Nancy Harris, Pioneer.

An Aged Woman's Stories of the Gold Fever in California.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 30.—The bill recently offered in the legislature of California at Sacramento to give a pension of $300 a year to aged Nancy Harris, of Los Angeles county, will not become a law, but it has turned attention to one of the most wonderful women of the Pacific coast. She lives in a rude, rough wooden house near the mouth of the long and wide San Gabriel canyon, 24 miles northwest from Pomona, and twenty-two miles east from Los Angeles city. She has been an invalid for several years, and but for her granddaughter's family would be a subject of public charity. Several women of Pasadena have now taken her case in hand, and she will probably be well provided for during her remaining days.

Nancy Harris is the widow of Daniel Harris. She was the third white woman to come across the plains to California, and she is one of the few persons now living who was well acquainted with Jim Marshall, the first white American to find gold on the Pacific coast. It is also believed that she was the first among persons now living to come by ox team to California. Her memory is good, and she never tires of telling of the picturesque life in the Golden state of California as she saw it in her early womanhood. She long ago learned to smoke cigarettes with the Spanish senoras and senoritas, and the visitor who brings her a few packages of cigarette tobacco and a book of cigarette papers (for the old lady is as dexterous as a Spanish dude in rolling her own cigarettes) may have an hour of interesting tales about a romantic life.

She was born in Gloucester, Mass., in 1823, and her relatives were whalers and fisherfolks. In 1837, when a girl of fourteen years, her father gave up fishing, and, hearing of the possibilities of fortune on the frontier of Missouri and Illinois in those days, started for the West. Chicago was the objective point. They traveled by the Erie canal to Buffalo, and were three weeks going on a boat from Buffalo to Chicago via the lakes. Chicago was at that time a place of 3,000 or 5,000 inhabitants. In 1840, when Mrs. Harris' father became convinced that Chicago was on the decline, and would retrograde into a wild Western village, the family removed to St. Louis, which was then a fast-growing city of some 12,000 population. There Mrs. Harris was married in 1842. She was eighteen years old at the time, and her young husband had received letters from an uncle, who was a sailor, saying there was a fortune to be made on the Pacific coast in dealing with the Indians for furs. The young people talked over a project of going to California almost daily during the first year of their married life. That was six or seven years before Marshall found the gold in Sutter's mill race, and no one but a few restless traders and daring missionaries among the Indians ever went across the plains from the East to the Pacific coast.

Several more letters came from the sailor uncle, and young Harris and his wife decided that they would risk their lives in traveling across the prairies and mountains to the Pacific ocean. They heard of two young Catholic priests who were getting ready to start across the plains for Sutter's Fort with the intention of being teachers among the Indians, and a few weeks later they found, also, that a company of young men, fired with a spirit of adventure and a desire to become traders among the Spanish and the Indians, were about to start from Fort Leavenworth for California. When the party was made up for the journey in April, 1842, there were twenty-two men and two women in the party. Mrs. Harris says that for days her friends and relatives besought her and her husband to abandon their plan to journey across the plains, and her brothers and sisters wept bitterly at what they believed was constructive suicide by going out with a little band of men among untold thousands of fierce savages.

"We were from April 11 until Sept. 28 in going from Fort Leavenworth to what is now Colfax, Cal., Mrs. Harris' says. "We hired a man at Fort Leavenworth, who had been across the plains once, for our guide. I believe he was to get $300 for his work, and he expected to become a sailor when he reached this coast.

"Our first mishap was on the Platte river, where a young man named Dawson was captured by the Indians and stripped of his clothing. They let him go and then followed him, so that without knowing it he acted as their guide to our camp. The redskins surrounded our camp and remained all night, but when daylight showed them our strength they went away. We had a picket guard about the camp nearly every night we were on the plains. We saw literally millions of buffalo. Many a time the galloping of immense herds of the beasts across the prairies sounded like distant thunder.

"We left our wagons this side of Salt lake and finished our journey on horseback and drove our cattle. At one place the Indians surrounded us, armed with their bows and arrows, but my husband and four other men levelled their guns at the chief and made him order his Indians out of arrow range. Before we had been two months on the plains we had become so used to hardships, had seen four of our party welcome death from sickness, and had had such frights at threatened death by the savages, that we lost a good part of the natural alarm that one has when environed by danger.

"We crossed the Sierra Nevadas at the head waters of the San Joaquin river. On Sept. 1 we camped on the summit. It was my twentieth birthday. That day one of the priests in our party drank at a spring of clear, cold water. It was strong alkali water, however, and he came near dying in the next few days, and it ruined his stomach so that he lived only a year longer. We had a difficult time to find a way down the mountains. At one time I was left alone for nearly half a day, and as I was afraid of Indians I sat all the while with my six-months-old baby in my lap on the back of my horse, which was a fine race animal. It seemed to me while I was there alone that the moaning of the winds through the pines was the loneliest sound I had ever heard.

