreman handed the former a ten dollar and a five dollar note, to the other he passed six one dollar bills.

"What for!" objected the first. "Johnny got big money," and the paymaster had to hunt up half dollar pieces and pay them in the coin they understood. It was a remarkable thing they could only count to twenty-five.

Mox totlum pe quimim; *i.e.*, two tens and a five. Anything more that was beyond their calculation. The way they kept accounts among themselves was by a notched stick, either for number of days or dollars, cutting a notch as a day went by, or a dollar was paid.

Billy frequently had to carry a box of silver into his room behind the store, and being too tired to count it, would push it under his bed till morning.

One night he was wakened by a scratching noise, and woke up with the idea that some one was getting in at the insecure window. He lighted a candle and

looked somewhat fearfully around, but finding the noise came from overhead, among the rafters, waited and trembled. Looking up he saw a bright eye peering down, through a hole in the canvas ceiling, and at first took it for a mouse and threw something at it, when his mind was speedily set at rest on that point as the penetrating odour of skunk filled the air, and finding it was nothing more he went thankfully to sleep till daylight, when he got up, counted the contents of the soap box, and locked it carefully away in the safe.

Now Con had a partner in his business, who was mate on one of the river steamers, and his part on the conder was to collect orders as he went up and down the Fraser. He was a man of gigantic stature, and he possessed one of the ugliest squaws in the country, one-eyed, bad tempered, and masterful. When she became too obstreperous he would beat her into what he considered a proper frame of mind. He had been occupied in this pleasing manner upon his return from his last trip up country, then to salve his conscience, had gone off on a gambling bout.

Billy had hardly locked up the safe and hidden the key away when the mate, red eyed for want of sleep, and furious from his nights losses, rushed in and demanded the key of the safe, which consisted of a box built of stone and fitted with an iron door. He wanted fifteen hundred dollars right away—and marched to the puny lad threatening all sorts of dire calamities if Billy refused to comply with his gentle request.

But Billy refused, and escaped through his bedroom window, the key in his pocket, and set off for the home of Cons.

The latter being afraid to face his partner in the half demented condition in which he was, stayed in the back ground till after the steam boat had started on its trip, and the uproarious mate with it.

CHAPTER III

MAKES A NEW FRIEND AND TRAVELS WITH HIM TO THE CARIBOO GOLD FIELDS

BILLY made many acquaintances in the store of Nathan Cons, mostly men outfitting for the Cariboo Gold Fields. Up to the present none had appealed to him except a young fellow, some ten years his senior, who had just returned from San Francisco where he had been to spend the winter and to board with some New York people, whom he had met on his outward trip.

He had given his name as Jack, and as he had been known in Cariboo, so was called Cariboo Jack, and no one asked for any other name; indeed, it was sometimes unsafe to inquire into the antecedents of these roving miners.

Cariboo Jack seemed to have no boon companions, and often dropped into Cons store to buy some household necessities, and he and Billy became quite good chums. Naturally Jack talked of Cariboo, and of the wonderful strikes some of the miners happened upon, seldom mentioning the total wrecks and failures of the majority.

For himself he had made good wages, and was returning thither as soon as the season opened, and the river boats and stages again plied to that El Dorado.

Billy became inspired with the gold fever too, and made up his mind to travel with Jack. Billy had saved his wages while at Nathan Cons, but they did not amount to much, and the Cariboo trip was very expensive. Jack being of an economical turn of mind, they decided to take the stage as far as Billy could pay for, and then to foot it the rest of the way into Richfield, the mining centre of the Cariboo district. So one fine morning in May saw them on board an up river boat prepared to do or die. Billy, with a boy's romance had provided himself with wide sombrero, ill-becoming his small face and slight figure, a heavy blue German shirt, a cartridge belt, with a pistol stuck in a belt on one side and a bowie knife on the other much as he had seen some of the most admired braves in the Indian camps up the coast.

Cariboo Jack eyed him with a smile, but said not a word. Billy also carried a carpet bag in one hand, a concertina in the other, and a roll of blankets on his back.

Thus equipped he felt equal to any emergency, and all went well till they reached Yale, and Billy was charged twenty-five cents per pound for his baggage. Now this would have cleaned him out. He couldn't afford to leave his clothing behind, so he retired for a few minutes, donned all the clothing he could and stuffed the rest into his pockets. Carried in this way, although uncomfortable, it was not looked upon as baggage, and indeed Billy only filled half the space some of the sturdy miners occupied.

Travelling by stage and boat the two came to what Cariboo Jack considered the end of their tether, and they saw the stage drive off without them, at 4 a.m. one

morning, leaving to plod through the snow, carrying their belongings on their backs.

The snow became soft as soon as the day w .re on, and their going was correspondingly difficult.

They arrived at a roadside house some hours after dark, very cold and hungry, and found two other travellers ahead of them.

They paid their dollar each for a supper of bacon and beans, soggy bread and boiled tea, and enquired for a bed. "Well," said the hotel keeper, " they's on'y one bed in the house to spare, and if you four men can make out on it, it'll on'y cost a dollar a-piece."

The four accordingly mounted the rough ladder to shelter under the roof, and found a single mattress and half a blanket.

It was better than being out in the open, that was all you could say about the accommodation before them.

The four eyed the mattress, and then looked each other over.

One of the men threw himself down, apparently to see how much the others would stand. He soon found himself booted off that, and consented to take the mattress lengthwise, lay upon it their heads and shoulders and so make out for the night.

They were up before four o'clock, getting a breakfast the counterpart of their last night's supper and at the same price.

They secured all the pieces left when the landlord's back was turned, and made sure of the midday meal they had missed the day before. Several days and nights thus spent brought them nearer Barkerville, and Billy found it harder each day to keep up with Cariboo Jack,

although the latter carried the boy's carpet bag and helped him along all he could. Billy, footsore and weary, begged Cariboo Jack to let him lie down and sleep, but as it would have been an act of suicide, Cariboo Jack insisted on the outward rush; brandishing a stick over the exhausted lad, and threatening to lick him out of his skin if he refused to proceed.

Past all threats and too drowsy with the cold and fatigue, Billy stretched himself out on the snow, his concertina under his head, deaf to threat or persuasion. Cariboo Jack couldn't carry him, nor would he leave him. What to do he didn't know.

After standing for some time in perplexity, he heard the welcome sound of sleigh bells, and driving up on the trail came the most noted gambler of the region. He was wrapped in fur coat and cap, and was being drawn along behind a pair of good horses.

He stopped by the man and boy, and wanted to know "what the hell was the matter now." His tone was not encouraging, and his words not very cordial, but under the gambler's roughness was the brunt of the good Samaritan. Finding not a tragedy, but only an exhausted boy, he got out, helped to lift Billy to the footboard, climbed in again, took off his fur coat, wrapped it round the forlorn and freezing boy, and took him into Barkerville, had him fed and put warmly to bed.

There was no room for Cariboo Jack, but what did he care, he trudged in a few hours afterwards, carrying Billy's truck and his own, and located himself in a cabin he knew of on the hillside, he was joined by Billy and the two proceeded to make themselves comfortable.

Now Billy's mining life began. The two would

come out of a shaft so covered with mud, you would hardly distinguish humanity from its original clay. One night Billy was awakened by a splashing outside the cabin, and awakened Jack to know what it could be.

"Only the fellers taking a bath in that other old cabin I guess," replied Jack sleepily, and was again in dreamland.

The splashing kept on, and Billy thought to himself, "Those fellows must be very fond of using cold water," when he felt the cabin rock, water gushed in and the two comrades were thrown from their bunks to the floor.

Jack was wide awake enough though now, and called, "Grab your clothes and run." But the cabin was jammed over on its side, and they crawled through the window, for Billy to find he had left his purse under his pillow with what little money he had in them.

Against Jack's advice he returned struck a match, and received his precious articles, but the cabin turned over again, fortunately the door upwards this time, through which he escaped and landed just in time to see the water burst its bounds and carry the cabin surging down the creek. Such a narrow escape upset Billy's idea of the romance of mining, and he resolved to seek more congenial employment.

He found it with a German who kept a general store and batched in the back part of it.

Part of Billy's duties at this time was to cook dinner. Now, though potatoes and bread were very dear, beef was comparatively cheap, as it was brought up the hoof, killed and stowed away in natural cold storage. So this German would have say two roasts of meat, and

insist upon both being cooked the same day, but only seven potatoes all the same size were carefully doled out, and these were supplemented by the everlasting boiled beans.

Billy was serving in this store, equipped in his cow-boy costume, his pistol and knife proudly in evidence, when the chief of police, a big red-headed, good-natured Scotchman, one of the sappers and miners came along, and asked him in no measured terms, what he was masqueraded in that get up for, and advised him to get into his usual togs.

This Billy did, for if there was one thing the boy could not stand, it was ridicule.

Billy wanted to cook a lot of potatoes, so as to have some cold to fry for breakfast, but no; the storekeeper'd say, "To-morrow! you not know to-morrow come. To-day! To-day! Get ready for to-day. Perhaps no to-morrow."

SPENCE'S BRIDGE AND FREIGHT WAGGONS.

CHAPTER IV

BIG BERTHA

EVERYONE had to repair to the post office to get their own mail, and while waiting there one day Billy saw a gigantic woman enter, look around, and then fire a pistol at a man near him. Some one put out the lights, and others, near the woman, secured her arms.

When the lights were put on again, men were seen crowding to the door, flat on their faces, o. hiding behind the counter from which the mail was distributed.

Big Bertha, however, broke away from her captors, and seizing the newly lighted lamp hurled it at the offender, who it seemed after marrying her had gone off with another woman.

Poor thing, her real story was pitiful enough, and no one would wonder at the state of mind to which she had been reduced.

People often remarked that through all her vicissitudes an old mulatto always stayed by her; till it transpired that he was her uncle. After this white man had married in the South, and spent all her white father's money, he had taken her to —— City, and made her get his living for him, and then abused her in return.

Fortunately for her the old uncle traced her up, and as Big Bertha decided if she had to get her living on the downward grade on which the man who should have

held her sacred, had started her, she would keep the proceeds herself.

Occasionally, however, in fits of remorse or fury, she would drink herself beyond control, and then in her mighty strength and her fierce anger, no one but the old coloured man could soothe her.

The only punishment meted out to her for her escapade, was a warning to leave the place which she did. Some years afterwards she was seen near New Orleans, living quietly, with the old uncle a shining light in the Free Methodist Church, presided over by an attentuated coloured pastor, who was paying his respects to the wealthy widow of his community. For Big Bertha always had her savings bank account.

When accosted by this man who had known her in the North, she looked at him seriously and said, "I was driven by one man to get my living through many men. Most women get their living, in the same way by one man." Adding after a moment's reflection, "I dare say you have no call to 'cast the first stone at me.'" He knew he had no call to cast it, and had the grace to go and leave her to such peace as could come to her.

CHAPTER V

THE MURDER OF SMITH ADDLER

Now a miner named Smith Addler, who had made his pile, disappeared on his trip to the coast, and no trace of him could be found. He, however, had a friend with whom he had mined and batched, and naturally some suspicion attached to this man, although he had not started down with him.

Smith Addler sending on his gold dust by express, had started to walk to Barkerville alone.

When at a wayside house he had occasion to take some money from his belt, he was surprised to find himself not alone in the room. The stranger started out to walk with Smith Addler. If Smith Addler waited over a day or two the stranger did the same. On reaching another wayside house Smith Addler came upon Moses, a coloured barber from Barkerville, a big, burly, good-natured fellow, to whom he told his trouble and expressed his fear, telling Moses if anything happened to him it would be caused by this man. Moses went on to his destination and returned to Barkerville.

A few days later Moses met Bertog, whom he had seen with Smith Addler in the streets of Barkerville. "Hullo! I see you've got in. What's become of your chum?"

"Oh!" returned Bertog, "got cold feet. Couldn't wait for him, left him behind." No more notice was taken of this till several days later, when Moses again met Bertog, and asked, "Has your chum got in yet?" Bertog got angry at Moses, and said, "It's none o' your business. What do I know about him. I'm not lookin' after him am I? If you mention him to me again, I'll blow yer black head off!"

This disturbed Moses, and he began to have strong suspicions that everything was not as it should be.

In the meantime Smith Addler's former mate had been to one of the Dance Halls, and there while dancing with one of the girls noticed upon her hand Smith Addler's ring, and fastened in her dress a gold nugget pin. Of the latter he was very positive, as the pin had been broken off, and the jeweller in mending it had set the nugget wrong end up. He supposed Smith Addler had given them to her, but he asked carelessly, "Where did you get this pin and ring?" To his surprise she told him Bertog had given them to her, and had also left some blankets there, and told her she could have them if she liked. Dobs asked to see them, and also recognised them as Smith Addler's.

Now Moses' was the only barber shop in Barkerville, so of course all affairs, important or trivial were discussed there. When Dobs required the services of Moses he told the old man about the finding of Smith Addler's effects in possession of the dancing girl, and of her confession as to where she got them. Moses was so much disturbed that he couldn't go to bed, and he sat in his barber's chair, thinking over the matter, till he fell asleep.

In the front of the shop was a small window; glass being very expensive, no windows were of a conspicuous size. This window of course looked on to the sidewalk.

Moses dreamed that he saw Smith Addler pass by and look in. So realistic was the dream that he instantly jumped up, ran to the door and opened it, intending to call Smith Addler, but of course there was no Smith Addler on the sidewalk.

Moses went back to his chair still pondering over this strange illusion, when, soon after daylight, the little mining sheet that was printed in the town began to be distributed, and his copy was pushed under the door.

He got up and reached for it. The first thing that caught his eye was—spot of red blood, and looking closer he saw it was right over Smith Addler's name. The paper contained an account of his disappearance. Moses was too excited to work, he found no rest, he felt certain that Bertog had killed Smith Addler.

He went out and made enquiries around the town, but nothing could be heard of him. Finally he decided to go and see Judge Bell at Richfield, the official residence of the judge and police, and where the court house was situated.

