

A NEW GOLD ERA.

It Has Been Opened by Modern Mining Methods.

Renewed Activity in the Gold Fields of California—It Lacks the Excitement of Early Times, But Has a More Solid Basis.

The golden lining to the silver clouds that hung over this country a year ago is just becoming apparent. When this government ceased its purchases of silver, and the mints of India were closed to the white metal, the financial outlook was dark indeed. But out of evil good often comes, and whatever other effect these measures may have had, they have resulted beneficially in causing a greatly increased activity in gold mining. Never before in the history of this state, says the San Francisco Argonaut, have the prospects been so flattering. The spectacular effect that accompanied earlier mining excitements is wanting, but there is in its place an element of greater stability and permanence. The romantic era, when the population, red-shirted and roughly clad, wandered among the gulches and foothills of the Sierras, with pick and pan, searching for the precious particles among the gravel of the river beds, has passed into history. The more intensely dramatic era, when the fever of speculation coursed through the veins, when every fluctuation in the prices of stocks was watched with eager interest by millionaire and pauper, by the clerk in the counting house, and the serving maid in the kitchen or nursery, when fortunes were made and lost in a day, and when everybody was rich whether his wealth was evidenced by comfortable bank account or by a scrap of worthless paper—this second and more unwholesome era has also passed, to return no more.

The mining of today, while it lacks the element of wild excitement, is on a more solid basis and has a far more substantial prosperity. Mining methods are more scientific than they were, wasteful and extravagant processes have been laid aside, new and improved machinery has been brought into use, and private companies, operating quietly and soberly, are reaping a harvest unobscured even in the days when the delirium of speculation was among us. The placer mines have been diligently worked over. There are still golden grains and nuggets in the river beds, but not in sufficient quantities generally to pay corporations for working them, although individual miners can still make "grub."

But the placer mines at best hold only the overflow of the richer original deposits. The wealth in the hillsides poured over and the surplus was carried with the rain into the rivers. From north to south, throughout the whole stretch of the Sierra range, are ledges laden with their golden treasure as yet untouched. Quartz mining is still in its infancy despite the vast stores of wealth that have already been wrested from the earth; drift mining will yet add untold millions to the wealth of this state. The output of gold this year will far exceed anything of recent years.

Not in this state alone, but throughout the world this same renewed activity is seen. Colorado, prostrated last year by the repeal of the Sherman law, stands today as one of the wealth-producing states of the world. This year California will be closely pushed for first position among the gold-bearing states of the union. Two years ago the gold product of Colorado was less than \$5,000,000—\$4,743,000—while California produced more than twice that amount. The next year Colorado increased its output sixty-five per cent., while the increase in California was only eight per cent. This year the difference between the two will be still further decreased. In Montana twice as many properties are being worked this year as last; in Australia there is unusual activity, and the output of South Africa, which a few years ago contributed practically nothing to the world's supply, is estimated for this year at \$48,000,000.

When California, Australia and Russia first began, in the early fifties, their immense output of gold, prices were seriously affected. Prior to 1850 the annual product had never exceeded \$38,000,000 or slightly more than will be produced in the two states of California and Colorado this year. During the next five years the annual average was \$147,000,000, the highest point reached being in 1853, when the output was \$155,000,000. After that date, there was a decline in production. In 1873, twenty years later, the output was \$96,200,000, in 1883 it was \$94,000,000. Last year, however, the effect of the increased demand for gold was felt, and the output reached and passed the figures of 1853. The most careful estimates place this year's production at \$170,000,000. For the four years since 1850 the annual average exceeds that of 1850-'53 by \$12,000,000.

What is to be the effect of these immense additions to the world's supply of gold? The increased production of 1850-1860 resulted in a decline in the purchasing power of gold, or, expressed differently, prices generally rose. The same result should be seen this time were it not for certain other factors

that are at work. The increased supply is in response to an increased demand, and that demand will absorb the surplus as it is produced. Again, the world's stock of gold is far greater now than it was forty years ago, and additions that would materially affect the mass then would not be felt now. It is therefore probable that, unless continued for a number of years, the increased production will not affect the business of the world. The effect in California will, however, be different. The annual addition of fifteen to twenty millions to the wealth of this state is bound to affect all business beneficially. One year's output would be sufficient to build the proposed railroad through the San Joaquin valley. The cost of a new transcontinental line would scarcely be felt if taken out of several years' output.