"One old man gave out, and we had to threaten to shoot him before he would attempt to descend the mountain. At one place four pack animals fell over a bluff and they went so far that we never attempted to recover the sacks. We were then out of provisions, having killed and eaten all our cattle. I walked barefooted until my feet were blistered, and lived on roasted acorns for two days. My husband came very near dying with cramps, and it was suggested that we should leave him, but I said I would never do that, and we killed a horse and ate the meat and remained over till the next day, when he was able to travel. Then we ran short of water twice, and the thirst we endured once for two days and nights was the most horrible experience I have ever known. If we had not found water just when we did I believe I should have gone crazy. I have read a barrel of stories of the sufferings and privations of pioneers who came across the plains fifty years ago, and I have seen few exaggerated ones. Had we known what was in store for us, nothing in all the world could have induced any one in our party to have suffered the hardships and run the risk we did. We found plenty of game on the San Joaquin plains, which we killed for meat.

"My husband's cousin and a man named Jones had strayed from the company while in the mountains, and we supposed they were dead, but my husband when hunting discovered their tracks and reported that they were surely alive. At one place I was so weak I could not stand, and I lay on the ground while Mr. Harris went out and killed a deer. We were then near the Sepulvida ranch, which was close to what is now Martinez. Mr. Jones, one of the supposed dead men, and one of Sepulvida's Indians rode into our camp and brought with them some farina for me. We arrived at Sepulvida's on Oct. 14, 1843.

"We met Gen. Sutter at Alvarado's hacienda, and in December we went up with Sutter in a leaky rowboat to his fort. We were fifteen days making the trip. The boat was manned by Indians, and Sutter instructed them to swim to the shore with me and the child if the boat should capsize. That is only a sample of the chances we took with our lives every day in those pioneer times. When we wanted to eat, we landed, angled for fish or hunted for game, cooked and ate it, and then moved on. We arrived at the stockade that Sutter called a fort just as the winter rains set in, about the middle of December.

"Gen. Sutter was very hospitable, and we paid him a few dollars a week—$3, I think—for remaining there until February or March, I don't quite remember the exact month now. The old building was a great barn-like affair, and the household equipment the very plainest and most primitive. It is now the property of the state of California, and is a sort of Plymouth Rock of this state. My husband used to go out with the Mexicans who were in the employ of Gen. Sutter and vainly look for something which he could develop into an industry or business, but he was too young or he did not have the ability to see the future good things. I can tell you, we spent some terribly homesick days at Sutter's place. Many a night I have wept myself to sleep. In later years when we saw the millions of dollars made in the gold diggings north and east of Sacramento. I recalled the fact that, while my poor husband was tramping over Central California, almost beside himself because he had brought his wife away out to a strange land, far away from civilization, he had many a time passed by and even gone among gold deposits that would have made him a combined Vanderbilt and Gould had he but known.

"Along in May, 1844, Gen. Sutter heard from some friendly Indians that the white settlers in Oregon and Northern California, up near where the Modoc Indian war took place, were making money by buying furs from the Indians and selling them to the trading agents for the Astor company and some English buyers, who sailed up and down the coast for the purpose. So we started for Oregon. I have been told by some California historians that I was one of the first white women to make the journey, which was dangerous in those days, I can assure you. There were fourteen men in our party. We went up the east side of the Sacramento river for about forty miles, and then crossed over by swimming our horses and cattle, of which the crowd had quite a number. It was there I first witnessed the killing of an Indian. The men were all out trying to drive the stock into the river, and I was left alone in camp, when several nude Indians came in, and as I thought they intended to steal I stepped to a tree where the guns were. As they approached me I warned them away. I marvel now how I ever dared so much, and my grandchildren cannot believe I was in my senses to have stayed as I did in such a barbarous country.

"My husband saw from where he was that Indians were in camp, and sent one of the men, whom he called Bear Dawson, to protect me. Dawson was a reckless young man, and as he rode up he ordered the Indians to go, but they drew their bows on him and reversed the order. Then he drew his pistol and killed one of them and the rest fled. The Indian fell within six feet of me. After that my husband got one of the Indians to swim across the river and tow the canoe in which the child and I were sitting. The Indian took me across all right, because he knew they had their guns bearing on him.

"There's a heap of adventures I could tell you about those days. One night, when near Shasta Butto, we had twenty horses stolen from our party by the Indians, and a nice mare was shot and killed with an arrow within forty feet of where I was sleeping. The next morning we had a fight with the Indians, and I myself counted five of them as they went down before the guns of the men in our party.

"In going down one of the Siskiyou mountains the Indians killed several of our horses and cattle. We went as far as Oregon City, but there we found that the profit of dealing in furs had been exaggerated and there was no money in it for any one not used to the business and possessed of lots of capital. We lived at Oregon City for five months. My husband and I had the best house of any one in our party. It has one room, and was built of rough pine boards. It was begun and finished by the men in our party in three days. Our diet was game and no one ever had such an abundance of venison and quail as we. I have seen many a deer carcass hauled away from camp because we could not eat it. My husband would not waste powder and shot on any more quail than were necessary for our food, but any one could have shot 200 or 300 quail in one day in Oregon at that time. In 1845 we returned to Napa valley, California. On our return, when we had but five men, our stock was stampeded by the Indians near Shasta. By this time I had two children.

"While the arrows were flying into our camp I took one babe and rolled it in a blanket and hid it in the brush and returned and took my other child and hid it also. The moon was shining bright, and it seemed to me that every time I heard a gun fired I could hear an Indian fall into the river. We had an Indian boy we had brought from Oregon, and while the men and Indians were fighting he succeeded in capturing all our saddle horses and tying them in camp."

