

PROGRESS, SATURDAY, APRIL 13 1895.

... Letters from ... NANNARY

SAN FRANCISCO.—The golden city of the west I found in many ways feeling the pressure of hard times, but the city had grown wonderfully from the time I first beheld its ripening glories in the early sixties, when, with down upon my lip, less man than boy, I sailed in through the Golden Gate with little else but youth and hope and my fortune strapped upon my back, to hazard fortune amid her golden sands. Nearly thirty years had elapsed since that joyous and happy time when I became cursed with what the Hoosier Poet has aptly termed "the wandering foot" that has carried me hither, and yon, year after year, in my wanderings over this great American continent, to land me after all the ups and downs, the shade and sunshine of so many weary wandering years.

San Francisco was en fete. To offset its other little drawbacks the big Midwinter Fair was in full blast with all its attractive beauties a kind of an annex and fitting close to the wonders of the World's Fair. The avenues to wealth and fame were not wide open and strewn with the most roseate hues. The glorious climate was still in it and the land of sunshine, fruit and flowers was still smiling and hopeful through the dark misty clouds that occasionally floated in from the bubbling waters of the vast Pacific that is continuously chafing its mystic sides against its golden shores. Visions of Shanghai or Canton could be seen any day or night in the populous and overcrowded Chinese quarter where the odor, not always smelling of the Orient, assailed the nostrils and the music of the tom-tom and the squeak of the Chinese fiddle floated upon the quiet evening air from the temples of the Eastern muses, which these pigtailed, almond-eyed sons and daughters of the moon have planted in this free American soil, which the Geary law and the long sincere silenced orator, the redoubtable but now almost forgotten Denis Kearney, failed to banish. The smell of incense and the boom of the fire-crackers mingled with the weird chant of the servitors in their pagan temples bound amid the vice, degradation and shame that the wisdom and logic of Confucius or his worthy descendants have not been able to eradicate. The children of the Mikado and the Tycoon were very much in evidence also, but a brighter and more beautiful object lesson by far than their yellow brethren of the Orient.

All kinds of people and of every nationality under heaven I think were gathered here, particularly during the progress of the gorgeous fair. The Golden Gate park, one of the prettiest spots on American soil today, rich in eternal verdure and spangled with the gorgeous bloom of magnificent plants and flowers, sparkling in rainbow colored beauty, in bright sunshine, musical with birds and sensuous air of a glorious atmosphere, and all this reclaimed by proud, progressive and lordly man from the barren sand hills of a few years before that looked cheerless and desolate, as the winds from the mighty ocean sent it in whirling clouds down among the quiet walks and busy thoroughfares of the proud city; that less than a century before was the infant Mecca of a bright and busy metropolis to which the energy and enterprise of a fortune howling universe had been attracted by the marvellous stories of the heaps of yellow gold that lay slumbering in her shining sands, and to which Marshall's pick on Sutton Creek gave the impetus to a flowing tide of human life, that has peopled her hill-sides and valleys and made the world ring with more than the fabled tales of another Eldorado.

San Francisco after an absence of so many years was intensely interesting. Old landmarks that were hurriedly raised in the restless stormy past, had in most cases disappeared, and the fine public buildings, the mansions of the Bonanza kings, who had struck it rich beneath the swaying surface of the earth or extracted wealth from the quiet vales and heaven-kissing hills over which they had pushed amid the cruel snowdrifts of the frowning Sierras to meet their friends from the old homes in the east, and welcome them hither to the bright glowing feast which their skilled hands and throbbing energetic brains had spread before them in this wondrous land of the setting sun which had slumbered so long and peacefully on this side of the Great Rockies.

The finest cable cars in the world fly through the busy streets and over the soaring hills. The finest ferry boats in christendom float over the waters of its magnificent bay in and around a fleet of maritime splendor, contributed by every land on earth, to take away from her shores the varied products of her forests, her seas, towering mountains, and smiling lakes, where the sheep wander in myriad herds, and the orange and the lemon and the fig and the grape vine smile upon you as you fly along through a region rich in glowing

natural beauties and wealth-producing bounties.

