CALIFORNIA'S BIG MINES.

GOLD DIGGING THERE IS GETTING UPON A SOUND BASIS.

Pioneer Miners Doing Well in Montana—The Big Strike that Is Paralyzing Leadville's Industries—The Black Hills Swarming With Prospectors—Alaska.

SAN FRANCISCO, June 20.—All the talk of mining men now is of the Mother Lode, the great fissure in the Sierra Nevada filled with gold-bearing quartz, from which came the gold of California's placers and gravel beds, and geologists and mineralogists are examining, describing, and explaining it. Miners are beginning to understand that the Mother Lode is a big gold belt that has been tapped here and there only in a desultory, unscientific fashion, and that, although California has produced over $1,300,000,000 in gold, only the surface of the lode has been scratched.

The change that has been going on in mining methods for a dozen years is now beginning to be discernible as a revolution, and gold digging is getting upon a legitimate business basis. The four biggest mines in the State were abandoned and allowed to lie idle for many years because mining was regarded as a gamble for big stakes and not a business. The four mines referred to are the Utica, Calaveras county; Rawhide, Tuolumne county; North Star, Nevada county, and Kennedy, Amador county. The annual dividends from these mines are now reckoned in millions. They are all on the Mother Lode, a vein equal in extent to fifty Comstocks and richer than anything known in South Africa or Australia. Tuolumne county, toward the south end of the lode, has yielded $220,000,000; Nevada, in the centre, about $250,000,000, and Sierra, toward the north end, about $200,000,000, indicating plainly that the lode is alive and auriferous from end to end.

Several sales of property along the lode have been made recently. The old Summit mine, near Sutler Creek, Amador county, which had not been worked for twenty-five years, was sold by J. Tregloan & Co. to C. W. Randall for $40,000. New hoisting works are being erected, and the owners propose to sink a shaft 1,000 feet deep.

The Irish & Byrne placer mine, near Iowa Hill, was sold by the Superior Court of Placer county on the 8th inst. for $41,000 to Columbus Waterhouse, owner of the adjoining Hoorman drift mine. The claim lies between the Morning Star and the Hoorman, and covers about 800 linear feet of the channel. The probable yield, estimated on the basis of the yield of adjoining ground, is not less than $300 per linear foot.

The Louisiana, in the upper Coulterville district, has been sold by J. T. Gove to C. R. Treat of Chicago and C. B. Rustin of Omaha.

The Bondurant mine, Mariposa, has been pumped out and inspected, and if a test run of two tons of ore proves satisfactory, the mine will be bought from Bruner of St. Louis by the Red Cloud Company of Boston.

The 35-year-old suit and fight between the Morgan mine owners and Irwin & Fair, at Carson Hill, Calaveras, which has cost many lives and more than a million dollars, is reported to have been settled, and Carson Hill expects a revival of business.

The Bald Hill mine, near Angels, is bonded to Capt. Macfarlane, United States army, and is being developed. The ore body, like all others on the Mother Lode, runs northeast and southwest. It averages twenty-five feet in width.

The Santa Ana and Missouri, same district, are bonded to Salt Lake people, who intend to sink 1,000 feet before putting up a mill.

The Wheeler group, near Big Oak Flat, has been bonded to A. H. Ward. The mines have been worked in a small way for fifteen years by J. P. James, and the ore taken out has averaged $35.

The Mount Zion has been bought by a Fresno company. The former owner took out $14,000, and was then driven out by water.

The Mount Jefferson is now owned by Boston people, who are putting the plant into working order. The former owners made it pay until they put all their poor relations on the pay roll, spent more money for boosing than for mining, and broke up in a row.

NEW MEXICO.

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M., June 22.—The Hillsboro mines are producing pay ore regularly, and the Bonanza mill is pounding steadily. The Richmond, Sherman, Catherine, and Snake keep the mill busy with free ore, and are shipping smelting ores to El Paso. Mexicans are working the placers and making good wages.

The Alamos mine, in the Black Range, is in ore assaying 300 ounces in silver and $100 in gold, and has sixty sacks of ore ready for shipment. S. D. Felt of Kansas City has leased the Goodenough and the Cliff, and will begin development work soon.

The output of Hillsboro for the week ending June 18 was 435 tons; total since Jan. 1, 1896, 11,389 tons.