"Do you remember the news of the finding of the first gold in California?" asked the reporter.

"I never could forget that if I should live a thousand years. It was in May, 1848, and we were living in Napa. My husband was foreman for a Mexican ranchman, and by that time had managed to make a living. One night when Mr. Harris came home he said that one of the men who worked for Mr. Vallejo upon Sonoma creek, was terribly excited, and said that they had found bits of gold in the sawmill sluice up at Coloma, and that the canyons and gulches up that way were full of gold nuggets. Mr. Harris and I had been fooled so many times by exaggerated stories in California that we gave the subject only passing comment. We thought no more about the stories until a sailor same to our house on his way to Sutter's fort a few days later. He said that his brother-in-law had seen some gold down at San Jose that had been washed out by several of Sutter's workmen. He had quit sailing and was on his way to Coloma. Then the news of the gold find came thick and fast, considering what a sparsely settled region we were living in. When a month more had passed, and we began to see for ourselves nuggets of gold as large as peas in the hands of people, my husband believed that the stories of the riches in the mountains were, after all, true. He started with several other men to walk to Coloma. In three weeks he was home again with $1,300 in gold and silver. He was as crazy as every one else by that time, and I was about the same. Then he fixed the babies and me more comfortably, stocked the house with provisions and started off for the gold diggings again. The whole country was literally insane with excxitement, and when autumn came a white man or a white boy who was at all able-bodied was not to be found for miles and miles around Napa, for they had all gone seeking gold. Prices for everything we ate or used rose to ten and twelve times their former value, and it was often hard work to get provisions at any price, because what man was going to fool away his time with ham and pork and calico when he could pick up gold nuggets all day long up at the diggings?

"You can have no idea how plentiful gold was in that region all of a sudden and its very plentifulness made it such a delirious dream state that none of us realized what a marvelous epoch we were living in. To show how easy we got wealth, I tell you that one day a Mexican, a stranger to me, came riding a horse to my house in Napa. He asked me to store some gold in my garden for him, because he was on his way home from the diggings, and found he had too big a load to carry. He had to go on horseback 200 miles further down the Sacramento river. I agreed, and he divided a load of about thirty pounds of gold nuggets and dust that he had in bags on the pommel of his saddle. He and I buried about fifteen pounds of gold at a certain marked spot in my back dooryard. Then he rode off and I saw or heard nothing of him for weeks. He came back and gave me about a pound of the gold for my keeping of his treasure and his secret. Gold, I believe, was worth about $240 a pound at that time. That man had gathered his thirty pounds in about five weeks, and I imagine he was like most Mexicans, pretty lazy and had not worked extra hard at washing out gold. Why, my husband once panned out eleven ounces of gold in one day, and when you know that the stuff was worth $15 an ounce, you can see what possibilities there were for industrious men then. But we were all fools, and there's no use regretting what we missed.

"Did we know Marshall, the finder of the first gold? Yes. I recalled when he became known as the first gold miner in California that we knew him when we were at Sutter's. He was a dozen years older than either my husband or myself, and came around the Horn to California a few weeks before we did. I remember we knew him as 'Jersey,' and he called us 'Yanks.' Marshall came from a little town in Warren county in New Jersey. He was a herder or vaquero for Gen. Sutter's cattle when we first knew him. I saw him in 1851, when the gold fever was raging, and he was worth probably $60,000 or $70,000 by his gold operations. He might have been one of the greatest millionaires the world ever knew, but he had no ability for accumulating wealth. He was a middle-aged man when he found the gold nuggets in Sutter's mill race at Coloma in 1848, and his habits and tastes were formed. He had no idea above the simple duties of life, and caring for a herd of cattle or a band of horses. I saw him again in 1873, when he was old and poorly dressed and in poverty. He just laughed about the way he had sat about and let other men get millions of dollars; but he did think that California ought to give him more honor for what he had done for the commerce of the world.

"In the spring and summer of 1849 the seekers after gold from the East began to pour in. It seemed as if the whole East was turned upside down, and its population poured upon California. When 1850 came there were thousands and thousands of youg men—once in a while a woman—flocking into California, but we old settlers had become used to seeing men get rich in the gold mines by that time, and looked upon the acquisition of sudden riches as an every-day occurrence. My husband came home in April, 1850, for a third time. He had made over $30,000 in digging gold, and we felt as rich as any Astor or Vanderbilt ever did. Just at that time my husband broke his leg, and that was the beginning of our hard luck again. There was only one doctor within sixty miles, and he was a poor one. We paid him $1,500 to look after my husband for four weeks and were glad to have his services at that price. My husband never went back to the mines, for by the time he was able to endure hardship the mining field was swarming with restless, aggressive, wild miners, and he felt that he had no more good chances there to get rich.