After a very enjoyable rest with relatives, taking in everything that was worth taking in of an amusing and instructive character. I crossed the magnificent bay, in one of the finest ferry boats in the world, to Oakland, a very beautiful place, with its wide, level and well paved streets and avenues on which have been reared pretty homes and big commercial houses, where the trees give leafy shade to everything and the sweet smelling flowers scent the air in great profusion and variety, where the bloom upon their budding beauties and full grown loveliness never dies. In January it is the same as in June, an eternal glow of vernal and floral beauty always in evidence year in and year out, a never-ending and never-dying dream of natural loveliness that can be only found in a climate so genial and so mild as is this of golden California. Oakland is styled by the hopeful and enthusiastic native the Athens of the Pacific slope, modestly claiming such a distinguished honor for a section of the country where Boston is not brought in friendly rivalry and made to excite any feeling of jealousy in the breasts of the cultured ones in the home of the adulterated baked bean in the effete east.

We then went on a short tour of the interior towns, making our first stand at Marysville, an old and much frequented place in the days of old and the days of gold, when the poor but honest miner floated around the Yuba and the Feather rivers in search of the auriferous metal that is so attractive to the average mortal in this vale of tears. Marysville was warm, very warm, and the mosquito was very much in evidence and in a very annoying quantity and quality. The flowers and the Chinamen were all in bloom, and the dust on the unpaved streets was as fine as flour. From there we pushed on to Auburn—sweet Auburn, loveliest village, not of the plain, but of the foothills of the glorious snow-crowned Sierra Nevada mountains. The gentle summer air rustled mildly through the glistening emerald foliage of the stately pines with which the hill sides and the tiny vale were crowned. Pretty hedges and flowers everywhere, and the smiling vineyards stretching over and around the base of some climbing hill was a vision to the hungry eyes of everything that was picturesque and beautiful. We pushed on to Grass Valley and Nevada city, two old and prosperous mining towns, lying only six miles apart and literally buried amid a magnificent growth of swaying pines. The main streets of both these places were always lively with the sight of the old stage coach and the sharp snap of the driver's whip that recalled the palmy days when the golden state was young and vigorous, and when the railway trains were not dreamed of by the long-bearded men in long boots and woolen shirts with the bowie knife or six shooter hanging from their belts, who were making the hillsides reverberate with the sound of their picks and the little shining streams muddy and discolored as they tore away at their watery beds in their quest for yellow gold.

From the hills back again to the plains we came, halting for a week at Sacramento, the capital of the golden state. Twenty-nine years before I soiled my hands with honest labor in the same old town, which at that time had only twenty-six miles of railway running out of it, and in fact that was all there was on this side of the Rocky mountains. The capital has not progressed very much; I recognized a great deal of what I remembered when I was there in the early sixties, never dreaming that I should return, after so many years, a stage player, but such is life—we know what we are, but we know not what we may become. The capitol building was new and gorgeous, modelled on the same lines as that of Washington, and one of the prettiest cathedrals I have seen anywhere has taken the place of the modest brick church where I spent many a bright Sabbath morning, a stranger in a strange land and among strangers, in the days of long ago.

Marriage of the Dead.

A strange custom prevails among a certain tribe in the Caucasus. When a single young man dies, someone calls upon the bereaved parents who has carried to the grave a marriageable daughter in the course of the year and says:—

"Your son is sure to want a wife; I'll give you my daughter and you shall deliver to me the marriage portion in return."

A friendly offer of this description is never rejected, and the two parties soon come to terms as to the amount of the dowry, which varies according to the advantages possessed by the girl in her life-time. Cases have been known where the young man's father has given as much as thirty cows to secure a dead wife for his dead son.

Not Disinterested.

Quiet Man (on first night of new piece): "Excuse me, sir, but I really do not see any occasion for such violent applause." Demonstrative Neighbor: "I do, my friend. The author is one of my wife's boarders, and he's over two months behind with his bill."

HE SLEPT ON THE SOFA.

Why, he Preferred This Rather Than Sleeping in Bed.

There is a certain dignified and courteous though somewhat bashful young man in a St. John boarding house who "smiles and smiles," although he is not a villain. He did not smile, however, when he met the other boarders at the table the other morning. They did all the smiling, and by the same token, have been smiling ever since.

The young man frequently boasted that he had never been the victim of a practical joke—that many plans had been laid to entrap him, but that he had always discovered them in time to prevent any unpleasant consequence to himself.

