

EARTHQUAKE ECHOES.

From the Argonaut.

"What's that?"
"I don't know. It looks as if the roof were falling in."

Thus said my companion and myself. We were driving in a buggy down Broadway, Oakland, and were looking at a building then called the "Wilcox Building." It was the morning of October 21, 1868.

As I said, we were looking at this building. A new story had just been added to it, and we were speculating as to the safety of making such additions to buildings whose walls were only designated for structures of lesser height. It was five minutes to eight o'clock. We had pulled up, and were looking curiously at the new story when my companion made the remark:

"What's that?"
It did indeed look as if the roof were falling in. The walls budged out, the roof seemed to sink, the building moved slightly, and then recovered its perpendicular. We were both so amazed that we could only stare in open-mouthed wonder.

At this moment I noticed that the horse was acting queerly. He did not look as if he were going to run away, but simply as if something extraordinary were puzzling his equine brain. I fancied there might be something wrong with the harness, and giving the lines to my companion, jumped out to see. As my feet struck the ground I thought for a moment that I must be mad. The earth rocked beneath me; it rocked with such violence that I could hardly stand. I seized the shaft, partly to steady myself, and partly to get to the horse's head, for he was giving such signs of agitation that I feared he might runaway.

As I got to the horse's head, there was a dull, rumbling roar, and a cloud of dust rose up and down the street. Then there was a crashing, jingling sound, and I saw many window-fronts upon Broadway falling into the street. Following them came an avalanche of bricks and mortar from falling chimneys and fire-walls. And last of all came a dense mass of people from the shops and houses. Your human does not move as quickly as inanimate objects during an earthquake. When he does, he sometimes regrets it, for if he arrives at the same time as the falling bricks and mortar, he wishes he hadn't—unless, of course, he be a good Christian, whose salvation is all fixed and his good deeds chalked up, in which case, of course, a riotous joy should pervade his breast.

All that I have related took but a few seconds. And in about a minute after the shock began Broadway was filled with runaway teams of every description.

There was at that time an open square, or vacant lot, on Broadway, containing nothing but trees. I remember noticing these trees, and being struck, even then, at their absurd appearance. (One thinks quickly during an earthquake.) As the waves of the earth-spasm rolled along, the trees rose and fell, inclining first to one side, then to the other, bobbing and bowing in a ludicrous fashion.

Those who were on this side of the bay that morning may think this description of the shock exaggerated. But when they consider that the local centre of the earthquake of '68 was evidently at San Leandro, they will see that they are mistaken. For there some buildings were entirely demolished, others twisted upon their foundations, and fissures and cracks opened in the earth many rods in length. Scarcely a chimney was left standing in Oakland or Alameda.

A curious phase of the earthquake was the belief on the part of the Oaklanders that San Francisco was destroyed. A thick haze hung over the bay. It was impossible to see any of the spires and towers of San Francisco. The telegraph wires were down; the draw-bridge over San Antonio Creek was thrown out of gear by the shock; the train (there was but one then) was panned up on the other side of the estuary. The only way of reaching the city was by freight-boat which they ran on the creek. To this repaired the anxious Oaklanders and we still more anxious San Franciscans.

On the little pier at the foot of Broadway was a crowd of several hundred men. It was divided into little groups, in the centre of each of which was an excited man, telling where he was and what he did at the time of the shock. He was perpetually being interrupted by other excited men, who wanted to tell what they did and where they were. Every man in every group was engaged in moving his arms wind-mill-wise, to illustrate how the earth had quivered. In moments of excitement the Anglo-Saxon race becomes as gesticulative as the Latin.

One man in particular I remember. He was one of those small men with immense fustian voices—one who could out-roar any one else, and by virtue of his superior lung power had succeeded in telling his personal experience over any number of times. As soon as he had finished it, he began again.

It may be necessary to remark here that all through the morning of the 21st there were continuous shocks. People had their nerves completely unhinged by the first shock, and the gentle yet continuous oscillations of mother earth kept them permanently so. I will further remark (apparently without coherence) that there was an immense heap of coal piled up on the edge of the pier.

The little man with the big voice was still talking. His oration ran thus: "You see, we had just got up from breakfast when that first shock came. My wife she started to run. I says to her, 'Now, Jemima,' says I, 'never is the use of running.' But she wouldn't listen to nuthin', so I just grabbed her and held her till it was over. And what do you think?—when that shock come to an end, Jemima she started and I was just as cool as I am now."

"Drip—drip—drip—drip!"
The coal was falling into the water over the edge of the pier. Every one turned—the slightest noise was ominous.
"Drip—drip—drip—drip! Dash!

Spash!"

The pier was rocking to and fro—first gently, then with vigor, then with a vicious thump which meant mischief. There was a sudden abatement to dry land. The crowd resolved itself into an immense and swiftly moving fan, the apex pointing toward the shore. The apex was our friend, the little man with the big voice.

At this point many of the Oaklanders lost their interest in San Francisco. They could not be again induced to go upon the pier. They contented themselves with vaguely remarking that they "would wait and see," and with whooping up others who seemed disinclined to go.