"In June, 1851, Mr. Harris bought a herd of cattle from Salvador Vallejo, and drove them down to Benicia, where the military garrison was located. Just think what fools we were to go into the cattle business when there were untold millions still in those hills and canyons. But we were crazy, that's all. I went along with my four children in a wagon drawn by an ox team. The cattle were butchered and the beef sold at Benicia, but it was a poor investment. We lived at Benicia for over a year. While there we became well acquainted with Capt. U. S. Grant, who had come there from the Mexican war. He and my husband were about of an age. We little imagined that the quiet, modest, chunky man would be the great American general in twelve years more. Capt. Grant was then a smoker but cigars were too expensive in those crazy gold days, and he contented himself with a briarwood pipe. He was a good card player, and I remember that pedro was his favorite game. He was very poor then, and I recall that, although he had to be very careful of every cent he spent of his small salary, he took little interest in the alluring stories told day after day by men down from the mines with gold dust. Grant was a great reader. He found some old books in my husband's collection, and I think he went through all of them. He used to read, as fast as we could get them, the periodical installments of Dickens' stories, which were then coming out and he would talk about the characters in the novels. He went on by water up to some fort in Oregon at about the time our family went South to Monterey, which was then one of the booming and liveliest towns—outside of the mining regions—in all California.

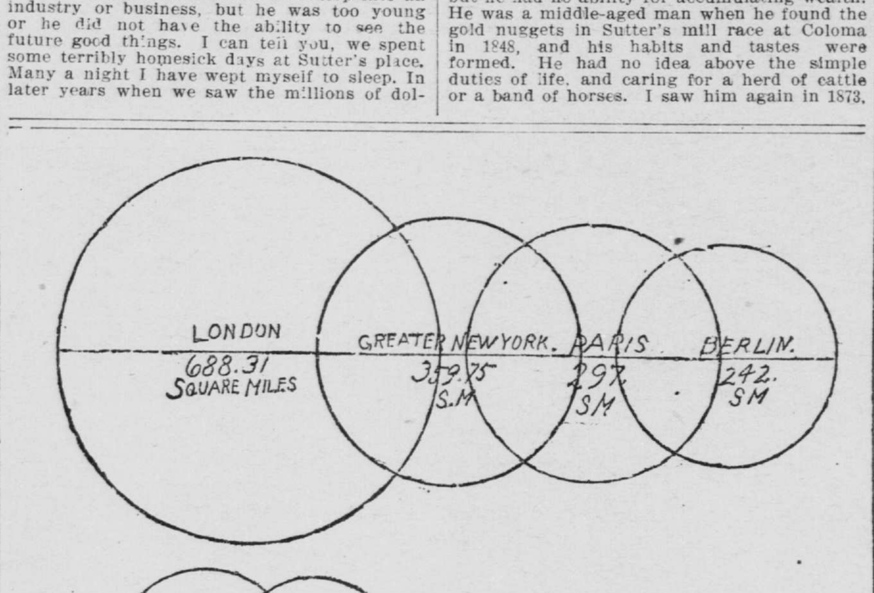
"We lived in Monterey for six years, and my husband dealt in cattle and sheep, which were shipped and driven to the mining towns. I have seen hundreds of fair steers that brought $500 in gold each in those days, but when you remember what exorbitant prices had to be paid for feed and for ranchmen there was not such great profit in the business; besides, everything we ate and wore was put on a gold mining basis. My husband paid a common vaquero $200 a month in gold for three years, and my calico dresses used to cost $35 and $40 each in those days. We sold hundreds of pounds of butter at $2 a pound, and some at $4 a pound, but it was too slow a way of making money in those extraordinary times, and we did not make one-quarter as much butter as we might have made.

"Up to 1859 I had enough personal incidents to fill a book. I once rode seventy-five miles on horseback in one day and carried a one-year-old child in front of me. I was going to see a sick woman at San Jose, and I fainted when they helped me off the horse.

"My husband's health began to fail in 1859, and we started for a hot, dry climate, such as there is in New Mexico and Arizona. The best days for gold mining for poor men were over by that time, and the mining companies that have put in capital and made millions by scientific and business-like mining had begun work on quartz mines and at the placers. In 1861 we drifted into Texas, where we were attacked by the Apache Indians. The men were out hunting wild turkeys, and a woman and her children and I and mine were there alone. I discovered the Indians approaching our camp, which was situated in a brushy place. I loaded the guns we had and suggested that all hide themselves. The two oldest girls ran and hid, and a sixteen-year-old boy went alone to a hiding place. We women and the smaller children secreted ourselves in a small cave in the bank of the ravine. I could hear the Indians above, but they did not discover us. I had forgotten to hide the money that we had along, and with which we intended to buy cattle to bring to California. Afer they had pillaged the camp and taken the money ($4,200) they started off and discovered the two oldest girls. They succeeded in catching my girl, because her dress got tangled in the brush. She was twelve years old. The other girl could hear the blows and her sister's screams as they struck her down.

"We all returned to camp and heard the girl's story, but did not find my girl, as she had recovered sufficiently to wander around in search of help. We found her the next day, but oh! the anxiety felt during that long night! Yes, we found her, and my anguish was horrible when I discovered that she had been scalped and was partially deranged. My husband and seventeen men followed the Indians 200 miles, but never caught up with them. My husband died in Los Angeles in February, 1868. My daughter who was scalped died in Tulare, Cal., when she was 18 years old, from the injuries she received six years before. Those years were the most fearful of any I ever knew on the frontier, and I don't like to think of them.

"There, do you not think I had a life filled with remarkable vicissitudes? Often as I sit here in my chair I get to thinking about strange scenes I have witnessed and the extraordinary phases of life I have participated in. I wonder if really I am one and the same person who has experienced all this and seen a great state grow in one lifetime as has California. Yes, I have been visited by many literary men and historians. A few years ago no less a person than Charles Dudley Warner come out from Pomona one day while he was spending the season in Southern California, and he talked with me about life as I saw it in California in the early fifties."