Judge Bell at the time being sick, Lindsay, the chief constable, met Moses who told him he wanted to see Judge Bell.

Constable Lindsay said, "You can't see him Moses, he's pretty sick."

But Moses persisted, "I must see him, I've got something to say to him; you go and tell him I must see him; if he can see you, he can see me."

Lindsay reported to the Judge what Moses said to him, and the Judge ordered Moses to be admitted.

Moses related to the Judge all the circumstances as he knew them, and gave it as his opinion that Bertog had murdered Smith Addler.

The Judge immediately ordered the arrest of Bertog. After a long search they found him, and he was taken to New Westminster and jailed. He was tried at the assizes and pleaded not guilty. There being little or no evidence to commit him, he might have gotten off, but a miner running short of meat, went into the woods to shoot grouse. One that he shot fell upon a pile of brush and leaves, and in picking up the bird, the man caught sight of some clothing showing under the brush.

Upon investigation it proved to be the body of Smith Addler, with a bullet hole in the back of the head. The body lay not far from a trail through the forest that was used as a short cut.

Near the body was a log upon which it was surmised the two men had rested and apparently eaten their mid-day meal. When they arose Bertog had shot his companion in the back of the head, and securing his money and portable goods had made the short distance into Barkerville alone.

Bertog was taken back to Barkerville and confronted with the evidences of his guilt. White and trembling he made full confession, and the extreme penalty of the law was meted out to him.

CHAPTER VI

EXIT MINERS FOR THE WINTER—THE THEFT OF THE SILVER SPOONS

Now the brief Northern summer was drawing to a close, but the supplies were running short, and nothing being brought in by mule team and covered waggons but straight whiskey. Flour was one dollars worth of gold dust per pound, bacon the same, and even beans running short. Still every mule team that came in brought nothing but whiskey. For months the roads and trails would be blocked by snow, and dangerous in the extreme from avalanches and land-slides. What was to be done? The whiskey men could pay the best prices to the teamsters and cow punchers, and naturally each man wanted to make all he could during the few summer months.

The miners called a council of their own, and gave out that they would send a delegation to meet the next incoming team, and should it be bringing only whiskey, they would smash every keg and bottle, and do likewise to each and all that followed with a like freight.

This word was sent out by the whiskey men to the teams coming in, and they were halted by the roadside, till teams carrying provisions had passed on and the mining district had been saved from fear of famine.

Many of the prospectors had already started down on foot, and among them Jack and Billy. On ahead of them was a party of Italians whose hilarity must have been caused by something stronger than water, and the two chums lingered to give them plenty of headway.

Now of course neither Jack nor Billy had any more money than they knew what to do with, although sewn in the chamois skin belt of each was a tidy little sum in gold dust.

Coming near a roadside house, where the stage was already drawn up before the door, they were witnesses of a lively dispute; and going into the dining-room found passengers cleaning off pies, cakes and bread into their pockets, or carrying them off under their overcoats. It seemed that the man who kept this hostelry, on the plea of serving such delicacies as pie and cake, charged one dollar and a quarter per meal, but when the passengers crowded out of the dining room and the stage was waiting at the door, this hotel keeper could never find any change, the consequence being that he often got a dollar and a half or more for his meal, as the stage could not wait, and the passengers could not afford to loose it, as they would then have to walk, or stay with this skinflint for a whole week, till the next stage came along, as well as forfeit their passage on the one waiting.

One of the passengers who had travelled this road before, warned his companions of what they might expect. So each was ready with his dollar and a quarter, and handed it out to the proprietor. He seemed much surprised, but invited them all to take a drink, which they all accepted, and felt that perhaps this man was not so black as he had been painted. But imagine the

astonishment of these sturdy pioneers, when Mr. Proprietor demanded pay for the same. This was when some of the party returned and cleaned the dining table, and so secured for all a midday lunch, as they would not reach the next stopping place till late that night.

Jack knew his man and continued on, although somewhat out of his way to the home of three brothers who farmed a sheltered nook of rich land and were content with their lot. Receiving a hearty welcome Jack gave all the latest news of the mining district, and Billy inspected the warm quarters provided for horse and cow.

Before they retired the eldest of the three arrived home loaded with provisions for the oncoming winter, and before retiring the elders took a glass of whiskey.

When these brothers left Ireland, their aged mother gave each a silver spoon, on which was the family crest, souvenir of better days, and a reminder of the good name they bore. The youngest brother got up and provided glasses, and went to the place where the two remaining spoons were kept, for unfortunately one had mysteriously disappeared some time previous. No spoons could be found, and the eldest brother asked the others who they had had in during his absence.

A man travelling down, with his blankets on his back, had called in and asked for a meal, which had been willingly given. Then he wished to be allowed to do some work for them in return, and as night was approaching the brothers gave him a shakedown in the general living room and kitchen. Early next morning they heard him depart, and when they had arisen went leisurely about their day's work, with little thought of their lodger.

The eldest brother was angry with them for being so careless as to whom they let in. Going over to the table he remarked, "I see you put away the purse I left here!" No, they had not put it away. But no purse was where it had been left. A somewhat strained silence followed till one of the men dropped the ordinary spoon with which he had been stirring grog. Still no one spoke, and Billy sat watching the open hearth fire, and the split cedar in which were many knot holes. A mouse came up through one of the largest of these under the rough chair upon which sat the man who had dropped the spoon.

Putting up his finger for silence, Billy pointed to the hole, and soon a bushy tailed rat appeared, seized the spoon, and scurried back with its prize. The men eyed each other and then burst into a hearty laugh. Prying up the loosely laid board, they found many articles that had mysteriously disappeared, for which strange visitors had been suspected of taking. There were also the missing purse, and the three precious spoons.

CHAPTER VII

SAPPERS AND MINERS AT WORK AND PLAY—THE AVALANCHE—STORIES OF THE ROAD PARTY—MULE TEAMS

After a day of rest and social intercourse our travellers again shouldered their blankets and set forth on their journey. Taking a short cut through the forest they came to a clearing from which many trails branched. They were all but slightly marked, evidently more used by animals than man.

Now the Indians, "Lost? sit down bile kittle," and this they decided to do, for where so many animals passed, they knew water must be near.

They soon found the stream, and camped for the night under a spreading cedar. How sweet was their fried bacon, how appetizing the beans warmed over in the bacon fat. And tea! was ever so delightful a beverage brewed? notwithstanding it was without sugar or cream. They collected bark, and brought it under their sheltering tree, for there were signs of rain or snow, and they also rested some of the larger pieces slanting over their blankets, and with their feet to the solid fire of bark, slept such sleep as few beds of down can give.

Next morning they rose with the dawn, and while Billy made the fire, Jack went and threw a line for mountain trout. Such a feast as they had with slap

jacks, trout and tea. The freedom of all the earth entered into them as the healthy blood coursed through their veins.

Shouts and a shot! a noble deer went bounding by, followed by several sappers and miners of the Royal Engineers from the coast, and the wanderers found themselves near the military camp of these men, and with them they worked and camped for the next month.

These were the men who built roads through this all but inaccessible country, and left their landmarks for future generations of hardy pioneers.

But as was said before, the short season was nearly over, and the long winter approached, so camp, with all its paraphanalia of instruments, and what not, was struck, and the party set off for the south.

A heavy rainstorm fell during their first night on the road, and after a breakfast in the dripping forest, they set out before sunrise on the march. As they made their way through a narrow canyon a rumbling noise attracted their attention. A halt was called. Then stones and boulders came rolling down the steep sides of the mountain. Next, mountain sheep could be seen bounding from rock to rock, and making all speed to the higher altitudes.

Soon the forest about a mile ahead of them appeared to be sliding down bodily into the canyon. Men looked at each other in horror stricken silence. Then one pointed to the forest on the other side of the canyon, and lo! it appeared to be coming in majestic slowness to meet its fellow. All stood in silent awe.

The officer in command of the detachment took in the situation and instantly ordered retreat.

It was hard to nonplus these seasoned veterans of war, many of whom had witnessed the "charge of the Light Brigade," others were in the trenches before Sebastopol, some had been in the hospital at Scutan, either as sufferers or helpers to the never-to-be-forgotten Florence Nightingale.

Not an unnecessary word was uttered, but the retreat was made in the double, and in ten minutes after the men had reached safety in a rocky defile, where there was no land to slide, the mighty forces accelerating their speed as they neared each other, had met in a mighty embrace, and mingled their millions of tons of debris, and a new and fertile valley sprang into existence.

Calmly the men prepared their next meal and awaited further results. A scouting party went out and reported two men with a couple of oxen, and supplies a few miles beyond the slide.

The mention of the oxen made the men think of "the Roast Beef of Old England," and as the owner of the oxen soon followed the scouts into camp, a bargain was struck of something like a dollar a pound for the meat, and the commissariat department was soon busy preparing the feast. Round the fires the men bivouaced, and with song and story the night was beguiled.

One of these stories is too good to leave out, as it tells of the intrepidity of these pioneers of civilization.

"Hullo Cass!" called a stalwart non-com. "Want to pack some more bean?" "No want," grunted a mahogany coloured Mexican, and passed on.

"That's the fellow," resumed the sergeant, "who

wanted to get his money's worth when he was gettin' 'is boots at the coast fir 'is houtfit. Siwashes and Greasers are all alike fir that, they will buy boots big enough to put both feet in one."

Cass or Cassetro, was a Mexican helper in the summer road construction camp.

"Feet sore; no more can walk!" declared Cassetro, sitting down by the trail on a log, with a sack of beans he was packing, strapped to his back. Presently the officer in charge of the Royal Engineers came along, and waited to know what was the matter.

"Feet sore, no more likee walk!" repeated Cassetro. "Let me see your feet," rejoined the officer. Cassetro took off his big, hard, leather boots, very precious because no more were to be had till he returned to the coast.

His feet were pretty badly cut up. The officer took one boot, looked inside, and then threw it into the swift current of the river, and before the astonished Cassetro could object, had sent the other after it, remarking suavely, "There, Cassetro, the damned boots won't hurt your poor feet any more. You'll be able to walk alright now!"

Cassetro had to hunt up the bags, the beans and bacon had been placed in, tie them around his feet, and walk that way, till his feet became sufficiently hardened to walk without. One day as the party packed along, with eighteen or twenty Indians and several Greasers, as the Mexicans were called, they came to a rapid mountain stream which had to be crossed.

After the Indians bad felled several trees one lodged within four feet of the opposite bank, and several men

were sent on to lop away the branches, so as to give the water less chance to carry it away before the party had had time to cross.

The Indians pack their loads on their backs, only held by a broad band of grass work across the forehead; so if they came to a dangerous place, where packer and pack were alike threatened with destruction, either by going over a precipice, down a crevass, or off an impromptu bridge like the present one, they could just tilt off the band, let the pack go, and remain in safety themselves.

The Indians plodded over the tree, which of course swung slightly as they neared the smaller end, which rested on nothing more stable than the swirling waters. They swung with the tree, and all got over in safety with tents, blankets, the heavier provisions, tools, papers, and apparatus. Then the Greasers came on with bacon, beans and coffee. Cassetro as leader, had a sack of beans strapped to his back, the straps passing over his arms, the same as the white men pack.

The officer of commissiariat warned him he was strapped too close up, and advised him to fasten a band across his forehead, which would leave his arms free, as the Indians did, any way to loosen them so he'd loose his pack and not his life if he couldn't keep his balance.

"He was no Siwash, to pack like a squaw carrying a papoose," he said. "He'd go over as he was!" He started; when near the middle of the stream the tree began to sway, Cassetro lost his footing and disappeared below.

"Catch at the first thing your hand touches," yelled the officer, when he saw Cassetro going, for, good

swimmer as he was, he could do nothing in those seething waters. He took in the advice mechanically, and clutched for anything in his way, but failed to hold on till fully a quarter of a mile down, where he caught on some bushes, and willing hands hauled him to land, almost insensible. The straps were still on him, but the sack had been ripped in the torrent, with one hundred pounds of precious beans left behind; to which fact no doubt, Cassetro owed his life.

When the dripping man was brought back at double quick the officer asked him drily, what show there was for mule-feed.

"You take me for one damned mule? no, by gosh," which was all the thanks anybody got.

Another time when the party was out in a new section of the country, they came to a mountain torrent which had to be crossed. This time they had forty-three mules doing the packing, led by a bell-mare. Wherever she goes they never refuse to follow.

The crossing must be made, and as no ford could be found, the choppers went to work to cut on the banks of the torrent the longest trees they could find, three hundred and fifty to four hundred feet in length or height. They cut down some seven or eight before a huge pine lodged right on the sloping bank of the opposite side.

The men leaped on the swaying monster, made their way along it, lopping off all the links to give the water less hold upon it, and reached the other side with ease themselves. But they must get the loaded mules over. The officer in charge ordered some to take augers, and bore holes in the side of the log, others to cut wedges

MULE TEAM WITH FREIGHT FOR CARIBOO.

of wood. Then they hammered the wedges into the auger holes, slightly raised outwards; laid smaller trees on these, and covered the whole with moss, dirt and leaves.

"Now start your bell mare over," commanded the officer to the non-com. in charge of the mule team. Feeling dubious of the result, the mare tried it.

The bell-mare was nearly half way over before the mules missed her, then they noticed the tinkling of her bell, and with noses down to their fore feet, they carefully tried the bridge.

Fortunately the mare kept on, and soon a string of loaded mules were following, head down. The impromptu bridge swayed as they went; the men watched with bated breath. The driver ahead with the bell-mare called encouragingly, and the team knew his voice. As the mare planted her two fore feet on the opposite bank, the driver caught her head and led her steadily off; but the loss of her weight made the bridge rise slightly, and two mules went over into the seething waters, and we saw them and their packs no more. They carried grindstones and iron tools, so their pack was a dead weight. The rest of the mules, their noses down to their hoofs, clung to the log, and plodded over.