Hydraulic mining on the California system has not been attempted on a large scale in New Mexico heretofore, but the first of August the building of reservoirs and pipe lines for a big hydraulic enterprise will be started by Cleveland capitalists, who are now closing a deal for 4,000 acres of placers near Hillsboro. These placers have been worked in a small way by Mexicans since 1854, and they have made good wages by dry washing. The projectors of the hydraulic enterprise began prospecting and testing the ground last January, and in this work and surveying they have expended $20,000. Hydraulic engineers and experts from California have been employed to examine the ground and make plans, and their reports have been entirely favorable. A dam 150 feet high at the head of the Aminas River will impound the water, which will be carried fourteen miles in 30-inch steel pipe and delivered from the nozzles under a pressure of 360 pounds. After the water has done its work with the gravel and deposited the débris, it will be impounded again in the Percha on the mesa, and used to irrigate about 12,000 acres of land between the mesa and the Rio Grande. The projectors completed the purchase of a large area of placer ground last week, and will at once take up options on the smaller claims. The bed of auriferous gravel is more than sixty feet deep in many places where shafts have been sunk, and it is all pay dirt. The cost of securing the ground and establishing the plant is reckoned at $500,000. This is the biggest enterprise of the kind ever attempted in New Mexico.

ARIZONA.

TUCSON, June 19.—At the Johnson-Fitts mines, on Tomlinson Hill, a rich body of ore has been struck. The ore is of a queer character, but all over the surface is horn silver.

At Six Mile Hill, on property belonging to the Pierce family, it is believed they have struck a continuation of the Pierce ledge.

The shipment of a car load of ore from the Grand Reef mine, in Aravaipa Cañon, will be made to-day. This is the first of the regular shipments which the owners expect to make. The ore goes to the El Paso smelter.

Thomas Coleman, from Dos Cabezas, came in on Saturday with $1,400 worth of gold from Waughtall mill. The mines are looking first-class and the only drawback to the camp is the scarcity of water.

A beautiful specimen of gold was exhibited this week from the Mammon mine, in Pima county. The chunk was from a run of eighteen days, and is valued at $3,084. The Mammon mine is twenty-eight miles south of Casa Grande. It is a fissure vein, in slate, and has at present two working shafts, each 200 feet deep. There is a four-foot streak of gold ore that averages $27 per ton, and it is estimated that two miners can supply a sufficient quantity of ore to keep a ten-stamp mill in constant operation.

Joseph Goldtree of this city has shipped a car load of silver ore to the Pueblo smelter. The ore was taken from the New Colorado mine. It runs from 250 to 300 ounces and carries a large percentage of lead.

Placer mining on Sleepy Hollow is being carried on by means of dry washers, as there is no water. Two men went up into a side gulch a few days ago and took out $40 in gold in two days. All the miners are doing well there.

The Iron Springs Mining Company have decided to add ten more stamps to their mill at the Last Chance mine. They have thousands of ore to keep twenty stamps in operation. They will also sink their main shaft in the Last Chance 200 feet deeper, taking it down to a depth of 500 feet.

The Crowned King mine continues to turn out $10,000 to $50,000 per month. The operators have an abundant supply of water, and the indications are that it will continue all the year. They expect to close down, however, temporarily, to put in a new boiler.

The Casey brothers have made a discovery which settles the question of the depth of the Dos Cabezas mines. They have struck a vein of high-grade ore over twelve feet wide and apparently widening on the east drift of the 100-foot level. They had run a drift just above the lode and then sunk a winze with the above result. There is no doubt in the minds of those who have inspected the work that a bonanza is in sight. Many claims along the big ledge are being developed. The Dos Cabezas ledge that runs along the range for miles is seamed with hundreds of small rich veins, while the big dike itself will average about $8 or $10 per ton.

At the East Camp ten men are working two shifts on the Davenport mine. The shaft is down 136 feet and shows a vein of ore four feet wide. There is one foot of extremely rich ore which will run $300 per ton. The other three feet will average $40 per ton. One third of the value is gold and the balance silver.

On the McDonald mine an additional level is being run, all in ore; the vein is from five to ten feet in width, and will average $15 per ton, one third being gold. The level is now in a distance of 150 feet.

A new shaft has been started on the Great Eastern and looks very well.

In the West Camp two shifts are being worked on the Summit mine, driving a crosscut tunnel which is now in a distance of 500 feet and will intersect the vein within the next fifty feet. Two shifts are also at work upon the shaft to connect with the tunnel at the point where it intersects the vein. The shaft is now down fifty feet and will strike the tunnel at a depth of 150 feet.

MONTANA.

BUTTE, June 23.—The recent slight advance in the price of silver has given an impetus toward the resumption of silver mining in some parts of the State. For three years silver mines have been practically abandoned, and copper and gold have been depended on to keep the mining industry booming in this part of the world. Much silver has been produced, but only that which is found in the ores while mining for copper and gold.

Recently a few of the silver mines have been reopened, the price of silver being now higher than at any time since the repeal of the Sherman law. With confidence that silver will rise still higher, much prospect work is being done, particularly in Granite county, in western Montana, for new silver mines.

The whole Hasmark district is alive with men employed at the Trout, the Puritan, the Hobo, the Coyle, and others, all doing development work, and most of them extracting ores for shipment. All of the Hasmark ores are very refractory and must be smelted.