COMPARATIVE AREAS OF THE TEN LARGEST CITIES IN THE WORLD.

Notice to Depositors.

The next quarterly interest term of the Savings Bank of St. Paul commences April 1, 1897. Money in sums of $5 and upwards, deposited on or before April 10th, will draw three months' interest July 1, 1897. One-dollar deposits received.

EDWARD J. MEIER, Cashier.

A PRISON ROMANCE.

Celia Perryn's Attachment to Hildreth, the Boy Train Wrecker.

Once every month since John Watson Hildreth has been confined in the state prison at Auburn he has received a visit from Celia Perryn, of Rome. Henceforth her visits will not be so frequent by half. A recent order of Warden Mead, the new head of the prison, has curtailed the visits to a single hour once in two months.

Hildreth is the young scoundrel who conceived and, with the assistance of three other dime-novel-reading youngsters, carried out the plan to wreck the fast mail on the New York Central railway, near Rome, a year ago, for purposes of robbery. He was sentenced to Auburn prison for life.

Before the commission of the crime Hildreth had formed the acquaintance of Celia Perryn. He had run away from his home in New York city, and, after a series of adventures, had landed in Rome. He was bright, and made many friends in Rome. Among them was the girl, who was about his own age, and a warm attachment sprang up between them. When he was arrested upon a charge of murder, after the wrecking of the train, she did not desert him, but visited him frequently while he was in jail, sat near him during the trial, and, after he was taken to Auburn, began to visit him as soon and as frequently as the rules of the institution would permit.

Regularly as the month rolled around she appeared at the prison. On the day of the visit she left her home at 5 o'clock in the morning and arrived in Auburn at 8:25. She at once crossed the street from the railway station, passed through the ponderous gate of the prison, and in a few moments was pouring out effusive greetings to Hildreth. After the greetings the pair would sit down in a corner of a visitors' room and remain oblivious to every one and everything until it was time for the young convict to go to the mess hall for his dinner. Then Miss Perryn would leave the prison, and, repairing to a nearby restaurant, would eat luncheon, after which she would return to the prison, always being on hand promptly at 1 o'clock, which was the earliest hour at which she could be admitted to see Hildreth in the afternoon. Another visit of two hours would follow, and then Miss Perryn would bid Hildreth an affectionate good-bye, hurry to the station and board the 2:50 train for home.

Some little token was always brought by her on these occasions. On one occasion she brought a bottle of pickles. Another time she presented to Hildreth a pot of strawberry jam. On almost her first visit she brought Hildreth her picture in a prettily embroidered frame, the work of her own hands. Usually the offering is candy, chocolate bonbons having a decided preference.

After this had gone on for some months it dawned upon the prison officials that these visits were having an injurious effect upon Hildreth. For days afterward he would be gloomy and depressed. When Warden Mead assumed control of affairs at the prison, he was made aware of the facts, and after satisfying himself that there was really ground for alarm, he determined to restrict Miss Perryn's privileges. She didn't take at all kindly to the new arrangement, and she didn't hesitate to express her feelings to the warden. Warden Mead is a kindly man, and he bore her outbreak with patience. When at last she had exhausted her pleadings and had sought refuge in tears, the warden gave the girl some wholesome, fatherly advice.

"This boy can never be anything to you," said Mr. Mead. "He is dead to the world—a prisoner for life. You should have some ambition beyond a convict. It is better for you to break with him now than later. It will be easier for you both."

"No, no," interrupted the girl.

"Some day, it is to be hoped, you will marry some honest man, and then you will look back with shame and horror at your prison associations," continued the warden. "You are young, and what now seems to you to be a grand passion will in after years bring a blush to your cheek. Now, I do not wish to be unkind, but your visits are doing harm to the one you are trying to assist. You are not a relative of Hildreth, and you have not under the prison rules any right to visit him at all. I am not going to say that you shall be entirely separated, but you must curtail your visits."

Miss Perryn sobbed and protested, but the warden was inflexible, and she finally left the prison. As for Hildreth, he took the announcement of the new restriction in grim silence. If he felt any pangs of grief, they were hidden. He accepted the order as he has everything else in the prison—as a matter of course.

Don't be without it. It will cure consumption by building up the system. Blackburn Maryland Rye. California Wine House.

NOVEL DRESS FOR COMMENCEMENT

Two Ohio Students to Wear Flannel Shirts and Overalls.

AKRON, O., April 3.—Thad Rice, of Costalid, O., and Arthur Johnson, of Wadworth, O., students of Buchtel college, have entered into a written agreement that they will wear overalls and flannel shirts when they graduate in June. Both were born in the country, and a pride in this led to the agreement. Efforts of relatives to dissuade them have been fruitless. Both stand high in college and social circles.

PECULIAR STONE FOUND IN IOWA

Mysterious Carved Slab Taken From a Coal Shaft.

WEBSTER CITY, Io., April 3.—A very peculiar piece of rock was taken out at the Lehigh coal mine today. The slab was found just under the sandstone, which was 130 feet below the surface. It is about two feet long by one foot wide and four inches thick. The surface is artistically carved in diamond-shaped squares, with the face of an old man in each square. Of the faces, all but two are looking to the right. The features of each are identical, bearing a peculiar mark in the shape of a dent in the forehead.