No tatoo sounded "lights out," and the men went to their beds as they felt like.

CHAPTER VIII

CLINTON—THOMPSON RIVER INDIANS—GAMBLING—POALATCH—TRIBAL CUSTOMS—AN INDIAN ROMANCE

THE party next reached Clinto on their way to the coast, and found there a gathering of a tribe of the North Thompson River Indians.

They had come to meet the Indian Commissioner from Victoria, and they came with their old and young, their kyouses, their dogs and their tepees.

The Indian Commissioner was dressed in the uniform of an Admiral or a Governor, with gold braid, cocked hat and white plumes, and the beautiful trappings for his horse that the Mexicans know so well how to make.

The saddle is deep-seated, with a horn in front which precludes the possibility of being thrown over the head of a bucking horse. The thick cowhide is carved in intricate designs, and mounted with solid silver. The bridle, martingale, and double reins are all of the most exquisite workmanship, and heavy with carved silver.

All the bucks, headed by their chief, went out some miles to the Commissioner. After suitable greetings, the Indian chief rode side by side with the Commissioner, and the bucks at regular intervals galloped in a circle round and round the two Tyhees (chiefs) without in the least impeding the progress of either.

This was made possible by the character of the country. A soil composed of sand and alkali, with only sagebrush growing everywhere, the bottoms of the lakes white from the deposits of alkali, had the appearance of having been whitewashed below the water line.

Then again, where the soil was better, the trees stood far apart in parklike fashion, with no impeding undergrowth.

The whole tribe of Indians met the Commissioner on the plain outside the little settlement of white people, and several hours were passed in watching Indian games and in their favourite sport of horseracing.

After the bucks came the squaws, who rode astride in this way: A blanket was spread upon the pony's back, the squaws vaulted on to the animal's back and drew the forward half of the blanket up to her waist, sitting upon the ends, thus making her improvised divided skirt secure.

Now Clinton nestled in a valley, surrounded by low hills, and formed a natural race course, though somewhat rough. But the kyoos is very surefooted, and the Indian riders reckless.

The bucks had shown many feats of horsemanship, and their ponies were by this time tired; but were considered good enough for the squaws. In making a start one of the young clootchman (squaw) was thrown from her horse and her arm broken. This caused quite an excitement among the trihe, who are always afraid of a hoo-doo, and are equally willing to allow their medicine man to inflict any kind of torture upon the person possessed of the devil; who is supposed to have caused the trouble, in order to drive out this particular

evil spirit from the unfortunate sufferer. They generally succeed, as the tortured one often dies under the process of elimination.

A doctor of medicine accompanied the Commissioner, and soon the clootchman's arm was set, and the sports continued; the young squaw being made happy by the handsomest and brightest shawl from the store of the white trader.

A plentiful lunch was now supplied the tribe. Boxes of soda crackers were brought out, a barrel of blackstrap molasses, and cauldrons of boiled tea sweetened by the same tempting ingredient.

All the stock of cups and tinware belonging to the white trader being requisitioned. The crackers were freely distributed, the molasses in tins and jugs given to the Indians, who formed a group round each receptacle, dipping and eating with great gusto.

When everyone was satisfied, some dumplings were tied to a string, dipped in molasses, and a number of little Indian boys, in nature's own garment, their hands tied behind them, were set to catch these dripping delicacies in their mouths, as they swung back and forth.

This caused uproarious laughter, and the little fellows were all rewarded with toy drums, trumpets, whistles, and so on.

Now followed the ceremony of the day, when the Commissioner, under a canopy of red cloth, received each member of the tribe, was introduced to each, and while he shook hands with his right hand, passed out with the other a plug of tobacco to the men; to each squaw was given a shawl, and to each papoose some thing in the shape of dress goods.

The Indians all bid a solemn goodbye to the Commissioner, and he, accompanied by the chief, and escorted by the braves left for his next destination.

The Thompson River Indians have a great number of horses, and these they sell to the white settlers. They now proceeded to trade a band to the store keepers for provisions, clothing, and anything that took their attention.

They have a peculiar way of packing their belongings. They carry the poles for their teepees with them, and these they fasten together, harness them to the ponies, load their teepees, provisions, etc., on the poles, perhaps seat a papoose or two on top, and draw them along this way, the noble brave riding the horse, and the squaw laden with small papoose, or anything that could not be packed on the trailing poles, tramping after.

The North Thompson Indians were all ready to leave, and only waited until the spirit moved their chief to give the word.

In the meantime another tribe which had been down from its mountain fastness to meet the Commissioner, happened along, and camped behind the sandhills, across from the North Thompson River Indians. A friendly parley followed, a potlatch arranged for, and after several days of feasting, dancing and games, the all absorbing gamble of the Indians began.

Shrouded from the white people behind their sand hills, preparation for the great event was made.

The place chosen was a narrow gulch, and when the time for action arrived, each tribe was gathered on its own side of the narrow canyon. A long board of split

cedar was laid upon the ground in the centre, and many sticks of hard wood piled near.

Chosen men from each side arranged themselves on either side of the board, each tribe to its own side. Every man secured two of the aforementioned sticks and squatted beside the board. A man from each seated himself, one at each end of the board, holding in his hand a drum of green hide. This drum has only one head and is stretched over a circle of any kind of hard wood.

Silence ensued, the huge fire burnt brightly, and illumined the dark faces, the steady eyes of the bucks, the bright shawls and eager faces of the squaws, even the papooses were at high tention.

All eyes were directed towards those squatted around the cedar board. One buck exhibited a bone stained black, and carved with the design of his tribe. In the same way a buck on the opposite side, showed a piece of bone or ivory carved with the mystic signs of his tribe.

The silence was still unbroken for a few seconds. Then the two bucks who had shown the symbols lowered them and began passing them along, the bucks pretending to hide them, or pass them, in any way to puzzle their opponents. Then they paused, and a buck from either side was asked to guess who had the bone. The one who guessed right had the bone of his tribe used for the entire gambling game, and the other was returned to its own. It was considered good luck for the tribe getting the first guess.

The black bone was the one retained, and now began a monotonous chant from all those seated, the tom-

toms (drums) beat time, and the sticks in the hands of each man did the same, only interrupted as the black bone was passed, or pretended to be passed.

A squaw wagered her much prized shawl, perhaps, upon the first guess from one tribe, and two squaws had bet theirs against her.

All these shawls would be hung in sight, and the guessing and gambling continued, before a certain number of guesses had been recorded on either side, and the prize awarded.

This continued for two days and nights, till one tribe had gambled away not only all its ponies, blankets, and provisions, but many of its squaws, girls and papooses.

The triumphant tribe left amidst the sullen anger of the defeated bucks, and the bitter jeers of the angry squaws.

The defeated tribe had left a band of ponies cached some miles away and out of range of their opponents. Selling or trading most of these, they returned to their reservation, nothing daunted.

A romance we heard of which grew out of this adventure was that of a young buck and his chosen klootchman.

She was one of those wagered in the gambling, and his lost guess gave her over as a slave to his opponent, an old Indian of very bad reputation. Getting a pony from somewhere, he followed the tribe, and came upon them at sunset the day after they had started on their homeward journey.

Hearing screams, he followed the sound till he came upon the older Indian, whipping the girl he had won, as she refused to enter his teepee.

The young man made an eloquent appeal to the chief, and secured one more day's freedom for the young squaw. Next morning he met the chief men of the tribe, and with them the elderly Indian. He held a handsome pony by the bridle, and near the old man stood the girl, disfigured by weeping, enforced travel on foot, and the stripes that had been given her.

The young man waited for liberty to speak, and then offering his pony in place of the squaw, he pointed out the fact that there were few ponies as strong and handsome as his, while there were many squaws much prettier than the one in question.

After due consideration, and the knowledge that the young buck had left his destination to be forwarded to the Chief Commissioner in case of his non-return, the old Indian consented to make the exchange, and the two re-united ones returned on foot to Clinton.

CHAPTER IX

LAST GOLD ESCORT OF THE SEASON—A MOUNTAIN STORM—LEFT

Cariboo Jack and Billy started from Clinton, and the whole country seemed to be moving with them. Mules laden with nuggets and gold dust, in some instances the work of years of patient labour, and never ceasing vigilance. Now these miners from all the countries of the world were coming out, and had timed themselves to meet the Government road party at Clinton, for what better escort could they have than the British soldiers?

The overcrowded stages that passed them, hastening to meet the last boats of the season, warned them that they would be left behind, and have to trust to the mercies of the B. B.'s express.

This of course Billy failed to understand, but found out later to his cost. In the early days, the winters were much more severe than they are now, and steamboats which plied as far inland as Yale, had to be laid off as soon as thin ice began to form in the river, for heavy ice rushed down in such vast quantities from the upper stretches of the Fraser as to make navigation by the lightly built river steamers impossible, and no more mail, let alone freight, could be taken up or down till the spring opened, the ice had disappeared, and the steamers could ply again.

The whole party plodded along, camping at night in the dry belt, and marching by day in the best of spirits, for they were in the best of health, and were they not going home? The thought was enticing to many, to some a query, to others a blank, to the majority a curse, for lone men without the ballast of female influence are an easy prey; and many of both sexes were lying in wait for their unguarded hour.

They now reached the Cascade mountains, and the fall rains commenced with great severity. Millions of tons of rock, earth and trees slid down the mountain side, and did their little best to change the geography of the country.

Arriving within fourteen miles or so of Yale, the party were minded to march all night for fear of loosing the very last boat of the season, as the drivers of belated mule trains going up had warned them it would leave at seven next morning.

A sultry heat prevailed in the canyon on the Fraser as the mules and men went winding along the narrow way. In and out meandered the road, changing to the mountain side in places, passing over bridges which were built out into space, with the mighty Fraser tumbling and roaring over its rocky bottom several hundred feet below.

The thunder roared and craked, peak and chasm answering each other in cadence wild. The forked lightning shone out spasmodically, and the sheeted flame occasionally illumined the entire canyon from side to side.

What is this? The mule teams are backing up on each other, men are crowded together as the hinder part

of the cavalcade press upon those who have ceased to move forward.

"Halt!" sounded from the British officer, and all instinctively obeyed.

The last flame of sheet lightning had revealed a stage and six horses, with barely enough room to stand on, brought to a sudden standstill by what that sheet of lighning revealed to the driver.

Right in front of them, not forty feet away, yawned a break in the road when one of the built-out bridges had been carried away by an avalanche.

Men with lanterns were soon exploring the extent of the catastrophe, and reported room for mules and men to pass but the stage must be left behind.

The passengers alighted, took their belongings and started, each for himself; but the Captain of the Engineers came forward and gave orders for the procedure.

It was impossible for the laden mules behind the stage to pass that vehicle in safety.

Mails and express were packed upon the six horses, and they were started on their way. Next, it was necessary to overturn the stage into the canyon below; and then slowly and carefully the mules followed, and when the last man had passed, the Captain left his post by the danger spot; and now, again it was each man for himself.

The horses with the mail and express had got a good start, and had carried orders to the steamboat to wait for the members of the road party.

Now some of the passengers out had elected to carry their own nuggets and gold dust out, instead of paying

the Express Company for it. Two men here had worked together and were going out carrying with them thirty thousand dollars worth, sewed up in two chamois skin bags. The bags didn't look very large, but their weight soon told on those trying to carry them. First one and then another tried to help them; but finding they would loose their boat, they all hurried on except Jack and of course Billy with him, for the lucky miners had begged Jack to stay with, and upon condition that, if he did, the men were to pay his passage and Billy's down by canoe, if the boat had left before they reached Yale, he consented, and the two young men, assisted the miners with their precious load; but were too late for the river boat.

CHAPTER X

BILL BRISTOL—THE SQUATTIS CHIEF—THE SIX SCOTCHMEN—COMMUNITY HOUSE—VISITING INDIANS—FISH DANCE

Now it was that Bill Bristol came into requisition. Tall, lithe, with the strength of a panther, and lungs of leather, no weather daunted him, no dangers could appall.

He lived on an island about a mile from where the Canadian Pacific Railway runs now, just above Hope. He had cattle and horses, an Indian wife, and a half-breed family. Grey and wiry, he went about with his hairy chest exposed to the blasts of winter and the heat of summer.

With three or four Indians from his squaw's tribe, the Chehalis, as strong and fearless as himself; he would take charge of mail and express, the latter frequently of great value in gold dust and nuggets, any passengers who had to brave the perils of the trip at twenty-five dollars each, besides being expected to take a hand if their assistance was needed.

Bill set out with a big canoe. The water being low at this season of the year it was easier to pass the riffles below Yale; but the canoe and its freight had to make several portages over the sand bars.

On one of these bars two men were working with

a rocker, and Bill hailed to know "How goes it pards?"

"Pretty good!" returned one of them. It seemed the two men were brothers and had staked their claim on this bar, which could only be worked before and after the freshet.

"Soon be going down for a good time aye?" enquired Bill.

"Sure!" was the laconic reply.

Bill informed his passengers that these men just worked their claim sufficiently to get a "good time" on, and then they journeyed to town and were never sober till all their dust was gone.

Finding themselves kicked out on the sidewalk by the bar tender who had taken all or most of their treasure, they would sober up, take the provisions they had paid for before they started in, and proceeded up the river to work their bar till the next thirst came upon them. Of course poor humanity can only stand a certain amount of this kind of treatment, and after a few years they brought up at an hospital kept by some Sisters of Mercy, and there they passed away, leaving to the sisters there claims upon the bar, in payment for the good treatment given them.

Bill and his passengers would sometimes come to open stretches of water, where the ice had gone on down with the current.

Looking back perhaps a pack of ice had broken, and was chasing them down; then they had to paddle for life and property for the nearest shore, perhaps camp for hours, till the loose ice had passed on, then off again paddling between the jams, hauling the canoe on to the floes, all hands clinging to the side of the canoe, as they

pushed it ahead. If it broke through they clung to it, or they pushed it into the next open water, and so on for the one hundred miles of peril and adventure.