In the Royal district the Huntington mill is running with good success, the first nine days' run yielding about ten pounds of gold of extra fineness. The Royal mine is the star bullion producer of Granite county, and while the vein is not large, it is perhaps the most permanent gold property yet uncovered in the State.

Placer mines are doing well this year, and the yield of placer gold will be greater in Montana than it has been in twenty years. Reports from the Rock Creek placers are very flattering, and it seems certain that the whole country, hills and gulches, surrounding Quartz and Basin gulches, are rich in placer gold.

The Morning Star mine, on Castle Mountain, is proving an exception to the general run of properties in that district. Instead of being a silver-lead proposition, the mine is showing up an immense body of copper ore.

Reports from the new gold discoveries in the North Moccasin Mountains are very encouraging. Plenty of free milling gold ore has been found, and the only question is whether it will hold out as depth is gained. On the American Eagle the gold streak has been traced up the hill 1,100 feet from the discovery shaft. At every foot of the way gold can be panned out.

Helena men, among them A. M. Holter, A. J. Seligman, Barton Sewell of New York, and James King have bought the Judge mine in the Castle district, one of the richest lead-silver producers in that district.

A rich strike has been made on the Macaroni mine, in Hope Mountain, Butte district. The shaft on this property had been sunk 200 feet, at which point a short cross-cut was run, tapping the lead, which is of considerable size. The pay streak is fully two feet in width, and of a good grade of copper ore. The shaft will be sunk another 100 feet.

The sale of the Morris & Elling group of mines, at Pony, is now assured, and the pending negotiations will all be closed up before Aug. 1. Under the new arrangement Messrs. Morris & Elling will retain a one-half interest in the company, which will be incorporated on a basis of $1,000,000.

COLORADO.

DENVER, June 24.—The books at the Denver branch mint have been closed for the fiscal year ending June 30. For the last quarter of this year the receipts amount to $1,069,436, an increase of 110 per cent. over the same quarter last year, due to increased receipts from placers and mills and a decrease of shipments of gold to the East at slight premium, as was noted last year. The fiscal year, however, the gold receipts show a falling off of $1,416,621, due to the heavy shipments during most of the fiscal year of gold from the smelters to the Eastern markets to take advantage of the premium offered on gold.

The Miners' Union dealt the mining revival of the State a serious blow this week by ordering the Leadville miners out in order to enforce a demand to advance wages from $2.50 to $3 per day. Most of the miners were getting $3, but a number of companies were paying only $2.50 per day. The operators promptly closed down their mines, and many who were paying the regular wages demanded by the union joined with the other operators by closing down and dismissing their workmen. The strike quickly developed into a lockout, and at this writing nearly 2,000 miners are idle. None of the mines of Leadville are producing any ore, and the smelters are preparing to close down for lack of ore. This will result in the enforced idleness of ore haulers, smelter laborers, and coal miners, and reduced pay rolls upon all the railroads entering the camp.

The camp was getting in position to eclipse all previous records. It was recovering from the serious effects of the silver depression, and the time was not far distant when the operators undoubtedly would have advanced wages in all mines, for silver was advancing slowly, lead price and the water problem was being steadily solved. But the hasty action of the Miners' Union has completely stopped all plans of the operators and a struggle is now on that will not be easily settled.

The union maintain that they have the sanction and support of all the miners of the entire West and that they can hold out for months. It is generally admitted that Leadville miners are entitled, from the nature of the work, to $3 per day, but public sentiment does not uphold the strike at this time.

Deep mining at Aspen has been prevented by water, and up to this time the pumps of the big mines have failed to drain the lower workings so as to permit of further exploration work. A company was formed to unwater the mines, sink a working shaft which was to drain the entire district, but the company met with reverses and had to stop operations. The Smuggler Union Mining Company recently undertaken to go on with this work. The Free Coinage shaft is now 1,080 feet deep, and the Smuggler Company is to drive it 130 feet deeper. The shaft will be pumped out to the eleventh level, and a duplex pump will be stationed there to beat down the water below that point. Meanwhile the Smuggler continues to experiment in concentrating its low-grade ore, of which enough is blocked out to keep the concentrator busy for six years.

The lode mines about Breckenridge are producing an increased amount of ore. There is a growing demand in that camp for two or three custom mills. Six men are enough to furnish 150 tons of ore daily to the Jessie mill from the great quarry back of the mill. The placers are doing good work.

In Cripple Creek the work on tunnels and shafts seems to be as large as ever, while the established mines keep up a steady and regular shipment. The lessees upon the Republic, on Raven Hill, have opened a breast of ore sixteen inches wide, and they have explored it for a distance of forty feet. A car load of sorted ore from this discovery returned an average of eight ounces of gold to the ton. The Winter, on Gold Hill, has come to public notice as a producing mine. It is an old claim which has been worked at times by the owners and by lessees. At a depth of ninety-three feet in the shaft the owners have encountered a three-foot vein of ore that will yield a good profit. The Cripple Creek mines have to date paid out over $2,000,000 in dividends.