BLOWN TO ATOMS.

Fatal Dynamite Explosion in the Calumet Mine.

CALUMET, Mich., April 3.—Two miners, Eric Nemi and John Talernsarie, met a horrible death in the Calumet mine last night. They were preparing to blast 3,000 feet beneath the surface, in a shaft, when all the dynamite they carried exploded, blowing them to atoms. Only small pieces of the remains have so far been found.

A tendency to consumption will be arrested by a bottle of Blackburn Maryland Rye. $6 per gallon. California Wine House.

NERVE THAT HELD FAST.

Two Specimens in an Old Poker Player's Experience.

TRENTON, N. J., April 4.—"There were some pretty stiff poker players around Trenton in the early days," said an old settler the other day in a discussion of the merits and demerits of the great American game. "A fellow could get almost any kind of a game that he wanted in those days, from a dollar limit up to the extent of his pile, and he didnt' have to look very long for it.

"One of the nerviest players that ever put his legs under a poker table was Watt Williams, of Cape May county. Watt was interested in the oyster business and always carried a roll of bills in his inside pocket as big as your arm, and he didn't keep it idle, either. He would make it fly when he got started, and for that reason fellows who didn't have much money to travel on hung pretty close to Watt whenever he showed up in Trenton, which was regular as the legislature sat.

"He would come up the second week of the session and never leave till the legislators went home. It was his annual picnic, and he enjoyed it from start to finish. As I was saying, Watt was a poker player, and when he got into a game he had it understood before the cards were dealt that there was to be no limit to stand in the way of a man's winning something worth talking about when he had the cards to do it with.

"When a fellow struck town that wanted to get into a good stiff game, he began to inqure for Watt, and he was pretty easily located as a general thing. I remember that Watt once ran up against a man who had just as much nerve as he had. That man was Thompson, Col. Thompson. He hailed from Kentucky, seemed to have all the money that he wanted and was a pretty good fellow. He was here when the legislature sat and had made a good many friends among the Trenton fellows who found out his mettle at the card table and concluded to introduce him to Watt Williams just as soon as Watt showed up.

"The second week Watt came up and in less than five hours he had met Col. Thompson. The two men didn't get together over the cards for a week. One night they came together in a North Warren street restaurant and, while eating, got to discussing cards and one thing and another. After a while somebody sugested that the party go to a hotel and have a hand at poker. It was agreed and in a short time there was a game going at full blast and Watt Williams and Col. Thompson were in it up to their eyes. Thompson was having a big run of luck. He was tapping everybody's pile right along, and Watt showed that he wasn't enjoying the way the cards were running worth a cent. After a while everybody dropped out of a certain hand except Watt and the colonel. Watt drew two cards and the colonel took three.

"'I reckon,' says the colonel, after looking his cards over, 'that I can risk five hundred on that hand,' and he shoved the chips into the center of the table.

"'I raise that five hundred,' says Watt, as he dropped chips and money worth a thousand on the pile in the center of the table.

"'I'm in now and I reckon I'll have to stay,' said the colonel. 'I'll se your five hundred and raise it a thousand.' He counted out $1,500 and tossed the bills on the pile before him.

"The men who were looking over the players' shoulders began to get interested, but they were mighty careful to make no break that would give the hands of the players away. But the raise of a thosand didn't freeze Watt. He laid his cards down on the table and reached into his pocket for his roll. He counted the bills over and says:

"'I've got just $3,800 here. I'll play it.'

"He threw the bills down and Thompson twisted his mustache, looked from his cards to the pile of money and then at Watt, who sat tilted back in his chair, with his thumbs in the armholes of his vest and his eyes fixed on the ceiling.

"'It'll cost me $2,800 to play, won't it?' says Thompson.

"'That'll call me,' replied Watt.

"'Will you take a check for that amount?' asked the colonel, eying Watt as a cat watches a mouse.

"'I'd rather not,' said Watt, leaning on the table with a peculiar look on his face 'I don't want you to think, colonel, that I have any doubt about your check being good, but I've always made it a rule never to take checks when playing poker. I'd rather have the cash.'

"'I guess I've got it,' says Thompson, pulling a roll of bills out of his pocket. 'I'll call you.'

"He laid $2,800 on the table. Watt spread his cards out and he had a pair of fours. I've only got sixes,' says the colonel, throwing down his cards, 'but they're as good as gold. I wouldn't ha' called you Williams, if you hadn't refused to take a check. You knew that my check was as good as cash, and I concluded you were bluffing, and wanted to force me out of the game in that way. I made up my mind I wouldn't be forced that way.'

"That pot cleared the colonel about $5,000, and if you ever saw champagne run in streams in your life you can imagine how things looked in that room an hour after the colonel laid down his pair of sixes."

"That was one kind of nerve," said the old settler, biting off the end of a fresh cigar, "but it wasn't the kind that I saw shown once away back in the winter of 1855. In those days there was a fellow who lived down in Atlantic county, John Staples. He was all the time trying to get into a poker game, and he never had much trouble finding somebody to accommodate him, because he always played in hard luck and, as the boys said, 'gave up his money easy.' He was a careful player and never insisted in playing big stakes, but somehow he couldn't get hold of the money. If he had a full hand some other person would hold four of a kind, and if he held four of a kind some other fellow would hold four higher. And so it went, Staples always getting the worst of it.