Never did Bill lose a passenger, a mail bag, or an express package. The Express Company once recognised his services by presenting him with a two hundred dollar gold watch, and Bill carried it round with him. One time it disappeared, and Bill was at a loss to account for it. If he thought of it at all, it was to wonder which of his squaw's relatives had taken a fancy to it.

Two years passed and Bill had almost forgotten he had ever possessed so valuable an article, when, happening to follow his stock to some unfrequented part of his island, he espied an old vest of his trampled in the mud and mire by the feet of cattle.

He thought it might yet be wearable, as his wardrobe was not too extensive. So he dragged it out, and there to his astonishment was the long lost watch, tied by a leather moccasin strap to a buttonhole.

He remembered that he had felt too warm, when out this way, had removed his vest, hung it on a bush, and forgotten it.

Being of so good a make, the watch was little the worse for its exposure, and Bill 'iled her and cleaned her up, and she went as good as ever.'

Some Englismen with money came along one time, and thought they would like to buy Bill's island, and they asked him what he would take for it.

"Take fer it? Air yu aware of what yu're talkin' about young men?"

"Why, yes; we think we'd like to buy it if you will name your price."

"Now then," returned Bill, sententiously, "jest yu tell me what yer income is, and I'll tell yu ef yer ken buy that there land."

"What difference does it make to you what our income is, if we pay you your price?"

"Well, its jest this way, ef yu've got a good income, and can support that land, you ken hev it; ef not, yu kearnt; fer I've ben a mighty long time on it, an' it hes never yit supported me."

A survey party came along on the mainland, and the purveyor for them cast longing eyes on Bill's young cattle. He went and asked that individual if he wouldn't sell him half a beef a week.

"Well," says Bill reflectively, "what could I do with the other half? Ef it could run around till the next week, it'ud be alright, but es it is, I don't see how I could sell you half a beef."

It was seldom the luxury of milk was found on Bill's table, and butter was not so much as named among them.

The squaw and the family raised potatoes enough for the winter, the salmon only waited to be caught, and mountain trout was to be had for the angling, deer, grouse, wild ducks and geese for the shooting.

Bill salted a beef, and exchanged several for clothing, flour, tea, and sugar at one of the Hudson's Bay stores, and then winter supplies were complete.

Berries dried in the sun by the squaw formed a delicacy they always had, and we must not forget tobacco, which was as much enjoyed by the squaw and her many relatives as by Bill.

Bill and our party had now got as far as Sea Bird's

THOMPSON RIVER CHIEF.

Bluff, a place where the mountains close nearly down to the waters, making a very swift current at any time of the year. Not only this but a sudden bend seems to invite a wind storm when it comes from the north.

Such a storm was now raging, and the blinding snow and sleet seemed to cut their well tanned faces as it swept around them.

Bill gave orders to paddle for shore, and they landed at Squattis, so named from the tribe living there.

The two men, the thirty thousand dollars of gold, were given the Priest's room in the chief's house, which consisted of two log huts built near together.

In the one, inhabited by the chief and his sick wife were two rooms. In the bedroom of this was a big iron box stove that would take a four-foot stick, and in the kitchen was an iron cook stove. Both these were kept going at full blast all night, and no one complained of too much heat, for the rest of the passengers, Bill and his Indians slept in their blankets on the kitchen floor, the Priest's bed being occupied as we have seen, by the men carrying their own gold down.

Morning came, no wood was left for cooking, but, the Chief shouldered an axe and followed by Bill and the Indians they went out. Billy could see no wood pile, and he asked Jack where they were going to get wood.

"You'll see," returned Jack, and the two followed the Indians outside.

The Squattis chief went to a blind slough near by, and got out a small canoe, soon an immense stick (log) came swirling down, covered with ice, the Chief and Bill were after it in a second, had it secured and brought

it to land, where the rest soon had it reduced to firewood.

Chief Squattis and Bill returned to view the water, when presently Squattis threw a long pole from a peculiarly made fishing tackle.

The fishing pole was a proper contrivance for the trick.

The Indian would sit on the haunches, wrapped in a blanket, and as live fish or people always swim up stream, the buck or squaw, watch for a certain ripple, which could only be seen in shallow water, because the river in the upper reaches is generally narrow and very swift, and the fish in nature, takes the easiest or slackest current. The Indian in this case, looking for this ripple, made by the fish in plowing its way up stream, put the pole ten or twelve feet ahead, the water being very clear, and the rod prepared the colour of the water, so that the fish could not see it and dodge out of the way. This rod is about twenty feet long, in the main part. At the end of the rod is another small piece of wood nearly one foot long; to one end is fastened a strong surgeon-sized fish hook, six inches with a curve, and of iron, firmly bound with raw hide.

The thickest end of this small stick is a hollow, like a thimble. To this thimble end is tied an !ndian rope, made with seven or eight pieces of wild prarie grass, cured and platted together, and quite strong, about an inch in diameter.

This thimble end of the little piece of grass rope, about a foot long, is fixed to the small end of the long stick, which in turn is stuck on the small end of the larger one. This is pushed into the water, in the path

of the fish, and when it is directly above the hook, the whole rod is suddenly pulled against the fish, and the small piece with the hook is free to allow for the wriggling of the fish and generally landed safely, splashing and flapping. This they cleaned, carried into the house and fried. Then in the fat in which it had been cooked they heated up cold potatoes, and Jack brought out a pan of biscuits from the oven.

This meal, washed down by strong boiled tea, was greatly relished by all. But the storm continued unabated, and the Indians refused to risk paddling through the drift ice.

As they sat by the red hot stove, smoking and talking, they could hear the broken floes crashing and grinding on the banks of the river. Bill's canoe, hewn out of an immense cedar tree, strong as it was of its kind, would have been crushed like an eggshell.

Now among the Indians, who of course, could neither read nor write, a good story teller is much appreciated. One of the passengers asked Bill if he had ever come across any members of the McEny family, as he remembered having met one of six brothers of them in Oregon whose hair was white, but he was quite a young man.

Bill smoked reflectively for a while, then, still with his pipe in his mouth, he began in his slow way. To any one but those present the story as told by Bill would be unintelligible as it was a mixture of the Chinook jargon, the native Indian and English of a kind.

Before Bill came and discovered this happy island he had wandered and worked as the fancy took him through the fertile valleys of Oregon.

Here, he met three brothers from the North of Scotland. Men who had grown up by the sea, and for whom the mighty Columbian river had no terrors.

They built a steamboat, and plied it on the river, starting just above the Falls. This was alright during the season of low water, but when the spring freshet began, for which these young men were not prepared, the case was altered.

One brother, the captain, had fallen in love with and married an actress. The other brother being a practical engineer, took charge of the engine room, and between them they made a remarkable cut across the Falls.

One day they started, and noted nothing unusual until their boat was well in the stream, then they realized their danger, and that a strong downward current was running.

The Captain in his wheel house, and the Engineer below felt the situation, and both stood to their posts like the brave Scotchmen that they were, and worked for their lives and their boat; but the rush of the waters was too much for them, and they went over the Falls to instant death, and their bonnie boat was smashed to pieces on the rocks, and carried away in atoms by the seething waters.

The third brother, who acted as wharfinger and clerk, standing upon the bank, obliged to see his two brothers going to destruction, without the power to help them, had his hair turned white as snow. His rosy, youthful face, thus framed made him a very noticeable figure.

The unusual thing about this disaster, being that the body of the Captain was cast ashore on an island in

the river, and taken to what is now Portland, Oregan, for interment.

Great sympathy was always felt in those days for a bereaved woman, and the citizens of Portland came together, raised a purse, waited on the young widow with it, and offered to take all the trouble and expense of the funeral off her hands.

She thankfully accepted their aid and their kindness in saving her trouble, and the remains of the young Captain was buried with social honours, and the funeral was very largely attended.

The young widow was greatly touched by the general kindness shown her, and the respect paid to her late husband. She wrote a full account of it all to the aged mother in Scotland. She told of the purse of gold raised for her, of the public burial at the public expense, thinking to comfort the old lady, who was somewhat near eighty years of age, by letting her see in what esteem her son had been held. The widow sent his latest photograph, a lock of his hair and other souvenirs by mail.

What was her surprise to find all these things returned to her with a stern note from the old lady herself, saying, "My son earned good wages, and had only you and himself to keep, and if you both lived in such a way as to be unable to keep money enough by you to pay for Sandy's funeral, I am ashamed of you and him. I want none of his likeness or hair, he's no son of mine that brings himself to a pauper's grave."

This way of looking at it astonished this Western woman, for she understood nothing of pauperism, nor could she fathom Scotch pride.

After the disaster to his brothers, the young Scotchman went to Victoria, and with the aid of a Company built a larger and stronger boat for the newly opened up Yale trade, this he called the "Cariboo."

A fifth brother, a young lad just out of his apprenticeship as an engineer now arrived in the country, and his elder brother put him in the engine room on the Cariboo with an experienced engineer under him.

For the first trip Captain McEny took his bride with him. The boat started with flags flying, a lively young party on board, a few passengers and some freight.

She came flirting and curveting round the bend in the river, and kept on her way to Yale, a point which the river boat had not yet reached, owing to the sand bars, riffles, and two rocks, called "The Sisters," which stood in the stream and made a dangerous current. But the fearless young Captain took his boat up successfully, and made a safe trip down, coming stern first through the dangerous rapids.

He made several successful trips to Yale, and had all the freight and passengers he could carry, as this trip saved a long and tedious portage from Douglas, a small town which had sprung up at the head of Douglas Lake, where the steam boats had at first made their head of navigation, and from which packers, Indian and white, had carried freight into the Cariboo Country, and from which the lumbering six-horse stages had started with their varied passengers for the bourne.

On one trip, Captain McEny was deeply laden, and had many passengers, but having stopped at New Westminster, a number of the Sappers and Miners got on

board, on their way to the road making, surveying, and so on.

One of the larger boats that was only going to Port Hope, to take on cattle from the Similkaneen country, raced the smaller boat up, and whether the boilers in this way became overheated, or they were unable to stand the pressure, will never be known, for in going through the "Two Sisters" riffle, there was a teriffic explosion, and freight, passengers and coats were whirling round in the eddy.

Strange to say they all made shore on one side or other of the river, except the Captain, whose body was never recovered, and a fireman, who was seen drifting on a piece of wreckage, and looking as though he was sleeping soundly. He was brought to shore and found to be dead, with no mark of hurt or violence upon him.

"What became of the other brothers?" asked Billy, with breathless interest.

"Well," returned Bill Bristol, "I guess I'd best tell yer all the tale o' woe, fer these Scotch brothers had another boat yit at Victory, and when she was loaded up wi' freight and sich like, she blowed up in the night and them two last of the five brothers went up, and nobody knowed how it all happened."

It was late that night when they all turned in, with the hope that next day would see them as near civilisation as New Westminster.

Morning dawned late and darkling, the wind blew a hurricane round Sea Bird Bluff, and all hope of getting away was abolished for that day at least.

After a breakfast of salt, very salt salmon, and partly frozen potatoes, they sat round and sipped hot coffee to

the music of the gale, and the silent drifting of the snow.

A young buck came in and said something to Chief Squattis, and he and Bill Bristol went out together.

Soon we heard the tom-toms beating, and followed the other members of the household to a community house. A large shed or room in which all the tribe could meet and where visiting tribes took up their abode.

Some hunters from an island tribe had come in to pay them a visit, and hence the movement to the Community House.

A fire was burning near the centre of the house, an aperture in the roof serving as chimney. Already the floor space was pretty well filled with saluting Indians.

When they entered a dance was in progress by eight squaws, who stood in couples, holding an evergreen bough in each hand. They were chanting a low, soft rythm to the time of the tom-toms, and keeping up a kind of trotting movement. They faced each other for a few bars, then, keeping up the same step, till each faced around to the squaw who had been behind them. The monotonous chant and the trit-trot step never ceased for more than an hour; the boughs all time being held upright in their hands.

This same dance is performed by the squaws on the banks of the Fraser, when the salmon are late in coming up the river; the only difference being that they hold a green bough in one hand and a knife, for cutting the fish, in the other. They will keep this up for hours, till some of them drop with fatigue.

The same gambling game we have seen at Clinton was introduced, and played on a smaller scale, but with great gusto, although it must be said, while the bucks

played with stolid earnestness, the squaws and children fairly shrieked with excitement.

Another feature was now presented by a clown Indian who sprang in among the squatting Indians. The Indians always squat on their heels, and it is astonishing how many of them can thus crowd into a small space.

The clown sprang in among and over the squatting crowd, dressed in a skin, with animals tails bobbing all over him. A large wooden calabash of water was brought in by a lad, and a pile of slap jack's laid beside it.

The clown carried a rifle, and he proceeded to make feints of shooting anything and everything in sight. Making ludicrous signs of pride and courage, he would cower and run away, and whatever he did the audience were prepared to laugh at.

He now appeared to discover the calabash of water and the slap jacks for the first time, and made all sorts of antics and grimaces round them. Pretending he was afraid, pretending to taste them, pretending they made him sick; till his performance ended in his devouring all the slap jacks, and drinking all the water to the continued roar of satisfaction from the tribe.

It was getting dark, the long twilight was almost ended, and as the Siwash never moves out in the dark if he can possibly help it, they all trooped off to their several abodes, cooked and ate their supper, and little more was heard till morning but the barking of the dogs, or the cry of a wakeful child, for these children of the open sleep like logs, never heeding the crashing of the ice upon the shore, nor noting that the storm had abated.

The visitors were left in possession of the community house, and likewise proceeded to cook their supper, spread their blankets, and built up their fire in the centre of their hostelry, utterly oblivious to the smoke.

Bill Bristol and his passengers retired to Chief Squattis' cabin, and after a hearty supper proceeded to sleep, for the day's excitement had left them pleasantly weary.