The Hahn's Peak district is making no great progress. The only shaft in the district to reach a depth of 100 feet is the Hidden Treasure, and the owners say nothing. Several owners of claims have pooled to sink a shaft to determine the formation of the district. There are three shafts sinking, and with depth it is hoped to prove that the lodes of Hahn's Peak are valuable and worthy of attention. It is believed to be a blanket vein camp, and that a lime contact will be found with depth. Prospectors are steadily going into Routt county, and are scattering throughout the entire mountain district. There are rumors that a rich mineral bearing ledge has been located ten miles east of Hahn's Peak, showing copper, galena, and free gold, and many prospectors have rushed thither.

The Plateau mine in the Pine Creek district, above Central City, hauled away its first wagon load of ore this week. It will run over $100 to the ton. The Comet, in Black Cañon, is shipping ore to the Baltimore mill, and obtaining results as high as $300 to the ton. A number of loads of ore have been taken from the Moose to Black Hawk. The C. K. M. lode in Black Cañon has opened up a fine body of gold ore running from $40 to $65 by assay tests.

The region about Nederland, in Boulder county, has always been considered exclusively a silver district, but some recent indications encourage the belief that the gold belt runs between Nederland and Ward. The Boyle brothers of Denver, owners of the Miner's Dream, in Nederland, have leased the Jack Pot mine and mill, and will make an effort to prove the worth of modern adding skill upon their low grade ores.

Several important sales of Boulder county mines are rumored, and the number of investors visiting the district indicates that considerable interest has been taken in Boulder county mines.

The wonderfully rich gold strike in the Lloyd lode, Mt. Sneffels district, Ouray county, continues to astonish the miners of that district. The streak is five inches wide, and of great richness. A large number of small properties about Ouray are opening up and shipping this season, and the Ouray district is in the condition.

In the San Juan country this season shows a substantial advance over last. The number of new mines being opened and the attention the large deposits of milling ore are attracting from men with capital seem to foreshadow a boom.

Capital has for years been shy of the Silverton field, but a score of the best experts of America have been sent into that region this year, and their reports have all been of an encouraging nature. Travel to the camp has been heavier than it has been in the past, and all signs are of a most encouraging nature. Last fall operators of the great mines of Creede bought a group in Maggie Gulch, above Silverton, and developed a vein with good results.

SOUTH DAKOTA.

LEAD, S. D., June 20.—Not for years have the towns of the Black Hills country been so quiet as now. The prospecting fever has become contagious. On every hillside, peak, and gulch are scores of miners at work on claims of their own. The country is being scoured for miles around, Open and already located, and which has in many cases been idle for years, with the exception of the necessary assessment work, hardly a claim can be found that is not being worked by pick and shovel. Miners who are out of steady employment are prospecting, and those at work are putting in all their spare cash "grubstaking" others.

The Homestake Company has paid another dividend, making a total to date of $5,808,750. The Deadwood Terra has also paid a regular dividend.

A new find, called the Gold Bug, has been made by grubstakers for a Hill City doctor. A shaft has been sunk thirty feet, and an iron-stained quartz has been struck that pans about 20 cents to the pound. It is one of the richest finds ever made in the district. It is at the base of Harney Peak. The vein has been traced some distance and is between well-defined walls.

The Woodstock group of claims south of Lead has been bonded for $45,000 by Eastern men. There are twelve locations in the group. A. H. Swan and others are interested in developing a graphite mine near Mountain City. It is shown to contain graphite to 35 per cent. Alongside the find is a mine deposit of roofing slate, which will be opened up.

ALASKA.

JUNEAU, June 1.—The season here is fully six weeks later than usual, a late spring following the coldest winter experienced since the organization of the country by our pioneers. But this has not retarded work in the mines to any serious extent. The long days are now here, and the working hours are without intermission. The weather here at present is as fine as one could desire.

The mines about the Silver Bow Basin, which was the first discovered gold district in Alaska, and still maintains its prestige. The Taku group of mines are in this district, and recently have been incorporated under the name of the Silver Bow Company. There are three of the leaders running parallel through this property, with serpentine hanging and slate foot walls. The ore has been mined through open cuts or pits, and from twenty-five to thirty tons per day taken out, averaging about $22 per ton. There is a tenstamp mill operated by water power, and more stamps will be added. The mill has been in continuous operation since 1889, and, as the ore is absolutely free milling, it has turned out a large amount of bullion. A drift has recently been run 110 feet below the old workings, which is now in forty feet. On the surface the ore assayed $6 to $8 gold, but is gradually increasing in value with depth. Twenty-five men are employed in mill and mines, but fifteen are able to keep the mill supplied with ore.

The owners of the Utica gold mine, in California, Lane & Hayward, have purchased two claims in Silver Bow Basin, and have incorporated under the name of the Juneau Mining Company. There are two mills on the property, running day and night, the stamp mill being run by water on ore that gives $14 per ton besides the sulphurets.