ACROSS THE PLAINS BY WAGON

Wherein the Journey is Different from What It Was in '49.

A day or two since a family of immigrants from southern Kansas, who had traveled all the way across to Oregon in their own wagon and were five months on the way, camped a few miles east of this city, says the Portland Oregonian. So seldom do immigrants "cross the plains" with teams nowadays that Mr. Smith inquired how they had come to make the trip.

The immigrant said there were many more families on the way, strung along, when he had passed. He had become weary of the ups and downs of life in Kansas, and had started to make a home on Lewis river, where he had some friends. He was a man of some means, and had a wife and several half-grown children. When he concluded to emigrate he had nine horses, one of them a mare for which he had paid five hundred dollars. He could not sell them for anything, so concluded to drive to Oregon, save railroad fare, and have his horses after he got here. He bought a carriage and a cart for his family, and, loading his outfit in a farm wagon, hitched up his horses and struck out.

The man's account of the trip shows that, while crossing the plains now is much the same as in the days of '49 and thereabouts, in other respects it is a very different affair. For instance, instead of finding plenty of grass for his stock and game for his family, he found no game, and had to buy feed for his horses all the way, the "plains" being now comparatively a settled country. As far as wear and tear to wagons and animals goes, the trip was all that could have been anticipated. He lost all his horses, his cart and carriage, and came through the Barlow Gate with a pair of eastern Oregon cayuses hitched to his farm wagon, the wheels of which were braced with oak grubs and body bound up with withes. He said his five hundred-dollar mare was stolen, and the others had succumbed to all-kill water and other things. He now says it would have been cheaper to shoot his horses and come by railroad. He could have arrived at his destination in three days from the time he started at a cost of about two hundred dollars. However he did not care. They had seen the country, and had at last reached the promised land.

From the Kansas man's account there are several severe families following on his trail. It is a comfort to know that there will be no trouble in finding bread for them, and bacon, too, should any of them chance to arrive hungry, as was often the case in days gone by.

SQUADRONS OF HORSE FLIES.

A Frenchman's Scheme for Carrying Disease into the Camp of the Enemy.

Some amusing particulars of the inventions that have been offered to the French war office since 1871 have recently been published in a French newspaper, the majority of which, according to the London Court Journal, are about equal to the Laputan scheme for plowing fields, namely, by sowing acorns in rows and then turning in pigs to root them up. One genius sought a patent for the training of squadrons of horse flies. These auxiliaries were to be fed exclusively on blood served up beneath the delicate epidermis of mechanical figures clothed in the uniforms of members of the triple alliance, so that when political relations in Europe were strained the flies might be given daily a little of the juice of certain poisonous plants, and on actual declaration of war be turned out in the path of the enemy. Another ingenious person proposed a scheme for educating war dogs. In times of peace he would train French dogs to bite lay figures wearing Prussian helmets, in order that on the outbreak of the war the kennel of the whole country might be mobilized and let loose on the enemy. Then there are numerous proposals for bridging rivers by means of ropes attached to cannon balls, and a photographer suggests a novel kind of captive mail, which, breaching over the fortified position of an enemy, would disclose a small camera attached to a parachute. The enemy's fortifications would be instantaneously photographed and the apparatus hauled back by the string and the negatives developed at leisure. Two ideas are very inhuman. One is a scheme for sending large quantities of poisoned needles, as if in charity, to the enemy's generals, who would of course, distribute them to

their forces, and so poison their unfortunate users; and the other to charge explosive bullets with pepper. Two objects are pursued by the inventor of the pepper—its discharge would blind the enemy and the great demand for the condiment in time of war would stimulate the trade of the French colonies and increase the revenue of the country. There are also many other equally absurd proposals, such as suggestions for making soap by machinery, growing potatoes on barbed roofs in December and killing whole army corps of Prussians by post—but they are too numerous to be mentioned.

Why the Dog Turns Round.