Next morning a watery sun shone forth, the air was still and crisp, the wind had died down, the ice had been smashed, ground up, and piled on the shore.

Bill Bristol made haste to start before the ice from above should come surging down upon them.

Everyone paddled, and before dark they were within a mile of their destination, when the pack came crashing down after them with the falling tide, and it took them all their time to keep their frail craft from being cut to pieces.

CHAPTER XI

GOING TO THE CALIFORNIAN GOLD FIELDS— CAPTAIN VAN WICK

After a few days' rest, Jack Gayford, as we must now call him, told Billy he was going to San Francisco, at least for the winter, as the Cariboo diggings had not been as rich for him as he had expected, and he thought he would try California again.

Bill's married sister had gone down there with her husband and family during his absence, and he was only too glad to join forces with Jack, who had been such a faithful friend to him.

Bidding goodbye to Mrs. Ackers and her daughter, Bessie, he started in good hope for pastures new.

It being winter time of course when they arrived, they thought it better to stay and work round San Francisco, and start for the mines in the spring.

As their stock of ready money was getting rather low, they gathered up several large packing cases, obtained a little second hand lumber, and constructed for themselves a shanty on what is now Telegraph Hill.

Of course they had their blankets, men never thought of travelling without these useful articles in those days, and with their carpet sacks for pillows, they slept more soundly in their wooden bunks than many a one on a down bed.

They soon got a job grading sand lots, and continued at this work all winter, till April, when they started for the mines.

They had to go on a flat, or what was called surface diggings. These were known as " poor man's diggings," and very few of the miners made " a pile," just wages.

So the young men pitched their tent upon this flat with some five hundred others. It had the appearance of once having been a lake or water course.

A little distance from the flat a town had been laid out, which boasted several stores, an hotel and a saloon, where spirits of all kinds were dispensed, and where a great deal of gambling went on. For this reason Jack and Billy thought it better to keep to themselves; they had a good word for every one that would speak to them, but they went into no company whatever. Jack bought a little pup, which they named "Bob," and they made a great pet of him.

When they had arranged everything to their satisfaction, they each took up a claim, staked it out, and went to work. They proved to be literally, " poor man's diggings " for a few days, as they only took out from twenty to forty cents a day between them.

After a while it got better, but the most they took out never exceeded five dollars a day, and that but seldom.

Claims didn't run very deep, ten feet being their greatest limit, thus they soon worked one out and had to take up another.

After they had been there a few months an excitement was raised about another flat which was said to pay much better than this, and a great many men left, but

the two friends thought it better to remain where they were.

Before the fall rains came on they built themselves a log cabin, with a shed at the side, where they put their cooking stove, and stored their wood, making a kind of kitchen of it.

They put up their two cots in the cabin, made a centre table, and that with their two trunks and a couple of Chinese bamboo arm chairs completed their furniture.

They constructed an open hearth and chimney from the stones they collected; and as the winter came on they would have a nice fire upon their hearth, a bright lamp on the table, and they were cozy and comfortable as could be, with Bob blinking at them from the warmest corner.

It was thought by most people that there would be places on these flats were a kind of drift of gold, held by some stones or rocks, would be found; but as yet no one had struck one of these.

Like most of those who had gone out to this Eldorado, these young men had built castles in the air; but after working steadily for two years, they abandoned the idea of suddenly becoming rich, and made up their minds to be satisfied with what they got. They were quietly doing very well, being frugal young men, who spent no money foolishly.

They took turns at cooking week about, and on Saturday they left work at noon, did their washing and general house or cabin work, and then, the one whose turn it was cleaned himself up, and went to the Post Office for letters and papers, and to the store for the next week's provisions. They were afraid to go out

together, as their gold dust was hidden in the cabin, and they thought they might be robbed of their hardly won earnings.

One evening after they had left work and were cleaning up, they heard a pleasant voice say, "Gentlemen, I hear one of you came from the state of New York."

They looked around and saw a man of fine appearance and well dressed, standig at the door of their cabin.

They invited him, and as supper was nearly ready, he joined them at that meal, and after they were through and all sitting round the fire, he told them about himself.

"My name is Van Wick. I am a native of New York, and was captain of a clipper ship, in which I owned some shares. A man gets to have a great regard for his ship, and I wanted to own her altogether.

"I spoke to my wife about it, but she advised me 'to leave well enough alone.' She didn't want to have her property mortgaged, for it had been in her family ever since it was taken up by her Dutch ancestors, who cleared off its first trees.

"But I over-persuaded her, and invested every cent I could raise in my ship, took on a cargo, and sailed from New York to San Francisco, expecting to realize handsomely on my venture.

"After we'd rounded the Horn she sprang a leak, and the crew finding out she was unseaworthy, mutinied off Valparaiso, almost to a man.

"My first officer stood by me, and we took on a crew of Greasers, and made port in safety. There she was condemned, and I am left with just about money enough to take me to New York; but I can't go back

without money enough to pay off the mortgage, and I've come up here to find it."

They chatted far into the night, and then they made him up a bed and he stayed there. Next day when the two young men were out at work, they talked things over, and resolved, if the Captain was willing, to take him into partnership.

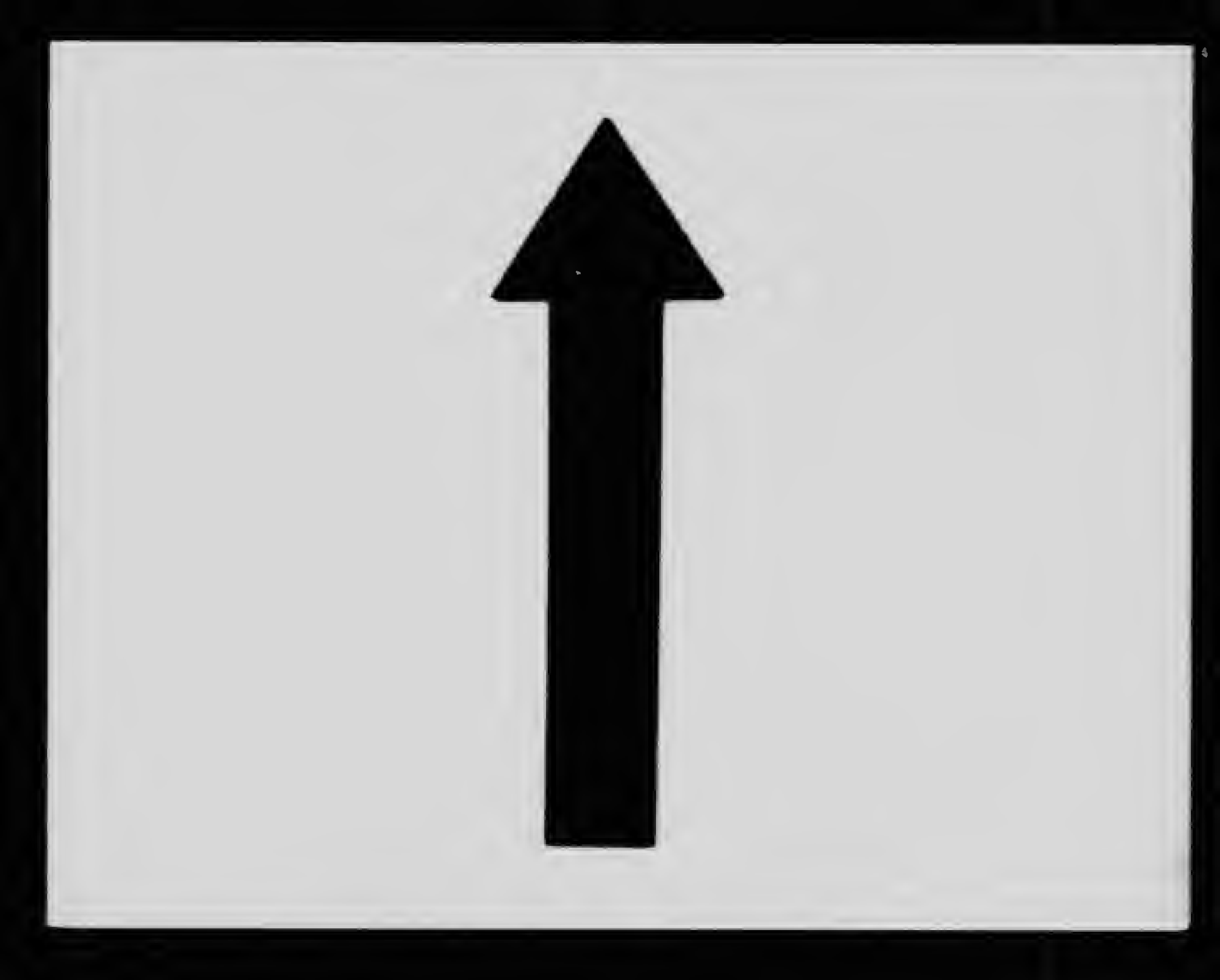
When they returned to the cabin, they told him exactly what to expect, but he was of that bright and sanguine disposition, and persisted in believing that they would come upon a drift, and if they didn't make a big fortune, they would surely make a nice little pile, but Jack and Billy, as we know, had given up any hopes of that kind long ago.

Captain Van Wick was a very pleasant companion, was a fine talker, and could sing well. He went to work and put up a mantle, and some brackets; and lined the cabin with printed calico, making everything bright and cheery, like himself. He handled his pick and shovel with a will, although it was easy to see the work was new to him. When it came his turn to cook, they had nicer things to eat than had fallen to their share for many a long day.

Of an evening, when they sat round the fire, he would sing a sea song, the young men joined in the chorus, and Bob would bark and howl and wag his tail, and look highly delighted.

It was a great deal more pleasant every way, for now, two could go out together, whilst the third stayed home to cook and take care of the cabin.

After the Captain had had time to get a letter from home, his wife used to send papers, pictorials and



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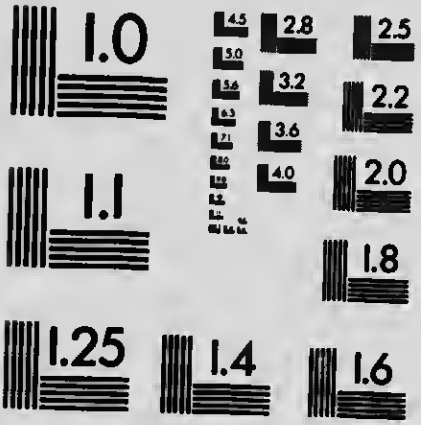

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pamphlets, beside the never-failing letters. Jack and his friend Billy, with their careful saving ways, thought this must be a great drain upon her resources, and said something of the kind to the Captain; so he told them that his wife had a friend who kept a book store, and when these things were two or three weeks old, his wife could get them, and it only cost her postage.

It was very pleasant and instructive to them to read about the outside world, and to have it pictured to them. The young men made the most of these privileges, and eagerly read and talked over with the Captain the books which also reached them from the same source.

Captain often spoke of his wife and of his little girl Nettie, and his conscience troubled him for mortgaging the property, as the mortgagee had foreclosed directly he heard that the Captain's ship had been broken up in San Francisco. Jack understood the Captain to say his wife still had some claim to a part of the property, which had come to her from her grandfather, and had not been included in the mortgage, and in which Mrs. Van Wick and her little daughter now resided.

INDIAN ENCAMPMENT.

CHAPTER XII

THE CAPTAIN'S DEATH—BILLY LEAVES THE MINING CAMP—JACK'S GOOD LUCK—HE LEAVES FOR NEW YORK

THE CAPTAIN, among his many gifts, was quite an artist. He drew a sketch of the house in New York, with the number upon it, for the young men, and another of the inside of the cabin, with Jack and Billy and Bob sitting there, the latter he sent to his wife and Nettie, and they prized it greatly.

He had been mining now nearly a year, and as he had to send money home, he found the "making a fortune" very slow work, for they never came upon a pocket or drift, as he had always been in hopes they would. He was just as pleasant and companionable as ever, but Jack, in his quiet observant way, could see it cost him an effort. He was weary of the hard life, and his trouble weighed heavily upon his mind.

One night Jack was awakened by hearing the Captain talking. He called to him, thinking he was just talking in his sleep; but the Captain took no notice, and kept rambling on. Jack felt sure something must be wrong with him. He got up and lit the lamp, and when he came to look at him, saw at once it was serious, as the poor Captain was burning with fever, his eyes staring wild at nothing, and his pulse very high.

He called up Billy, and they went to work and gave

him hot herb tea, and did all they knew of to relieve him. Just as soon as it was daylight enough to avoid the many pit falls on these flats, which had the appearance of gigantic open graves, Jack went off in search of a doctor, who returned with him, and pronounced it to be a very bad case of brain fever.

Seeing the serious faces of the friends he added, "but with a constitution like the Captain's, and good attention, he might pull through; but it is very doubtful."

So the young men hired a man who had been in the habit of waiting on sick miners; he was a very handy nurse, and everything was done for the poor Captain that could be.

When he came to his senses, he had a talk with Jack Gayford, and told him he thought he would die. He requested the young man to sell everything that could be turned into money, and send it home to his wife, after paying all necessary expenses. The friends promised, but refused to give up hope, relying on the Captain's fine constitution to pull him through,—but, he died.

After the funeral the young men gathered up everything that had belonged to Captain Van Wick, had them up to the town, and sold them by auction. Jack bought a trunk, and Billy a great coat. There was a watch and ring which had been down from one to the other, and these, with some papers, Jack had promised to take to Mrs. Van Wick whenever he should be in New York, as it was the wish of the late Captain, that Jack should hand them to her in person.

The doctor and nurse were paid with some of the

late Captain gold dust, and all the rest of his money was sent to Mrs. Van Wick. To do this they had to write to her, and that was the hardest task of all to them. There was part of the Captain's last claim still to be worked, and that they told they would send her later on, but for her not to expect it till winter.