The Nowell Gold Mining Company are operating quartz and placer mines in Silver Bow district, and their quartz mines, known as the Ground Hog, group adjoins the properties of the Juneau Company. The ore is similar to that of the other mines, and is worked by a twenty-stamp water mill. The hydraulic mines use two giants, and are successfully operated from the middle of May until late in October, when, as a rule, these mines have been producing since 1890, and are among the first of the kind in the Territory. The company give employment to about sixty men.

The Eastern Alaska Company, which began work in Silver Bow in 1890, had their ten-stamp mill burned last Christmas night, and lost winter, and have been unable to recover it up to this time.

On Sheep Creek, about four miles south of Juneau, the Silver Queen Company are operating a ten-stamp mill on gold and silver quartz, which they contemplate increasing to twenty stamps this season. Thirty men are employed.

The Last Chance and William Penn are promising properties in Sheep Creek, which are developed by a tunnel run fifty feet along the vein. The ore assays from $30 to $40 gold, besides a high percentage in silver. The vein is traceable for three miles, and the country is strewn with surface ore.

The Bald Eagle mine, on Endicott Arm, was discovered eight years ago, and has paid from the moss roots down. The ore is packed from the mine two miles to the water, and shipped whenever a steamer on San Francisco, and sold to the reduction works. The discoverer, after making a rich harvest, sold it to San Francisco men for $60,000, and the purchasers have since paid for the mine and all its improvements and development out of proceeds of the property, and have a large margin of profit besides. The output of this little four-stamp mill in the past year was $100,000, and the ore has increased in value from $150 to $200 gold per ton. The ore body has widened in the mean time to four feet, and is traceable for 700 feet.

Snettisham Bay, forty miles southeast of Juneau, is the scene of considerable activity, due to the discovery of rich gold quartz, running into the thousands in picked samples, but uniformly of high grade. The Gray Bird, Gray Eagle, and Gastineau claims, adjoining the ledge owned by four prospectors, give an average of $50 gold per ton, the pay streak being twenty inches wide, in diorite and slate walls.

At Burner's Bay, sixty miles north of Juneau, the Burner's Bay Mining and Milling Company are operating quite extensively. Most of the ore is being reduced by a forty-stamp mill, mines and mill giving employment to 150 men in various capacities.

The Alaska-Willoughby Company, on the west side of Admiralty Island, on Funtner Bay, have completed a ten-stamp mill, and will start up in a few days. They have five distinct ledges, and have exposed extensive and lasting bodies of ore.

ALARM IN SPORTINGMAN'S ROW.

Litigation Over Mr. Paterson's Proposed New Building.

William Gubbins has made application to the Supreme Court in Brooklyn for an injunction to prevent the erection of a new building in Plaza street by C. H. Peterson according to the plans on file in the Building Department. The plans provide that the new building shall front on Plaza street and extend about three-quarters of the way through the lot, which reaches to Eighth avenue. The opposite side of Eighth avenue, from St. John's place to Lincoln place, is known as Sportingman's row, having received that appellation many years ago, when Mike Dwyer, the horseman, and Jockey James McLaughlin were included in the list of residents. Phil Dwyer is now the only representative of the sporting fraternity who is left in the row. Among his neighbors are Justice Gaynor, ex-Judge Troy, Mirabeau L. Towns, the poet lawyer, and Robert A. Furey.

They are all in sympathy with Mr. Gubbins in his litigation with Mr. Peterson, being opposed to having the rear of a house exposed to view from their residences. It is contended that in the original sale of the property provision was made that houses on the east side would have to front on Eighth avenue. It is said that should the injunction prevailing fail other means will be adopted to protect Sportingman's row. The work on the excavation was stopped on Saturday by order of the court.

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GEORGIA'S FRUIT REGION.

WHERE THE PEACH AND THE MELON RIPEN IN JUNE.

A Stretch of Pine Forest Which Has Been Converted Into Orchards and Vineyards—How the Georgian Fences in His Crops—Unearthing a Case of a Mild Hoodoo.

PELHAM, Ga., June 10.—Those peaches on the fruit stands in New York—a few now at high prices, to be followed by more and better and cheaper ones before the month is over, come largely from this neighborhood. They grow here on trees that were pink with blossoms while we were shovelling snow in the North, and they take on their rainbow hues and become soft and juicy while the Delaware and New Jersey peaches are yet walnuts in size and marbles in hardness.