Have you ever thought why it is that a dog turns around and around when he jumps up on his cushion or starts to settle himself anywhere for a nap? Now you are reminded you can recall that you have seen a dog do it many times, can't you? This habit is about as old as left to our tame little dogs of the days long ago, when they were a race of wild animals and lived in the woods. Their beds there were matted grass and leaves, and it was to trample enough grass and properly arrange the leaves that the dog always trod around a narrow circle before he would lie down. The dog of today keeps up the same old habit, although there is no longer any need for it, and, of course, the animal has no notion why he does it.

Material in Pianos.

There are forty-eight different materials used in constructing a piano, from no fewer than sixteen different countries, employing forty-five different hands.

If There's a Lot of It, It Shows That He Is New to the Business.

"I can tell after a single glance at the baggage carried by a drummer about how long he has been on the road," said a lawyer at the Commercial Travelers' club, according to the New York World. "When the young man first starts out to the grand tour of the west or south he is likely to carry in one trunk enough samples to stock a village store. Another trunk will contain changes of clothing and linen sufficient for a trip around the world. He will carry two large hand satchels—one containing samples, the other a bountiful supply of gents' furnishings and toilet articles. Two overcoats—one light, the other heavy—a shawl or blanket, and a mackintosh rolled up and strapped, a leather hat-box containing a 'sixer,' an umbrella and a cane, and a large pair of field-glasses swung over his shoulders on a strap will complete the outfit.

"Six months later this young man will have discarded one of the trunks, the hat-box, the cane and the field-glasses. At the end of a year two satchels and the umbrella will comprise his belongings. He has gradually learned that every first-class hotel in the country can do laundry work in twelve hours; that umbrellas can be hired at the check room; that one middle-weight overcoat is sufficient for his wants; that a cane is in the way; that the place for a silk hat is on the head, or better still, that a derby is good enough; that blankets are supplied in the Pullman service; that field-glasses are only to use on race tracks, and then behold the angel of commerce with his change of linen on one side and his samples on the other of a single traveling bag, selling more goods in a day than he formerly sold in a week, and not paying out from \$3 to \$10 a day on excess of baggage."

Tons of Silver Around the Altar.

The erection of the magnificent canopy over the high altar of Our Lady in the shrine of Guadalupe in the City of Mexico has been completed. The pillars to support it are each of a solid block of polished Scotch granite, weighing seven tons. The diameter of each pillar is three feet and the height twenty feet. The altar will be ready for dedication on December 12 (Guadalupe day), and will be the most elaborate and costly one in America. The additions to the church edifice will not be completed for nearly two years at the present rate of progress. When finished, the Shrine of the Lady of Guadalupe will be one of the notable Catholic church edifices of the world. The solid silver altar railing weighs twenty-six tons, and many millions of dollars are in other ways represented in the palatial place of worship.

London's Smoke Must Go.

The ever prevailing problem of how to do away with the London smoke has been solved. It is reported, by Col. Duller, of the Belgian engineers, who has discovered an easy and economical method of disposing of it. The method is thus described: The smoke enters a chimney-shaped like the letter N; at the bottom of the left-hand leg it is met by a small jet of steam, which saturates the smoke and accelerates the draught; at the top of the leg a spray of water drives down the soot and noxious products, allowing only almost pure vapor to escape up the last leg. Half the acids and 94 per cent of the soot are thus removed; they are sent down into the sewers, where they act as disinfectants. The system can be applied to a factory for about \$250 and to a dwelling house for \$12 or \$15.

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Range from Meadow Creek to Henry's take on both sides of Madison river. Brand as shown in cut. Cattle branded on left ribs, same brand. Down cut dulp. Post office address, Virginia City, Montana.

Alex. Metzel.

P. O. address, Puller Springs, Montana. Cattle and Horse brand circle A on left shoulder. Thoroughbred cattle and American horses are branded J on left jaw. Vent, same brand on left thigh.

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President and Manager.....ALEX. METZEL. Secretary and Treasurer.....F. S. METZEL. Foreman.....W. O. METZEL.

P. O. address, Puller Springs, Montana. Cattle brand as shown in cut; horses same brand on left thigh. Vent for cattle same on left thigh; for horses, same under mane. Cattle cropped on right ear, and with down-cut dewlap on bris-ket.

Range, upper Ruby valley, from lower to upper canyon, including all tributaries.

Jack Taylor.

P. O. address, Virginia City, Montana. Horse brand, circle T on left shoulder. Cattle brand as shown in cut. Range, Madison divide.

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