Mrs. Van Wick sent them a very grateful letter back, thanking them for all their kindness, and saying that in all her husband's letters, he had written her how good they had been to him; and if they were pleased with the papers and pamphlets that were a little out of date, she could always send them, as they cost only the postage. Jack wrote to say they would be very glad of the papers and sent a five dollar gold piece to pay the postage, so every mail that came brought them something worth reading.

After the Captain's death, Billy got low spirited and complaining, and said it was very hard to be isolated the way they were, with nothing but work from sun rise to sun down; and that they might have been living in civilization, saved nearly as much, and lived like white people.

Jack got quite concerned about him, and used to send him to the store and post office when it was not his turn, just for the change, as he thought it might do him good.

One Saturday Billy refused to go, as he said it was Jack's turn, so Jack had to go for the week's provisions to the store, and then he went to the post office, although there had been no Eastern mail, and they couldn't get any papers.

Billy's maimed sister, as we said before, had gone to California with her husband and children.

They had settled in a country place, and the husband kept a general store.

There was a letter from him, deeply edged in black. Jack knew it was in her hand writing, and he thought to himself, " Now I suppose that's one of her children, and Billy's melancholy enough now."

When he got back he told his friends he had a letter for him in a mournful envelope, but it was addressed by his sister, so she was alright.

Billy found upon opening it, that his sister's husband was dead. She urged him to go to her at once, and take charge of the business, as her children were young, and she couldn't attend to it herself. She told him if he liked to buy it out, he could do very well there, and make money. For herself, she would like to return North with her family.

He showed the letter to Jack, and told him he would like to go, for he had been so downhearted ever since the Captain's death; but that he didn't like to leave his old friend alone.

Jack assured him it was the wisest thing he could do, for he had been worrying himself about him for a long time, and intended to propose that he should go to San Francisco for the winter. The good-byes were painful enough to both, but Jack took up his lonely existence bravely, his only companion being Bob.

When he was alone in his cabin he would talk to the dog for while, it was a relief to hear even his own voice, and he thought if any one was sneaking around, they would not think he was alone. But he really felt relieved after Billy's departure, the lad had been so

dejected since the Captain's death, it had made him uneasy.

Jack, as we know had come from New York, where he had left a widowed sister with two sons; so he thought he would send for her to come out, and bring the boys with her.

The mining flat was now almost deserted, there were not more than four or five men working. The drinking saloon was closed, the boarding house had no boarders, the town itself was almost as silent as it and the flat had been before the advent of the miners, and only the tumble down shacks were left to mark what it had been. One store remained and was more than sufficient to supply the needs of both places. So he thought if he could get his sister to come out, the two boys could assist in mining, and he could buy the hotel cheap, and make a boarding house of it.

The hotel was pleasantly situated on a road by which the stage coaches passed to and from the different mining towns; it had a large garden, and considerable land, and he thought he could make a nice home for himself, his sister and her boys.

The two friends had just cleaned out their claims when Billy's appeal from his sister arrived, so now Jack took up a single claim and went to work again. Of course he had his own washing, cooking, and general work to do, but his evenings were particularly dreary.

There were six miners working on the flat within sight, doubtless there were others farther off.

Jack worked along in this solitary way for six weeks, when one day his pick struck a rock. He flushed all over, for he thought of the many arguments they had

had about pockets and drifts, and the thought flashed across his mind, "Well now, is there a drift here for me?"

He scraped round the rocker in breathless anxiety; and there, sure enough was gold, so much of it, in fact, that he felt frightened. He knew his life would be worth little if any of those rough and desperate characters, always to be found round mining camps, were to come and discover his lucky find.

He scraped up the gold as clean as he could into his bucket. It had settled in all the crevices, coarse gold; what they had been getting was very fine. He dared not put it in the sluice box and wash it, as he had done before, so he carried it into his cabin, and worked day after day till he had picked out every piece, and then he set about cleaning and weighing it.

He cut up the tent and made little bags that held about two ounces each, and its value, as near as he could come to it, was about four thousand dollars. In all the time he had been working before, his share had only amounted to about one thousand dollars.

The rainy season was coming on, and he knew it would be scarcely safe in the cabin alone with his five thousand dollars worth of gold, so he made up his mind to take it himself to San Francisco.

He had a good heavy overcoat of pilot cloth, with strong pockets, and he put as many of his little bags of gold into these as he could, and sewed them up. The rest he concealed about his person, also putting a small portion in his valise.

He nailed up the cabin, took his blankets and valise and went up to the hotel. Then he made arrangements

with the boy, that if he would take care of Bob, and just look after his cabin, and see that nobody stole his traps while he was away, he would make him a present in the spring.

He got on the stage, and went along first rate, changed to the steamboat, and landed in San Francisco safely, gold and all; but he never felt easy till he had deposited his treasure in the mint.

When he received it again in gold coin, he placed it in a branch of the Rothschild's Bank, where it gained no interest, but was safe.

CHAPTER XIII

VISITS NEW YORK—NEW YEAR'S CALLS—MAKES MRS. VAN WICK'S AND NETTIE'S ACQUAINTANCE—THE WIDOW'S TROUBLES—JACK IN LOVE

JACK had been up the country nearly four years, and great changes had taken place during that time in San Francisco. He now had money and leisure, but he felt lonesome, and missed his friend more in the crowded city than he had upon the mining flat.

At this time the steamers of the Nicaragua and Panama routes were running opposition, and fares were very low, so he came to the conclusion he might as well take a trip to New York, as walk about San Francisco all winter, with no one there that he knew.

He took a thousand dollars out of the bank, got an order on the New York branch for five hundred, and the rest he had with him. Taking his blankets and valise, with a good basket of provisions, he bought a ticket for the steerage for fifty dollars.

Great improvements had been made upon the route, and, with the exception of a few days rough weather on the Atlantic, he had a fine trip back to his native state.

He arrived in New York clad in his rough mining clothes; so he thought he would dress himself up a bit before he went to see his sister, as she kept a nice

boarding house in a good locality. He went to the barber's and then to the clothiers and bought a full new suit; hat, boots and gloves, which made quite a transformation in him.

Next day he went to see his sister, confident of finding her as he had left her. But strangers met him, and when he came to make enquiries, he found she had married again, and gone West. He knew the man she had married, a widower, and his first wife and Jack's sister had been great friends when they were girls. Still it was a great disappointment to him, and his idea of buying the hotel had to be abandoned.

It was Christmas time, and New York was very lively. He made calls on the few friends he knew, and there were plenty of amusements to pass the time pleasantly. His desire for knowledge and love of reading had been fostered in the solitude of the mining camp, and he frequented Mechanics Institutes and Public Libraries till New Year's day came round.

The Hollanders had started the custom of calling upon this day, so he went to make his New Year's calls. The landlady saw him going out, and told him to be sure and come back for dinner, for she was going to give them something extra good. He returned to dinner, and then went to his room to fix up for calling again in the afternoon.

When he was ready to start, he found he had no pocket handkerchief. In turning out his valise to find one, he came upon a little bundle he had put away in some stockings; it was the Captain's watch, ring and papers. He bethought himself it would be just the right time to go and call upon Mrs. Van Wick. All

that was to come to her from her late husband's claim was set down, and he made it up to an even hundred dollars from his own pocket.

Making five, twenty dollar gold pieces, the watch, ring and papers into a neat parcel, he gave himself an extra brush, went out and hailed an omnibus, and soon found himself in the neighbourhood of the late Captain Van Wick's residence. He recognized the house from the Captain's sketch of it, went up the steps and knocked at the door. A waiter answered the summons. "I wish to see the widow of Captain Van Wick," he said to the man.

"No widow lady lives here, sir," returned the man, "but Mrs. de Lancy and her young ladies are receiving callers, perhaps you had better see them?"

"No, thank you; couldn't you tell me where the widow lives?"

Before the man could answer, Jack received a slap on the back, and a voice, somewhat thick from many New Year's calls, said, "My young friend, take the elder Weller's advice, and 'bevare of de vidders."

Three other gentlemen who had just alighted from a carriage with him, joined in his boisterous laughter, and the manservant grinned.

Jack felt an inclination to knock them all down the steps, but he refrained himself, and walked slowly along looking at the house. More callers were arriving, so he stepped into an alley way which ran along side, to get a better look at it, and pull himself together for the next move.

He was comparing the sketch of the late Captain's with the building before him, and making sure he had

not mistaken the number upon it, when he noticed a little girl looking up at him in a wistful manner.

"Well Sissie," he said, smiling down upon her, "where do you live?"

"We live right here," indicating the alley.

"Have you lived here long?"

"Yes, we always lived here. Mamma always lived here."

"Show me where your mamma lives, I want to see her," he returned, for he thought it would be a good idea to go and make enquiries of the child's mother.

He followed her into a square yard, on the right hand side of which stood an old fashioned Dutch house, such as had been built in Colonial days by the Hollanders.

The little girl opened the door, and running through the hall, called, "Oh, mamma, here's a gentleman come to call upon you."

He saw a fair young woman, dressed in black, sitting by a window, quilting in a frame.

As she rose and came forward to hand him a chair, he noticed how worn and sorrowful she looked. Of course she didn't recognize him, but she seemed to think it was some one she ought to know. She looked enquiringly at him, but treated him as a New Year's caller.

The lady began to talk, and he soon found out it was the Captain's widow. When he came to look at the little girl, he could see a great likeness between her and her father.

After Mrs. Van Wick had been telling him about the sketch she had, and of her late husband's partners, and how they lived in California, he told her who he was,

and both she and Nettie were greatly pleased, and couldn't do too much for him.

Mrs. Van Wick made him take off his overcoat and wraps, and stay and take tea with them. When she lighted up the room and stirred up the fire and he could look round, he saw that everything was very handsome, but old-fashioned. She made him sit in one of the old-fashioned chairs, and told him Martin Van Buren had sat in that chair many a time, and taken a comfortable doze.

He found Mrs. Van Wick both pretty and intelligent. The reason she was living in the home of her childhood was, that it had been left to her by her grandfather, and had not been included in the mortgage. She told him of all the trouble the mortgage had given her, and how she came to take possession of this house.

When she refused to give it up they instituted a series of prosecutions, and finally threatened to block up the alleyway, which was the only way of ingress and egress.

She went and consulted the lawyer who had been their adviser in better days, and he wrote to her tormentors, and told them if they interfered with her and stopped the alleyway, he would build a stone wall in front of their dining-room window, which opened into Mrs. Van Wick's yard, and would likewise stop their entrance upon the inner square, by which they would lose the use of a fine well of fine water. Since then they had left her in peace.

Nettie talked to him about Bob, and asked several questions about camp life and mining in her bright and childish way.

The tea was so nice, the surroundings so cheerful, Mrs. Van Wick and her little daughter so pleasant and refined, he thought he had never passed such a delightful evening in his life.

As he was to remain in New York for about six weeks longer, he asked to have the privilege of calling; he told her he had no relatives in the city and felt lonely.

After all his kindness to her late husband, and his attention to her interests in the claim left by the Captain, she could scarcely refuse him.

So they parted, and he went back to his boarding house, but he was not like the same man. The beautiful, sad eyes of the widow seemed to follow him everywhere, and he was also greatly pleased with Nettie, and fell asleep thinking of them.

The first thought in the morning was of them, and he went to several book stores, before he could select a present he thought good enough for Nettie.

He had to confess that he had fallen in love with the widow at first sight. He argued with himself that she was a delicate and ladylike woman, made to shine in society, while he was only a rough miner. Still he was an American citizen, and he felt, as most Americans do, that he was on an equality with any one. He therefore made up his mind to polish himself up, and make himself more companionable.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FAMILY FROM NEW YORK—THE ADROIT BOARDER —THE ROBBING AND ELOPEMENT—DIVORCE AND MARRIAGE

A FAMILY consisting of a man, his wife, and four children, came out from New York State the same time Jack Gayford set out for the western gold diggings.

They had had a farm in the interior of the State, which they sold; and as they intended to keep a boarding house in San Francisco, they bought and sent by way of Cape Horn, all the doors, windows and general furniture needed.

Mr. and Mrs. Milbert had been married very young, and their eldest daughter was now eleven or twelve years of age, and their youngest boy six.

The mere fact of having come from the same State brought them together on board ship, and as Jack Mayford was a steady young man, the acquaintance was kept up as long as they remained in San Francisco. They camped together on Telegraph Hill, and Jack assisted Mr. Milbert to build a s..g little place, consisting at first of three rooms, built of lumber bought cheap from a wreck, supplemented by other lumber which had been slightly charred, and which was likewise obtained at a low rate.

When Jack left for the Cariboo mines in the spring, the goods and chattels of the Milbert family had arrived, and they were preparing their boarding house; then they lost track of each other.

As Jack returned to his boarding house in New York, after selecting a suitable gift for Nettie, the landlady told him a gentleman from San Francisco had been making inquiries for him, and had made an appointment at three o'clock to meet him.

Upon meeting the gentleman Jack saw at once that he was a stranger.

"Do you remember the Milbert family?"

"Very well, indeed; and also what hardworking good people they were."

"My business with you is concerning them, so I must begin at the beginning, and tell you all about them, from the time you left."

"They got along very well the first year, for they all worked. The two little girls waited on table, and the father made a wagon for the boys, who collected in it all the wood necessary for use in the household. In fact they were saving money from the start.

"One day Mr. Milbert came home and said he was not feeling very well, and complained of a bad head ache. By morning he was in a high fever, and Mrs. Milbert sent for a doctor, who gave him suitable medicine to break the fever, but unfortunately the poor man insisted upon getting up and going out into the night air, and as he was far too strong in his slightly delirious condition for Mrs. Milbert to hold him back, he took a relapse, from which he soon after died.

"It had all come so suddenly upon the poor woman,

that she hardly realized what had happened, and her hands were too full of work for her to be able to sit down and think.

"When she went to her room she would relieve herself with a good cry, but she was almost too tired to take her clothes off, and was soon sleeping the sleep of the utterly weary, oblivious of trouble or over work.