"One night after the legislature had adjourned Staples ran across Jake Hibbs, who was about as unlucky at cards as himself. Hibbs told Staples that he had been in a game the night before and dropped about $500, which he would like to get back if he could. Staples felt inclined to play, and together they began to hunt for others. They struck a couple of fellows and went to a room over a cafe on Front street. There's a brick building there now, but then there were only frame buildings. It was a terrible cold night and everybody snuggled up to a hot stove wherever he could find one. It got noised around about midnight that there was a pretty good game going on over the Front street cafe, and I went down there to look on a while before going to bed. As usual Staples was losing. Hibbs was doing better, but the money was gradually drifting over to the other two players, who had already scooped in $100 or more each.

"I remember it was long about half-past 2 in the morning. The room was crowded and everybody hated to think about going to his hotel, it was so cold. Hot applejack was the order of the hour, and everybody was filling up to the top notch. Suddenly a jack pot blossomed out on the table, and the cards were thrown around three or four times before anybody caught openers. Then Staples opened the pot for fifty. Nobody came in except Hibbs.

"'I'm going to stay with you, old boy,' he said, and, throwing down his hand, called for five cards.

"'Give me three,' said Staples, who looked at his hand and shoved up a hundred.

"'That don't scare me,' said Hibbs. 'I'll see that hundred and bet you another.'

"Staples fingered his cards for a minute or two as if studying them to find out whether they would win or not. Then he said he guessed he'd better not lay them down, and raised Hibbs $200. Hibbs was in the act of pulling a roll of bills out of his pocket when somebody on the street yelled fire. The next minute a fellow came running up the stairs and said that the back of the building we were in was burning. There was a general rush for the stairs, and by the time we had got out in the street the blaze was under full headway. Trenton didn't have the fire department in those days that she's got now, and before the firemen got there we knew that the building was a goner. The bucket brigade got to work and the chemical engine did all it could, but the fire couldn't be stopped.

"The whole building seemed to be afire when somebody hollered out that Staples and Hibbs were inside. There was great excitement then, and everybody began to look around for a ladder. Smoke was beginning to come out of the windows of the rooms over the cafe pretty lively when Staples and Hibbs stuck their heads out and yelled for a ladder. A ladder was put up to the window and the two men came down. They were all right, barring a little smoke in the lungs and eyes.

"When we had all got in warm quarters at the hotel Staples said:

"'That fire was the luckiest thing that has happened to me in a long time, because it broke up the game. I'd been betting Hibbs now if it hadn't been for the fire. You know we were up against a jack pot that I'd opened on a pair of jacks, and I drew two more. Hibbs made a five-card draw, and I naturally thought that he was my meat, and I was tickled about to death when I found him willing to bet all kinds of money. We kept it going till the room got so full of smoke that we could hardly see the cards when Hibbs called me as he said to wind up the game. Think of that, being called with four jacks; why I'd rather played all night back of that hand, but I had to lay them down and Hibbs laid down four kings and took the money. That fire saved me money because I never would have stopped betting the jacks. But what's the use in my going up against a man that can draw four kings in a five-card draw anyhow?'"

HE IS 120 YEARS OLD.

He May Be 130, But He Does Not Remember Exactly.

EUREKA, Cal., April 4.—A man on his deathbed in a ranch house not far from this city, is probably the oldest person in the United States. He is so old that he has lost accurate count of the years he has put behind him, but they are not fewer than 120, and may be 130. He is John Bradbury, a native of Buckinghamshire, England. He lives with the family of Charles Nelson, who owns a ranch about twenty miles from Eureka.

He is an old man who was a baby when the world rang with the news that Napoleon had been sent to St. Helena, but John Bradbury was a middle-aged man then. He was married and had grown children. He was still in England, and he remembers well the rejoicing over the final disappearance of the French conqueror. Not long afterward he suffered reverses in his English home—deaths in his family and losses in his business—and, accompanied by two brothers, he came to this country and settled in New York. He does not remember how long he lived there, but from his account of affairs it must have been about ten years. Then the desire to wander seized him, and he drifted about from one city to another, visiting all parts of the United States. Sometimes he passed five or six years in a place, and sometimes he would return again and again, after years of absence, to the same city. His recollections of this period of wandering, which seems to have been as long as an ordinary lifetime, are much impaired, but it is possible, by piecing together fragments of his conversation, to get an idea of its extent and duration. It must have lasted fifty years, and during all that time, wherever there was any keen excitement and wherever men gathered from afar, there went John Bradbury, and there he stayed as long as things interested him.

Bradbury came to California in the early gold days, drifted about the state from one camp to another, went back to various parts of the East, and returned to the Pacific coast two or three times, and finally turned up some twenty years ago in this county of Humboldt. Even then he had had so many birthdays that they no longer interested him, and he had ceased counting them. He has been in this county most of the time since.

About ten years ago the desire to see his brothers again seized him, and, all alone, with the burden of his hundred and more years, he went back to find them or their descendants. But the brothers had been dead so long that, although the old man searched diligently, he could find no trace of them or their families. Then he came back to Humboldt county and resigned himself to dying without knowledge of kith or kin. He has been cared for ever since by the family of Mr. Nelson. Before this last illness the old man had been as vigorous as most men who are fifty years his junior. He must have had a frame of unusual strength and a constitution of amazing robustness, for he seems never to have taken the least thought for his physical welfare, and to have gone through all manner of hardships during his wandering life.