The other night when he arrived home at midnight's mystic hour he was wholly unprepared for the surprise in store for him. Had he been at all suspicious he might have found something strange in the fact that the gas in the hall and also in his room, which is on the first floor, adjoining the front parlor, had been extinguished. Other unusual sounds—those of scampering feet and suppressed laughter—might have warned him of impending danger; but he was unsuspecting and went headlong to his doom.

When he entered his bed-room he found it illuminated only "by the struggling moonbeam's misty light." He struck a match and was about to light the gas, when, happening to glance towards the bed, he beheld a sight which came near paralyzing him with terror, surprise, embarrassment and every other emotion which it is possible to experience under circumstances calculated to bring them all forth. His hand containing the burning match was held suspended in mid air; the tiny flame lasted just a moment, then collapsed; and so did the young man.

The match and the moonlight had revealed to him the figure of a lady lying upon the bed. It was true that the face was turned from him; but he recognized the crimson dressing-gown as belonging to one of the lady boarders. Two slipped feet were also seen; and one arm was thrown upon the pillow in the graceful abandonment of sleep.

The young man took in all these details at a single glance, and then hastened to let the door be between himself and the occupant of the bed. The delighted listeners, crowded in every conceivable place of shelter, heard him give a very decided knock on the door, then pause and mutter to himself, "By Jove, she's asleep."

Realizing then how embarrassed the lady would be were she to know that he had found her asleep in his room, he decided to pass the rest of the night, or until she awoke and left his room, on the parlor sofa, and accordingly provided himself with several overcoats with which he covered himself.

Morning dawned at last, after a very uncomfortable night for the young man. Then, supposing that the coast was clear, he went to his room again, but there in the bed still lay the figure—but the light showed that it was not that of a lady. It was simply composed of two pillows, stuffed into a crimson dressing-gown, one sleeve of which rested on the pillow, and one or two other little accessories.

The modest victim of this joke was unaware that anyone knew that he had slept upon the sofa all night, and wickedly tried to give the impression that he had discovered the hoax upon entering the room, but he was obliged to confess, in an excess of shame, that he was for once the victim of a joke, when he was greeted by the rest of the boarders with the unwelcome salutation, "By Jove! she's asleep!"

MEMORY'S TRICKS.

Remarkable Anecdotes Concerning This Fickle Gift.

Many novelists have taken advantage of the strange tricks occasionally played by the memory, especially in cases of illness or accident; but after all, fictitious narrative can hope to exceed in strangeness some actual occurrences.

A man of considerable learning had a severe illness at the age of thirty years, which left him with his memory an utter blank. He had even forgotten the names of the commonest objects, and as soon as his health was restored, had to begin to learn the most simple lessons, as though he were actually a child again. One day, while his brother was teaching him, he suddenly stopped, and put his hand to his head.

"What's the matter? Don't you feel well?" asked his brother anxiously.

"I have a curious sensation in my head," was the answer; "and it seems to me now as if I knew all this before."

And from that time he rapidly recovered the entire use of his faculties. But he was never able to comprehend how it had become necessary to teach him reading and writing over again.

A young lady, shortly after marrying a man whom she passionately loved, was seized with a severe illness, which left her with absolutely no remembrance either of her marriage or of subsequent events. It was only by the combined testimony of her relatives that she was at length persuaded that she actually had a husband; and even then she believed the marriage to have