"One of the boarders was a New Yorker, who had been raised to hotel keeping. He was a man of rather fine appearance, and good address. He had been to the mines, but found a life of 'ruffing it' didn't agree with him, so he returned to San Francisco to see what he could do there.

"He used to attend auctions, and buy up large quantities of goods, and then retail them; but he had a great deal of time on his hands, and he offered to assist the widow for his board and lodgings. Besides, he used to buy vegetables and fruit at a wholesale, and could supply the house at a much better rate than Mrs. Milbert had been able to do at the stores.

"He was very good to the children, and they all liked him. He advised Mrs. Milbert to make out to send them to school, and hire help in the kitchen. By this means the boarding house was better served, and became more popular, and Mrs. Milbert was doing better than she had ever expected to do.

"Things went on in this way for about a year, and then Mr. Chester proposed to the widow, but she had no thought of marrying again, and told him so. He professed to be greatly attached to her and the children, and said if she refused to marry him, he would leave San Francisco.

OX TEAM AT YALE FOR CARIBOO.

"The children were really fond of him, and wouldn't hear of his going away. So after a great deal of talk on either side, Mr. Chester and Mrs. Milbert were married.

"Things went along in much the same way; the children were sent regularly to school, they were all smart and got along well. They were also a fine healthy family and good looking.

"The elder girl being now nearly fifteen years of age, Mrs. Chester had paid the first instalment on a lot in the days of her widowhood, and she and her second husband continued to save money.

"It was the bi-monthly steamer day, and Mrs. Chester used to go down to see people off on the steamboat, who had been stopping at the house, and Mrs. Chester would then do the daily marketing.

"This day she left the cook in the house and took the two little boys with her with the wagon. She thought Mr. Chester wouldn't be gone long, so she didn't hurry herself, as he would see that all was ready for dinner; she had heard the gun fire, and knew the boat had left.

"When she got home she expected to see everything going on for dinner the same as usual, for they had quite a number of boarders; but Mr. Chester wasn't there. The cook was at a standstill in the kitchen, and didn't know what to do. Mrs. Chester hadn't time to change her dress, but went to work to help get the dinner ready in the best way they could. She got a very good dinner and served it, but no Mr. Chester put in an appearance, and only the two little boys came home to dinner.

ON TEAM AT YALE FOR CARIBOO.

"After dinner was over, she set the two boys to assist the cook in clearing away and washing up, while she went to change her dress. When she came to look around, she thought it seemed very strange, her husband's trunk was gone. They kept all their wearing apparel, and everything of value in trunks, that they might easily be thrown out in case of fire.

"She looked into the girls' room, and a cold shiver ran over her, for the trunk of the elder was likewise gone. She returned to her room, and went to the head of the bed, where her first husband had made a concealment between the bedstead and the wall, in which they kept their money.

"She would save up in small change till she got fifty dollars, which she would change into a slug. This she always rolled up in a piece of rag, and deposited in a hand satchel. Fifteen hundred dollars had thus been stored away in this hiding place, and when she came to look she felt completely stunned, for it too was gone. She sat down helplessly and didn't know what to do.

"After a while one of the little boys came in to say that a boarder wished to speak to her. This man told her that her husband had run off with her elder daughter on the morning's steamer. She almost crazy thinking of her daughter, and she would have given the money twice over only to have had her safe.

"When she recovered herself a little, she sent for me, as I had been her lawyer. Sent me after them, and I soon found out where they were.

There were no telegraphs in those days, and the start of one boat meant two weeks ahead.

"Mrs. Chester wrote to this husband of hers, telling

him she couldn't find words to say what she thought of him, but she had commenced a suit for divorce, and as soon as it was obtained, he must marry her daughter in the presence of witnesses she would send. She said she would never cross their path unless he refused to do the only thing left him to do; if he refused, she would follow him to the world's end and shoot him wherever she met him.

"The divorce has now been obtained, and Mrs. Chester or Milbert, as she will now be called, has sent me to you, Mr. Gayford, requesting you to be the second witness of the marriage."

Of course Jack Gayford went and did as he was desired; but the poor girl had already commenced her repentance, and was but a weeping bride. She lived in ill health for some years, and finally died before her mother, leaving no children.

CHAPTER XV

JACK PROPOSES TO THE WIDOW—THEIR MARRIAGE—THE CLEVER LAWYER—RETURN TO CALIFORNIA

After Jack Gayford's return, from the fulfilment of his next most unpleasant task, he continued his visits to the widow of the late Captain Van Wick.

One Sunday evening Mrs. Van Wick had a friend there likewise a widow lady, with one son. This was the friend who kept the bookstore, and from who the papers and so on came, that had been such a boon in the mining camp.

After tea, they all went to the Lutheran church, and little Nettie took possession of Mr. Gayford. When they returned to the house they had some singing and sacred music, and Jack was more than ever enthralled.

One week passed after another, but he could not make up his mind to go away, till April came round and very fine weather, and he felt it was high time for him to get back to work. He went to take tea with Mrs. Van Wick and Nettie, and to make his final farewells.

Nettie began to cry, and said she didn't want him to go away. He could never tell exactly how it came about, but that evening the widow promised to become Mrs. Gayford.

After some simple preparations they went to Albany for a couple of weeks. They had made up their minds

to go to California, but Jack wanted his wife to sell the old house first.

He went to the lawyer who had befriended his wife in her trouble with the mortgage and asked his opinion in the matter. The lawyer understood the people he had to deal with, and advised Jack to make an offer to buy back Mrs. Gayford's father's property, giving the amount for which it had been mortgaged, with all the interest and expenses incurred to date.

The mortgagee had of course made a good bargain, and refused to give it up; but, as the lawyer had anticipated, he offered a fair price for Mrs. Gayford's house; so she came to her husband with quite a nice little dowry.

Jack had all the handsome old furniture packed, not omitting the arm chair in which Van Buren had sat, with a lot of new furniture, and everything that was required for a good boarding house; this he sent by clipper ship round the Horn.

Then they all started for San Francisco; and after a good passage they arrived there safe and well. Jack rented some furnished rooms for his wife and daughter, while he went up the country.

CHAPTER XVI

MR. HUDDERSFIELD — HIS BEREAVEMENT — LEAVES IRELAND FOR UNITED STATES—PUBLIC SPEAKER—HIS SON-IN-LAW ELECT—HIS DAUGHTER'S WEDDING

THE landlady of the house in which Mrs. Gayford and Nettie stayed was very companionable, and tried to make her roomers feel at home.

One evening as this lady and Mrs. Gayford were sitting down to have a cozy chat, they were startled by some one in the hall, speaking in a deep toned voice, asking if Mr. Parks was at home.

After some time Mr. Parks came into the parlour, bringing his visitor with him, and introduced him as Mr. John Huddersfield.

He was a pretty good looking man, of massive build to match his voice, and probably forty years of age. He talked mostly to Mrs. Gayford, whose quiet voice and gentle ways were such a contrast to his own.

He went away about ten oclock, and Mrs. Parks' first exclamation, as the door closed upon his burly figure was, "What a voice."

"Don't say any more," put in her husband. "John Huddersfield is quite a character. He's a good speaker, and always speaks in favour of the working classes. He's a man who is honest and true in all his dealings, and wouldn't worry man, woman or child; but I don't

think he would be a favourite with the ladies, for he speaks the truth too plainly, and he's no ways polished."

Mrs. Parks looked at Mrs. Gayford, but never a word did she say. Presently Mrs. Gayford spoke up and said she believed he was a rough diamond and she liked him.

After this, Mr. Huddersfield was a constant visitor. He came early in the evening, and talked mostly to Mrs. Gayford. He told her he had been married when he was quite young, before he was twenty, and his wife not eighteen, that they got along as well as a couple could do for a few years. Then he went to collect some money for his father, as his wife and he were driving home, just as they got to a dark and lonely part of the road, two men jumped out, one on each side, and tried to get hold of the horse's head. It was a spirited young animal, and throwing up its head, dashed off for home as hard as it could go.

The sudden plunge threw Mrs. Huddersfield backwards over the seat, into the bottom of the cart; but there was no stopping the horse till he reached his own gate. Then it was found out she had broken a blood vessel, and they lifted her out in a fainting condition. A dead child was born the same night, and the poor lady was in delicate health for some years.

Then Mr. Huddersfield became a public speaker, taking part with the working classes, but finding his sphere somewhat restricted was induced to leave Ireland for the United States, to find a wider scope for his talents.

He went first to Philadelphia, and settled himself in a pretty cottage in the outskirts of the city. Here his wife's health was so much improved, that he found him-

self a good partner, and went into business as a contractor and builder.

After a while, a little daughter, Nellie, was born to them, much to their own pleasure and every one else's surprise.

When Nellie was about eleven years of age, he was taking her and her mother out for a buggy ride, when the horse took fright and ran away. They were all thrown out; neither Mr. Huddersfield nor Nellie were hurt, but the shock brought on the old hemmorhage in poor Mrs. Huddersfield, and she died in a few days.

Mr. Huddersfield didn't know what to do with Nellie and his home; so he bethought him of his wife's sister, who lived in the North of England, and sent for her. She came with her husband and large family, and took charge of the house and Nellie. The north country dialect which she had acquired, grated upon his ears, and although she was a good housekeeper, she lacked the refinement of his wife. So he resolved to send Nellie to school, and made his sister-in-law a present of the house goods, with the proviso that Nellie was to spend the vacations with her aunt and be taught housekeeping.

Mr. Huddersfield told his partner he must buy him out, for he couldn't stay there; that he would leave Nellie under his guardianship and go to California.

He made arrangements that she should come to him when she was eighteen and keep house for him. It only wanted a few months of that time, and he told Mrs. Gayford he was going to buy a house, and get ready for her coming. He would buy another horse, too, so they could drive a carriage and pair.

"Oh, you just wait till you see my lass," and he gave a merry look over to Mrs. Parks. "She'll not be all skin and bone, like some people, she'll be an armful."

Mrs. Parks would generally have something to say in return, and she was a pretty good talker, but he had so many words that she always came out second best.

He told them what a fine house he had bought and where it was, and wanted them to go and look at it. He had sent money to his lass to fix up her wardrobe, arranged with a friend and his wife who were coming out to the Golden State, to bring Nellie with them, and was negotiating for a handsome pair of horses, when he received a letter from the lass herself.

He came straight to Mrs. Gayford, his face in a flame, his voice louder and gruffer than ever, and bouncing himself down in the large arm chair he always occupied, took the letter out of his pocket, and shaking it violently above his head, as if he would like to shake the person who had written it, roared,

"Here's a pretty how-d'-yer-do. Here's a pretty kettle of fish."

Mrs. Gayford, who was reading, closed her book, and looked up at him. "What's the matter, Mr. Huddersfield?" she asked quietly.

"Well, you know the preparations that I've been making to get my lass out here, and how I've been looking forward to her coming eighteen years of age?" and speaking very loudly and in his deep tones, he went on, "Here's a letter, and she says she'd very much like to see her dear papa, bu she don't want to leave Philadelphia," and with a perfect roar, "because there's

somebody else! I've a great mind not to take any notice of this letter, but send for her to come right on."

"I don't think I'd do that Mr. Huddersfield," said Mrs. Gayford, gently. "You forget that you were quite young when you got married, and that your wife was not quite as old as your daughter is now. You have a friend in Philadelphia that you can trust, would it not be better for you to write to him, and ask all about this 'somebody else?'"

He quieted down a bit and said, "Well, Richard never went around with his eyes or ears shut; its astonishing I didn't hear anything of this before, as he is her guardian."

"I think that argues well for the young man," returned Mrs. Gayford, "for if he had not been of good character, and one her guardian would like for her, he would certainly have written, and——"

"Then you think its best for me to write to him, and find out all about it, and not say anything to Nellie?" he interrupted in his impetuous way.

"Yes, you wouldn't like to have her here pining and fretting, and wanting to go back again, would you?"

"No," he said energetically, and away he went, but came back a minute later, and putting his head in at the door, said he'd show Mrs. Grayford the letter he would send to his friend next steamer day.

The evening before the bi-monthly mail went out, in came Mr. Huddersfield, sat down in the big arm chair, and read the letter he had written to his friend.

"Friend Richard,—

"You know how I have been looking forward to the time of my lass coming out here, and have made great

preparations for it, and by last mail I received a letter from Nellie, stating that she did not want to come to California; and she would like to see her dear papa, but there was *somebody* else, and now I want to know who the 'somebody else' is, that aspires to the honour of being John Huddersfield's son-in-law. (Here he cleared his throat with a great ahem, ahem!) I want to know his pedigree—does he belong to the useful and producing classes? I want to know his age and weight; because if I am to have grandchildren, I want them to be strong and healthy and good looking. Now, I will tell you what I *don't* want, an old, long legged, lantern jawed, stick-whittling, whiskey drinking, smoking, chewing, swearing fellow for my son-in-law.

"From your old friend,

"JOHN HUDDERSFIELD."

"P.S.—Answer by return of mail."

In due time the answer came; it commenced:—

"Dear John,—

"I see life in California has not changed you. You are the same outspoken John that you always were; and to confess the truth, I have been grinning in my sleeve for the last three years, thinking that here is a love affair that would bring my old friend John to Philadelphia again. You may depend if this 'somebody else' had not been the right kind of person, you would have heard long ago. And his pedigree is, his father is an Englishman, and his mother is Scotch; both fine, young, good looking people, and his grandparents are still living, and all, of the useful members of society. According to your wish, I had the young man measured.

He stands six feet without his boots, and his weight is one hundred and ninety pounds. He is within two months of being twenty-three years of age. He is the youngest of five children, the other four being daughters. He neither smokes, drinks nor chews, and he is in business with his father, in a large furniture factory. It would be a great pity to break up the match, as he is an only son, and his father and friends would not like to part from him. So John, come back to Philadelphia and give your Nellie away yourself."

Then he wrote to Nellie, that though he was very sorry to lose her, he had had such a good character of this "somebody else," he supposed he would have to consent.