He has always taken his pipe and his grog with regularity. He had a most cheerful and jovial disposition and is still a stranger to most of the creeping whims and brooding fancies of old age. In most things his mind is fairly clear and his memory is better than one would expect to find it in a man who is so far past the century mark. The things he has forgotten seem rather to have slipped from his memory because he did not care to keep them there than by reason of weakening intelligence. Despite his load of years he does not want to die. Although he knows that he is probably on his deathbed he is trying as hard to vanquish death and snatch a few more years of life as if he were a hundred years younger.

HIS DOWNFALL.

Kind Old Lady—Poor man! you look as if you had seen better days.
Mr. Willie Deadtired—I have, madam. Once I dwelt in granite halls.
Kind Old Lady—And why this loss of such a home?
Mr. Willie Deadtired—My term expired.

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TONIGHT Matinee Wednesday, Engagement of the Distinguished ACTRESS, MARGARET MATHER, In her sumptuous $40,000 production of CYMBELINE, Supported by the original New York Co.

Monday, April 12—Danz's Symphony Orchestra, in a Popular Concert.

April 13 and 14—De Wolf Hopper, in El Capitan.

GRAND Popular With the People.

AN EMPHATIC HIT. The Showman's Daughter. Under direction of Jacob Litt. Matinee Wednesday.

Next Sunday Night—The Prodigal Father.

DIED.

MULLALLY—In St. Paul, at family residence, 899 Clark street, Sunday, April 4, at 4 a. m., John Mullally, aged thirty-seven years. Funeral from above residence Tuesday, April 6, at 8:30. Services at the Cathedral at 9 o'clock.

JOHNSON—In St. Paul, Friday, April 2, at 7 p. m., Mrs. Margaret Johnson, aged forty-nine years. Funeral from residence of Thomas Nealy, Lake Como, Monday, April 5, at 8:30 a. m. Services at St. Vincent's church at 9 o'clock. Interment at Mendota.

BOTT—In St. Paul, Minn., Sunday, April 4, at the residence of his father, 685 East Fourth street, Peter H. Bott, aged thirty-eight years. Notice of funeral hereafter. Prescott and Milwaukee, Wis., papers please copy.

A NEW IDEA.—E. W. Shirk's purchase and consolidation of the Quinby & Abbott undertaking business with his Seven Corners livery will be a combination appreciated by the public. I will make lower prices than have ever been known in St. Paul, with the best of service. Undertaking rooms, 322 Wabasha. Tel. 508. Livery, 7 Cor. Tel. 339.

No house should be without it in the spring—Blackburn Maryland Rye. $6 per gallon. Absolutely pure. California Wine House.

FROM HIS SADDLE

The Gaucho Catches the Tinamou With Rod and Line.

"I have often seen tinamous in plenty hung up for sale with ducks and chickens in the Buenos Ayres and Montevideo markets," said Capt. C. A. Buckley, whose business takes him yearly to South America, says the New York Sun. "They are queer-looking birds, with short bills, long, straight necks, plump, round bodies and short wings. In color they are not unlike a prairie chicken, and I took them at first to be a South American variety of that bird, but found out that they were of quite another genus.

"On visiting the ranch of Don Ernestino Moldavo in the interior, 150 miles from Montevideo, I learned more about this queer fowl. Riding one day on the pampas with the major domo of the estate my attention was drown to two gaucho boys whose actions I could not understand. Each of these boys was riding on an old plug of a pony long past service on the sheep or cattle ranges, but just right for the purpose for which he now was using him. The rider held in his hand a rod, like a short fishing rod, but less tapering and limber, cut from a river reed. From the tip of the rod dangled a four-foot line with a slipnoose at the end. With their rods and lines the boys were fishing for tinamous. As the horse plodding along through the grass came near a tinamou, the bird would lift its head to look. Being accustomed to the presence of horses grazing the plain, it would not offer to run or fly, but sat still with neck outstretched waiting for the horse to go by. Gently, with the light pressure of the bridle rein on the side of the neck, the boy would direct the horse's step in a direction to pass the bird two or three yards away. Intent on watching the horse the tinamou seemed not to notice the rider or his motions. When opposite the bird the boy, leaning from the saddle just far enough to place him at the right distance, would extend the rod and drop the noose over the tinamou's head. A little sideways jerk with the wrist to tighten the noose, and then the young gaucho lifted and swung the bird to the saddle precisely as boys swing pickerel into a boat in the North American lakes. But here was no trouble of poling a boat about or rebaiting a hook. Deftly the bird's neck was wrung, it was tied to one of the dozen short thongs attached to the saddle, the noose spread again, and, the horse not having once checked his pace, the rider would be looking for the next tinamou. Of four tinamous that I saw the boys approach to noose only one took alarm, running swiftly away through the grass without trying to use its wings.

"So far as being allied to any of the grouse family, the tinamou in reality is an ostrich, the smallest variety known. Its flesh is white and firm, and, though rather dry and flavorless, it makes an agreeable variation from the eternal beef and mutton, the principal meats served at the table, in the almost gameless country drained by the Rio de la Plata."