This is not the largest peach-growing section in Georgia, but nature makes it the earliest, for it is only thirty miles north of the Florida line. To see the orchards that vie with those of Delaware in size, one must go a hundred miles north of here to the neighborhood of Fort Valley, where the peach is as much of an autocrat as the onion in Bermuda or the orange in Florida. It surprises a Northerner at first to hear the Georgians speak of this as the greatest peach-growing State of the country; but that is the fact, unless the statistics have been very seriously juggled. In the nature of things Georgia peaches can never be as plenty in the Northern markets as Delaware peaches, because every mile of carriage reduces the profits. It is only the early ones that can profitably be sent North, and when Delaware begins to ship, the Georgia peach must retire with a blush. After the early part of the crop has been sold, and sold generally at the highest prices of the season, some hundreds of thousands of bushels of beautiful peaches can be had in Georgia at any price, or no price at all. The Georgians have not learned the Delaware fine art of converting their surplus fruit into peach brandy.

There is a more romantic story in the Georgia peach industry than has ever been told. A few years ago, say twenty years, this Mitchell county produced little but pine logs and turpentine. But at that time, and indeed for several generations before that time, the central and northern parts of the State were settled and cultivated and civilized. In those distant days now called "before the war," the planters of Houston county, up in the vicinity of Macon, were accustomed to eat peaches in June. It cannot be said that they raised peaches; they simply let them grow. There were no big orchards, merely a few trees here and there that received no attention till the fruit was ripe, and not much even then, for a dozen other fruits ripened at the same time to take the glamour from the velvety peach. Then a few boxes were sent North for an experiment, and the surprising discovery was made that there were people in the Northern cities who would actually pay big prices for peaches in June.

When this news spread the people of Houston county became as wild as if all their peaches had been converted into brandy and swallowed on the spot. A few lucky planters who were early in the field made fortunes, some of them as much as half a million dollars, and people began to nurse peach trees in the motherly way that Floridians have with their orange trees. Land that was worth $5 an acre for cotton suddenly became worth $100 for peaches, $200, and was almost priceless when covered with bearing trees. Fortunes were made in a single season, and it looked for a time as if corn and cotton would be driven out of Georgia, and the whole State become a peach orchard. But presently that immutable thing we call the law of supply and demand stepped in, the sudden fortunes stopped coming, and early peach growing in Georgia became a regular and on the whole a profitable industry.

It was not hard for a shrewd Georgian to see that the peaches sold profitably because they were early, and that they were early because they grew in the South, and that the earlier the fruit the better the price. From this it was easy to reach the conclusion that still further south the fruit would be still earlier, and it was this conclusion that led eventually to the transformation of the Mitchell county pine forests into fruit orchards. Mitchell is a hundred miles south of Houston county, and the experts say that fruit ripens here ten days earlier. The boy who buys a Pelham peach from the fruit stand might find other things here to make his mouth water. Beside the peach orchards are fields of melons; and beside the melon fields are vineyards full of grapes; and beyond the vineyards are fields of pindars. Perhaps the New Yorker would not know that pindars are peanuts, any more than the Georgia boy would know that peanuts are only pindars. But by the time the Georgian eats his pindars they are in different form; they are first fed to the hogs and converted into pork, and then the pork, which he calls meat. The impression is current here that pork is really meat, and it goes by that name. Beef is beef, and mutton is mutton, but when a rural Georgian speaks of meat he means pork, and it is not made any gainlier or more appetizing by the circumstance. Mitchell county hogs are fattened on pindars, because they are cheaper and more fattening than corn.

Peter Parley's old story about the foreigner travelling in Germany and asking who owned this, that, and the other handsome place, and being answered so often, Ichkanerverstan, that he came to think Mr. Ichkanerverstan a very wealthy person, is constantly brought to mind here in Pelham. Without good evidence to the contrary, it is safe to assume that most good things here belong to the Hon. J. L. Hand. His is the big store that sells everything, and the big gin that gins both long staple and short staple cotton, and the big peach orchard, and the big vineyard, and the big house that everybody stares at. He is such a father to Pelham, and has done so well here, that he might easily be used as a shining example of what a man can do in south Georgia with no capital but brains and pluck. The truth is that the same amount of enterprise would probably have made him a successful man almost anywhere, for he came here literally with an axe in his hand and hewed Pelham out of the Georgia forest, and what he has he has earned.

It was Mr. Hand who conceived the idea of coming south of the famous Fort Valley peach region and raising early fruit for the people of the North—not only peaches, but fruit of all kinds. That he is a Georgian is worthy of remark. So many of the successful Georgia ventures are in the hands of men from New England, New York, and the West that a native Georgian among them excites comment; and, taking this Georgia pine forest and set out to convert it into orchards and vineyards, was a task that might have discouraged a Connecticut farmer. There was nothing but pine timber for many miles in every direction, and the first thing necessary was to clear some land and turn the pine trees into lumber. Mr. Hand hired men to cut and put up a sawmill, which he could not insure, because the companies have a 25 per cent. prejudice against sawmills in the woods. He had made just about enough money to clear himself from debt when the mill burned down, and he borrowed more money and built another. His experience showed that the companies were right, for in a year or two the second mill burned down, and he built a third. By this time he had cotton fields and corn fields in operation, and was on his feet financially. Gradually other people hired him, and the clearing has become a handsome town of about a thousand inhabitants, with a big back country under cultivation. There is nothing of the old South here at all, not even so much as a war reminiscence, for it was only in 1864 that Mr. Hand blazed the first tree; nothing in Pelham is more than twenty years old, and Mr. Hand himself is still a young man.