He also got a letter from the young man himself, a nice letter. In answer, John Huddersfield wrote: "You call her dear Nellie, now. I hope it will always be so. You can be master outside, but I hope you will let her be mistress in her own home, for it is always best that 'the grey mare should be the better horse.'"

About this time, Mrs. Gayford, who had obtained Bessie's address from her husband, went to look up the young girl, and she was a frequent visitor at the Gayfords' rooms.

CHAPTER XVII

MR. HUDDERSFIELD MAKES NEW PLANS—THE LITTLE WIDOW—THE ENGLISH OLD MAID—MR. HUDDERSFIELD TAKES THE LADIES FOR A DRIVE—FALLS OUT WITH THE OLD MAID—PROPOSES TO BESSIE—EXEUNT HUDDERSFIELD

After Mr. Huddersfield's return from giving Nellie away, he came in and said, "Now its all settled, what shall I do with the house?"

"Your daughter's got a good start, and you've many years before you yet, get married yourself," suggested Mrs. Parks.

"If I could find some one to suit me within ten years of my own age, I would. I'm not going to marry a young girl!"

Mrs. Parks promised to be on the look out, and if she saw any one eligible, she'd speak a good word for him and let him know.

One day Mrs. Park's met him and said, "Oh, Mr. Huddersfield, I've got acquainted with a nice widow that would just suit you; she's a brunette and small, and a very nice woman altogether."

"Is she young?"

"No, I think she's well on to forty, by the way she talks; but she's well preserved, and has enough to live on."

"How long as she been a widow?"

"Four years."

"Good looking, and young looking," he mused in a stage whisper, "has enough to live on, and in a place where ladies are so scarce."

Then in his usual stentorian voice, "I wonder she hasn't married long ago."

"I'm going to invite her to tea on Tuesday," continued Mrs. Parks, "and you can drop in as if by accident."

On the appointed day Mrs. McDuff came to tea. She was handsomely and becomingly dressed, and a very nice little lady she seemed.

Bessie was there too, and as it happened she was the first to be seen by Mr. Huddersfield. He looked suspiciously at Mrs. Parks, fearing she was having a joke upon him, and intended to introduce him to a young girl.

As he was being introduced to Bessie, Mrs. McDuff came down stairs, and he was introduced to her. He was frigidly polite, but gave Mrs. Parks a look over the little lady's head, that she was unable to understand, and which made her feel very uncomfortable, for she was well aware of his blunt, outspoken manner. During tea he would look over Mrs. McDuff's head and give Mrs. Gayford the same kind of look.

Tea over, Mrs. Gayford had them into the parlour to show them some pictures. Bessie stayed to help Mrs. Parks clear away and wash up. Just as they were putting away the tea things, Mr. Huddersfield came out, and laying his hand on Mrs. Parks shoulder, said in a hoarse whisper which could be heard all over the house,

"She won't do!" Bessie nearly dropped the clean cups and saucers she had in her hands, and Mrs. Parks remarked quite loudly and as coolly as she could, "Mr. Huddersfield, if you want some water, walk this way."

She got him out into the yard and shut the door, then she said, "Now, Mr. Huddersfield, you've got to behave like a gentleman; it don't matter whether she'll do or not."

"All right," he returned doggedly, "but I won't see her home."

"Now don't say any more. I don't want to hear it," interposed Mrs. Parks. "You can tell me when she's gone."

At about half-past nine Mrs. McDuff talked of going, but he took no notice; so Mrs. Parks and Bessie said they would go with her; then he offered to accompany them.

After they returned Mrs. Parks demanded, "Now, Mr. Huddersfield, what's the matter?"

"I know that woman's husband," he thundered. He had to leave her. She don't drink all the time, but she gets on drinking sprees, and keeps on till she gets the *delirium tremens*. Besides all that," and he seemed to swell out as his voice increased in volume, "she's got a lodger."

"Well, well!" said Mrs. Parks. "I think there's enough without the lodger, we'll drop her."

One day he came in and asked us all to go for a carriage drive with him. Mrs. Gayford excused herself as she was afraid of horses, and was unwilling to take Nettie. Bessie was there and eager for the drive, so Mrs. Parks went with them.

Jack, Mr. Huddersfield's horse, was in great spirits, and the ladies were proportionately nervous. All went well until they reached the long trestle bridge which crossed a torrent, tumbling among the rocks and stones below.

Here they were brought up sharply by another horse and rig in front of them. The bridge was not wide enough for two to pass, and one must back off to let the other over.

Mr. Huddersfield tried to make Jack back, but he only stood on his hind legs, and pawed the air with his fore feet.

The ladies thought every moment to find themselves precipitated below. Seeing it was useless for Mr. Huddersfield to back off, the man in the other rig got down, and succeeded in getting out of the way himself.

Mrs. Parks and Bessie looked at the lady in the other rig, and she looked at them, the two men scowled at each other, and passed on their different ways.

They went on merrily enough after that, Mr. Huddersfield and Mrs. Parks keeping up a lively conversation, when, all of a sudden, Jack pricked up his ears, attempted to stand on his hind legs, trembled all over, and ended up by trying to turn round and round. Mr. Huddersfield did his best to hold the creature while he shouted, "Ladies, you'd better get out; there's something wrong with Jack."

When she was a safe distance from the unaccountable Jack, Mrs. Parks said to Bessie, "This is the first carriage ride I've taken in California, and I'll not want another very soon. We narrowly escaped being thrown

SEAL ROCK, PACIFIC OCEAN.

over the bridge, and killed among the rocks, and now the wretched horse has got a fit; just look at it."

Two gentlemen who were passing, asked if they could be of any service, and went to examine Jack. They informed Mr. Huddersfield that the horse had the "staggers," but would soon be better.

As soon as Jack had recovered, Mr. Huddersfield wanted the ladies to get in the carriage again. That, Mrs. Parks declared she would not do. She would walk over to the mission, and take an omnibus home. This he wouldn't listen to, declaring he would never hear the last of it, if he took two ladies out for a carriage ride, and dumped them down in the sand hills.

Timidly the ladies remounted the vehicle, and reached home in safety, and very thankful they were once more to stand on solid ground, and no persuasions ever induced them to go carriage riding with Mr. Huddersfield again.

Some time after this he came in and said he was going away for three months, and had come to say good-bye. After that time had elapsed, he called on us again, and said he felt of some importance now, for he was engaged to be married. So of course Mrs. Parks wanted to hear all about the affair.

"Well, the lady is an English old maid. She was engaged when she was quite young, but being poor gentle people, they had waited and waited, and the marriage had been put off in order to get something to make a start, and raise a family on.

"At last the young man had an offer to come out to California as supercargo. He did very well, and bought some lots in a coast town, went to work and levelled

them himself, sold them again and made considerable in the transaction.

"When he'd been out here two years, he'd got a house and lot of his own, and he sent for his lady love. But was taken sick before she got here, and two weeks after he died; but he left her everything he had. That was four years ago. How I came to meet her, she heard I was from the old country, and she came and told me some man was trying to cheat her out of a thousand dollars; and she wanted my opinion. One thing brought on another till we got engaged. and in three months we are to be married. So I shall be away most of that time."

The ladies told him they should watch the papers about that time, for they would be sure to give him a puff; and he must bring the lady to see them when they came to San Francisco.

They watched the papers, but never saw anything about the wedding. At last he walked in again one evening, and Mrs. Parks exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Huddersfield, where's the madam?"

"That's all off, we've fell out!"

Mrs. Parks went into Mrs. Gayford, and told her. "Here's Mr. Huddersfield, and no lady. He says they've fallen out. Come along, we shall hear all about it."

It seemed the lady had come up to San Francisco to try to get the thousand dollars, and he met her and said, "Now, Betsy, you must come up and look at my house, it is to be your future home, you know."

She looked through it, and then said, "Oh, Mr.

Huddersfield, this is a large house; I could take in boarders."

"Betsy, I don't want to live in a boarding house."

"Well then, I could rent out three or four rooms."

"I don't want roomers," he roared, "and I won't have people prowling about the house all hours of the night. I want my house to myself."

"So they came away and Miss Betsy was not in a very good humour; but he had Jack and the buggy brought round and took her for a ride. They went some miles, and the lady was still sulking. On the return drive he told her that he couldn't get his business settled to take her back next day, but he had given her in charge of a friend of his. Mr. Simpkins will see you safe home," he told her.

"I wouldn't be seen walking with Mr. Simpkins," she returned in a scornful manner. He turned upon her in his abrupt way, and in his loud voice, shouted, "Do you mean to say you'd lend a canting old hypocrite like Jonkins a thousand dollars, and you wouldn't be seen walking with an honest man like my friend Simpkins?"

With that she began to give out shrill screams, and our old Jack took fright. Mr. Huddersfield said he might have bawled himself hoarse, and Jack would have taken no notice, but those feminine screeches made him nervous, and he shied from one side to the other. At last he went on a rock, and knocked the lady's bonnet down the bank, hanging by the strings, and Mr. Huddersfield's best stove pipe hat into the road. This vexed him so that he called Jack a fool, and gave him a cut with the whip.

Miss Betsy screamed again, and told him he was a

violent man, and said he had made the horse run away, and they would be killed; then she tried to jump out.

At that time very large hoops and wide skirts were worn; so he caught both skirts and hoops, put them under him, and sat down upon them. She began to scream again, and then she would laugh in a demonical way, as he called it, and frightened poor Jack worse than ever.

Mr. Huddersfield said to her in a very loud voice, "If you don't stop that, we shall all be killed, you and me and Jack."

So she quieted down, and he regained control of Jack, and at last brought him to a standstill.

He liberated Miss Betsy's skirts, and said, "You can get out now if you want to, but I can assure you, you don't look very respectable. We both look as if we had taken 'a champagne,' and had a rough and tumble fight."

He offered to take her back to San Francisco if she would keep quiet, and he went back and picked up her crushed hat, whilst she arranged her disordered attire as well as she could, but they were a dishevelled looking couple.

After they had been driving silently along for some time, Miss Betsy said, "I don't think you and I could get along together." To which he replied bluntly, "I don't think we could, Miss Betsy, and I'm very glad we found it out before we got married."

Some time after that he was talking it over with the ladies of the house and Bessie was there.

Turning to her he said abruptly, "If I was only

twenty years younger, or you twenty years older, you'd be the next."

"Thank you, Mr. Huddersfield," returned Bessie demurely, "but there's 'somebody else!'"

"Somebody else," he roared, in his big, base voice. "There's always 'somebody else.'" Grabbing up his hat, out he rushed, and they never saw him again.

CHAPTER XVIII

JACK GAYFORD PROVIDES A HOME FOR HIS FAMILY—RE-UNION OF JACK AND BILLY—SIGHT-SEEING IN SAN FRANCISCO—MARRIAGE OF BESSIE AND BILLY—OLD FRIENDS IN NEW QUARTERS

"Who do you think we came across in San Francisco?" Billy couldn't guess. "Why your old friend Bessie Akers."

Trying to hide his pleasure at hearing of her, Billy asked as indifferently as he could, what she looked like now, and if she was the same school girl she used to be.

"Oh, she's greatly improved. She's in a fine dry goods store on Market Street. She's very bright and intelligent and stylish looking, my wife and she were very good friends. They are staying in the same house, and think a lot of each other."

Billy made no remark, but seemed in a great hurry to reach San Francisco after that.

Going directly to Mrs. Gayford's rooms, they met Miss Bessie, and Billy surrendered to the old attachment instantly. He was delighted with his friend's wife and daughter, and Jack made sure Billy would soon follow his example and join the ranks of the Benedicts.

They took in all the sights of San Francisco, and with them went the lively Mrs. Parks.

One evening they went to see Caroline Chapman play. She was called "Charming Carry," and was one of the great theatrical attractions of the early fifties. She was a clever actress and an estimable in private life; but few people outside of her family knew why she remained single.

While playing in the South, a mutual attachment sprung up between her and a Southern gentleman; but their course of true love was crossed by the pride of this gentleman's mother; who insisted that Miss Chapman should not only give up her profession, but that she should throw over her relatives. This Carrie refused to do, and a faded bouquet, carefully stowed away, was prized more highly than the presents of gold which were showered upon her, for it was all that was left to her of the romance of her life.

Our friends were greatly delighted with the performance of the Chapmans.

Events followed each other in quick succession.

Jack had the pleasure of being best man for Billy's marriage to Bessie. These happy young people returned to the store and bought out Billy's sister, thus setting her free to return to the North for which she had pined since her widowhood.

The ship with the goods and chattels of the Gayfords having arrived, Jack took them up the country, and fixed up everything comfortably, in readiness for his wife and daughter, and a very nice place he made of it. He had a fine flower and vegetable garden, for things grow profusely in this sunny land, and everything presented a bright and homelike appearance, when he returned with his wife and little daughter.

After Mr. and Mrs. Gayford were comfortably settled in their new home, Jack asked his wife to go for a walk with him, and he led her into the grave yard up on the mountain side. Not many people were buried there, and those mostly miners, for the place had only been settled a short time.

Under a nice shady tree, surrounded by a nice picket fence, was a grave with a marble slab, and upon it the name of the late Captain Van Wick.

This marble head stone Jack had brought from New York, and erected to the memory of Mrs. Gayford's first husband. She was overwhelmed at his thoughtful kindness, for this was the first intimation she had had of his intention.

Mrs. Gayford's widowed friend, who had so kindly supplied the camp with papers and books, came with her son and settled near them: afterwards marrying a judge. So they had quite a little colony of their own.

When Billy and his wife came to visit at Jack's wayside house, he was the proud father of a very fine son. As Nettie was showing him she said, "Oh! I don't care how many boys they have, but I don't want them to have a girl."

Papa Gayford laughed and said, " they wouldn't have a girl till after she was married."

" I shall never want to be married," she returned seriously, " for I couldn't love any one as much as I do my Papa Gayford and my dear Mamma."

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