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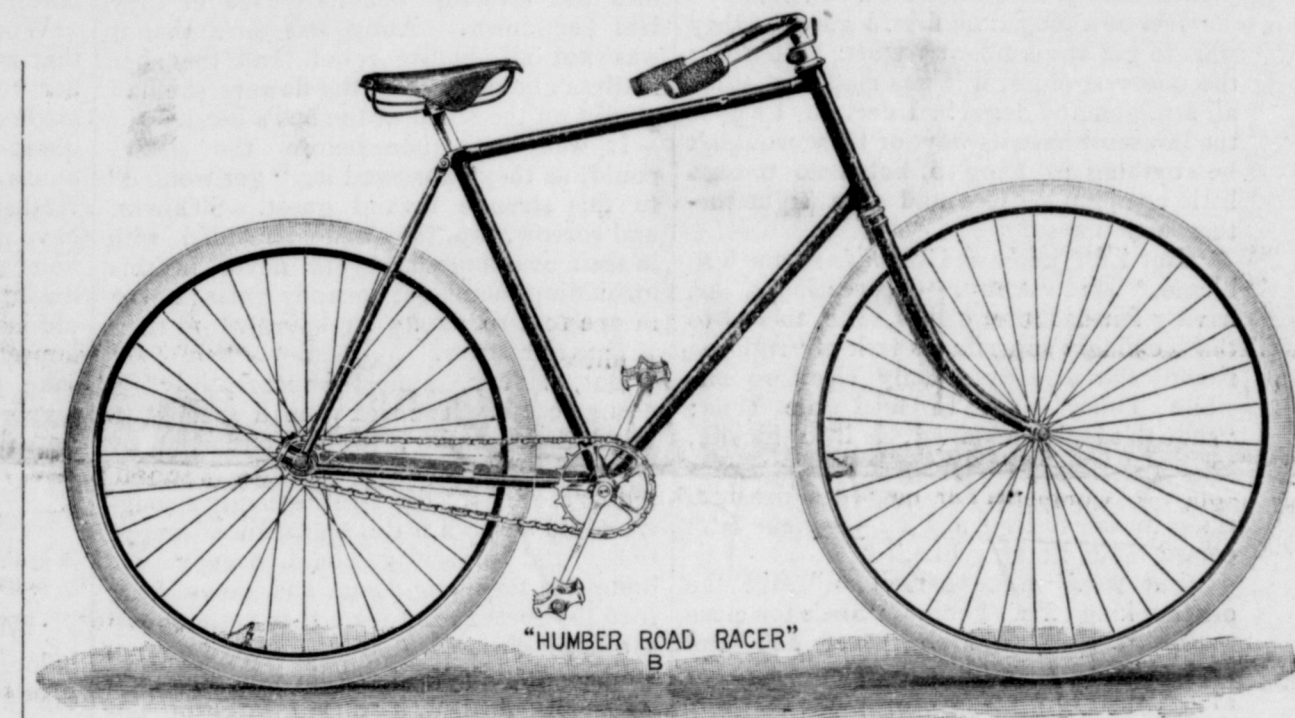
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taken place simply because she could not conceive that they were all lying to her. She was never able to regain the memory of that lost part of her life.

A man was out driving with his wife and child when the horse ran away, rushing so violently against a wall that he was thrown and sustained a severe concussion of the brain. After his recovery he could remember everything up to the time of his meeting with a friend a short distance from the scene of the accident. But of his efforts to stop the horse, and of the terror of his wife and child, he was perfectly unaware.

Of more than one well-known author has the story been told how, when hearing certain passages read, he would exclaim regretfully, "Ah, if only I could have written like that!" when the extracts in question came from his own works.

It was however, reserved for Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, to make his infirmity the occasion for a compliment—one that was both graceful and touching.

One day, when he was more than ninety years of age, he was out driving with a certain lady. In the course of the conversation she asked him something about a common friend. There was a sudden pause, which was broken by Rogers pulling the check-string and inquiring of the coachman "Do I know Lady M—?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply. It was a painful moment, both to the aged poet and to the innocent cause of his trouble. But Rogers was equal to the emergency. With a sad reminiscence of his old-time courtesy he took his companion's hand saying gently—

"Never mind, my dear; I needn't stop the carriage to ask whether I know you."

HEART-BEATS.

The Reason Why the Heart Flutters, Palpitates and is Oppressed, and How to Relieve it.

The heart has a hard old time of it, and within itself does not excite much disease, but is very often called upon to display the troubling symptoms of palpitation, fluttering, labored breathing, oppression, &c., on account of diseased kidneys offering increased resistance to the passage of the blood through their defective secretory structures, causing a morbid change in the blood unsuited to nourish the tissues and noxious to them. The minute arteries resist the passage of this foul blood, resulting in the muscular walls of the arteries and the ventricle of the heart becoming partially paralyzed, and from this cause results much of the so-called heart disease.

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Ruskin's Critical Moods

A story illustrating Ruskin's whimsicality is given on the authority of a friend of the great writer. "One morning," he notes, "as we were coming out of chapel, Ruskin said to us, 'I ought not to have come to chapel this morning.' We asked him, in no little astonishment, why? 'Because,' he said, 'I am going to write a critique on —'s picture in the Academy, and I was to be in a perfectly diabolical temper.'"

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