It is the country always, in these Southern places, that offers most attraction to the stranger. But there are some things in Pelham that demand a word in passing, not including the great cotton gin, which Pelhamites declare to be the largest in the world. One of these is the school. It is quite the fashion in these Georgia towns to say to a stranger, "Come and see our school," for concerning the school as a thing the residents are proud of, and good public schools are not old enough yet to pass as matters of course. But in this case it is not the beauty of the building or the quality of instruction that calls for notice, though both of them are better than the average. It is the number of children who attend it. Of the thousand inhabitants, a considerable number, of course, are colored, and the colored children have a school to themselves. In the school to which children the average attendance is reported 175, and 175 children of school age in a total white population not exceeding 750 is a strong indication that the population is increasing by other means than immigration. The other thing that demands attention is Mr. Hand's house. One hears about this house all over south Georgia. It is as much of a novelty here as Mr. Vanderbilt's place is to the North Carolina mountaineers. Nothing like it has ever been seen here before, not even in Thomasville, where wealthy Northerners congregate. Every stranger passing in the railroad trains turns to ask whose house that is, and what it means. And a visitor fresh from New York, where fine houses and grounds are not uncommon, is surprised to see here in the Georgia forest a house with a court yard covering five acres of ground, and grounds with marble fountains and the smooth-cut grass that is supposed to be a Northern peculiarity.

Going out into the surrounding country it is hard to believe that civilization here is only twenty years old. The old-time Georgians considered this pine belt unworthy their attention, and doubtless with their slave labor it would have been unprofitable for them, but not for the reason usually assigned, that pine land was thought inferior to the other lands of the State. To a disinterested spectator, going over the ground many years after the death of the old regime, it looks as if the impossibility of getting products to market was what kept the planters out of these pine woods. There were no railroads here in those days, and there are no navigable rivers at hand to carry cotton bales to the sea. Carting them for miles to the rivers would have eaten up the profits. It is easy to say, in this go-ahead age, that if there had been business for them railroads would soon have been built; but that was not the case then. The passenger traffic of a railroad through Georgia in those times was very small. The planters travelled in their own coaches when they travelled at all, the crackers lived and died without going outside of their native county, as they do still, and the negroes had no money. But the laws of trade were the same then as they are now, and a bale of cotton was not worth much unless it could be taken to market.

The newness of buildings and fields wears off very rapidly in this climate, and Mitchell county looks already as if it had been settled for generations. The roads, no doubt, have a great deal to do with the mature appearance of the country. They are good roads, as they are almost without exception throughout lower Georgia, partly because they are well worked and partly because it is their nature to be good. There is enough in the soil to make them solid, and sand enough to keep them dry.

The farmers hardly appreciate the fact that nature gives them as good roads here for nothing as we get in the North by expensive paving and grading. In a ten-mile drive here the traveller is sure to have six or eight miles of shade. When the road goes through the woods it is firm and fragrant with pine needles, and when it runs between cultivated fields there is still shade, for rows of old forest trees have been left standing, big pines and oaks, to shelter the animals and their drivers from the hot summer sun.

Even a city man cannot drive over these roads without giving a little thought to the question of fences. Fencing is quite as important here in such a country as this as street paving is in the cities. If a New Yorker should come down here and buy a hundred acres of pine land and pay for the labor of converting it into tillable fields, the fencing would cost him as much as the original price of the raw land. The cheapest fence would be the trees and does his own fencing, but even then his labor is worth a price in the market. The two systems of managing the fence question are made plain when one travels first through the rural parts of South Carolina and then through similar parts of Georgia. The South Carolina way is to fence in the animals, and the Georgia way is to fence in the crops. Here in Georgia, for example, John Smith, the planter, has a $1,000 field with $2,000 worth of cotton growing in it, and Tom Johnson, in the cabin across the road, has ten hogs worth $40 apiece. Johnson's hogs can't be allowed to keep out Johnson's $40 worth of hogs, because the hogs have the right of way over any roads or fields they can get into. In South Carolina, on the contrary, and also in several other Southern States, it is the crops that have the right of way, and the owners of them must be fenced in. No fences are necessary except around such fields as are occupied by the animals, and if Johnson's animals break out and destroy anything Johnson is liable for all the damage they do. To look at the thousands of miles of fences in Georgia, to think of and to think of the money and labor they cost, is to conclude that the South Carolina way is much better. But Georgia only follows a very respectable example in this fencing business. In New York state also we build the $500 fence to keep out the $50 cow.

The Mitchell county planter digs a well and walls it up as we do on Northern farms; but the Mitchell county negro, like his brother in Brooks county and Thomas county and all over the South, drives a pointed iron pipe and driven twelve or fifteen feet into the ground and attaches a cheap pump to the top of it, and gets his water surely and easily. It is convenient for Aunt Dinah and the children to have this pump as near the back door of the cabin as possible, and it is convenient also after the dishes are washed to throw the slops out of the same back door and let them disappear quickly in the porous soil and mingle eventually with the water that comes through the pump. After a few years of this mingling the pump water acquires a quality that escapes the naked eye and the exposed nose can detect sometimes, but that oftener makes its presence known by bringing fevers of the typhoid variety. Then Aunt Dinah says that "de good Lawd done took de chile away," when nothing of the kind took place but that ten years of dish water and other slops. This dangerous practice might be laid to the indolence of the negroes, but in various parts of the South some very intelligent white people do the same thing. The writer is acquainted with a prosperous Northern man in Florida, a Northern man originally, who has the enviable faculty of turning into money every enterprise he touches, and who was for several years Mayor of the little city he lives in. He married a Southern girl, a large family of young children, in a beautiful and romantic little house on one of his orange groves, where the well was close to the kitchen door. This was a dug well, but stones are scarce in Florida, and it was walled up with boards. Ten years from the question date he found the board walls rotten, so he put in a new wall of new boards inside the old ones. In a few years this second wall decayed, and he put in a third without taking out the old rotten boards. Of course all the slops of the house went into the well, and they did percolate gently but surely into the well. One summer three children died of typhoid fever, and the man changed his residence because the neighborhood was unhealthful. In the Southern country anything is possible where a darkey's superstitious nature is concerned.

Driving under the Georgia summer sun creates a thirst which sometimes becomes so clamorous that even the microbes of the cabin well lose their terrors. But Judge Tillman, familiar with cabin habits, put his foot down firmly against imbibing any dangerous experiments. As often as a cabin was passed and a driven well was seen, the sight gave new strength to the thirst.

"I don't want you drinking any of this cabin water," was his reply to all suggestions to stop. "Wait till we reach Col. So-and-so's and we will have some good water."

Presently, however, the road passed a cabin so shady and comfortable looking, with the well so far from the house, that there was no resisting any further, and the buggy stopped. To add to the attractiveness of the little place, it was occupied by a specimen of the real plantation type sat in a low rocking chair outside the shaded front door. It is a curious fact that very old colored women are rare among the plantations. Whether they work themselves to death or waste away in the prime of life, it is certain that they are not often in evidence, though aged Uncle Toms, with snowy hair and beard, are as plenty as dogwood blossoms. This woman was apparently eighty or more, but the color of her hair was concealed by a bright bandanna turban of many folds and colors.

"Porely, bless God," was her condition as she expressed it, but she hobbled in and brought out a shining tumbler for her visitors to drink from.

Why the old woman was "porely" came out gradually under the influence of a few encouraging words. She had no physical ailments but the stiffness of age. What her rambling explanations led to the assertion that "it had been set for her." What "it" was, or how it had been "set," had to be drawn out carefully, and the drawing out was retarded by the Judge exclaiming severely:

"Nonsense. Don't talk any of that stuff. You know better than that."

The white Georgian always puts his foot down hard on anything that looks like hoodooism, or voudooism, on the part of the negroes, and that was clearly the old woman's meaning. It is not to be tolerated for a moment, for he is convinced that the more ignorant held hands would readily rob their faith to false gods of lucks and colored feathers, to their own confusion and the disadvantage of their employers.

The "it" in this case was an empty bottle which had been hung in a tree in the old woman's front yard, had "brought her family troubles," and had been "powerfully" used to produce the bottle in evidence. And a real case of frankly acknowledged belief by an American negro in hoodooism would have been worth investigating; but in this instance circumstances were against the genuineness of it. With a real belief in it the woman would not have confided her opinions to any white person whatever, and it was apparent even to the Northern visitor that it was only a little trick devised on the spot to excite the interest of the white men and extract a few small coins.

It was in Mitchell county that an alleged agent of a colonization company gathered in many of the state dollars of the negroes a few months ago. He was a colored man with a good horse and buggy, and he had unfolded his plans to half the negro people, since he was, to have been left standing, big plans and a great tract of land in Liberia, he had leased, and every man who emigrated was to have so many acres, so many logs, and a mule. A vessel was to sail from Savannah at a certain time, and three ships would follow at short intervals. To enrolled it was necessary to pay $5 on the spot as a guarantee of good faith, and the other $20 could be paid just before sailing. It was a great enterprise that was to carry away half the negroes of the South, but the white man was to know anything about it.

Unfortunately there was a genuine emigration project under way at the time, under which a number of colored people were to be carried from Savannah to Liberia, and naturally the Mitchell county agent collected the fees