At last the boat made her appearance. I think it was the old ferry-boat Louise, long since disappeared from these waters—under that name, at least. It was not a very large crowd that boarded her. There was a good deal of talk about tidal waves and things, and the people looked upon us very much, I fancy, as the Spaniards did on Columbus when he set out upon his voyage into unknown seas. Most of us, as I have said, were San Franciscans. On the boat, I remember was Michael Reese. Michael was drenched with woe. He feared that where San Francisco had reared her fair tower-crowned hill-tops to the sky, there was nothing but ashes, dust, and desolation—hence pecuniary damage to Michael Reese. He was a large, adipose greasy mass of suffering. He even wept. Tears ran down his fat cheeks, and mingled with the imperfectly removed remnants of his breakfast.

A group stood around him, attempting to comfort him. I do not fancy they felt anything but contempt for him, yet they respected his millions. And this blubbering millionaire was being coddled like a blubbering school-boy.

"Ach Gott!" sighed Michael, blowing his nose with a large red handkerchief, "Ich bin ruined! All those years vat I shtruggle was town away. Who could vell noddins about an earthquake, I like to know? Dot is not like a fire. Dose insurance companies dey will not pay me noddins. Lieber Gott! Berhaps dose insurance companies vos tone up too?"

And a fresh burst of tears came to the relief of the over-burdened millionaire.

John W. Dwinelle approached, and satirically comforted the weeping Dives.

"Do not be so cast down, Mr. Reese," said he. "Things are not so bad, I imagine, as they are represented. We shall presently be in sight of the city, and I think we shall see it standing. Ah, excuse me, Mr. Reese—you had eggs for breakfast, I fancy?"

And he indicated to the weeper a large mass of egg-velk upon his starboard jaw, partially mixed with tears. Michael scraped it off and resumed his weeping.

But soon we came where the fog-veil was not so thick, and the top of the shot-tower was seen piercing the haze. I remember that some enthusiastic spirits gave three cheers for the safety of the city. And as we gradually approached the pier, it was seen that the city was apparently all there. We did not learn until later that the shock had been lighter on the San Francisco side than on the other.

We hastened up the streets, looking for damaged houses, ruined walls, and corpses. We did not see as many as we had expected. Coming up Clay street however, near Sansome, there was a frightened boy, who, surrounded by a crowd of people, was pointing at a mass of blood and brains on the sidewalk. His jaws were working convulsively, but no sound came from them. A bystander told me that the boy had witnessed the death of the man who formerly used the brains, and that the sight so horrified him that he had remained in that condition ever since the shock—a matter of a couple of hours. The man, it seems, had run out of the building when the first shock came, and had got to the sidewalk just in time to catch the falling fire-wall upon the top of his head.

I do not propose to weary my readers with an account of the earthquake. It is ancient history. But these things came into my head the other morning, when I was awakened at one o'clock by the familiar vibrating, twisting, grinding, motion—the creaking of the groaning bricks, the ominous rumble of the shuddering metal roof. I said to myself:

"The most severe shock since '68." And, so saying, these recollections came to me, and I jotted them down.

But I will indulge myself in telling one or two anecdotes which I recall. There was a gentleman here from the east at the time, who had been sighing for an earthquake. I have met many like him, by the way, but I never saw any of them who wanted to feel two. I do not refer to temblors, but to good stiff shocks. No one who has ever felt one wants to feel another.

This pilgrim, then had been yearning for an earthquake. Fortunately for him, it came before he went away. He went away as soon as he could get away, I may add. He was living in Brenham Place, and was awakened by the shock. He knew what it was. No man needs an introduction to an earthquake. He fled through the door. He nearly took it with him. He was clad only in a short night-shirt, but despite that fact he went into the centre of the Plaza, and there he remained. He could not be induced to re-enter the house. Finally, he hired a small boy to go and get his clothes, and dressed himself before the populace.

Later in the day he ventured out of the Plaza, and, accompanied by Tommy Newcombe, went to Barry & Patten's to get a drink. The barkeeper mixed the drinks and placed them upon the counter. Newcombe pushed his back, requesting the barkeeper to take the ice out. The other did the same. It was half past ten o'clock. There was a slight jingle of glasses, then a crash, and the bar leaned forward and courtesied to the two friends in the most familiar fashion. The barkeeper was almost buried in a vitreous avalanche. The eastern man knew, without being told, that this was another earthquake. He made for the street. He got there before anybody else in the house. This despite the fact that he lacked experience. These Eastern men are very quick to learn about some things—particularly earthquakes. He reached the street with such impetuosity that he was on the other side before he

knew it. There was a building there belonging to Sam Brannan, the top of which was crowned with two long stones, meeting like a V. One of these fell with the second shock, just as our Eastern friend reached the sidewalk. The stone came shooting down like a conical projectile, struck the flagged sidewalk, made a clean hole and disappeared in the depths below. The hole was about six inches away from the Eastern man. He nearly fell into it.

He took the next steamer for home. When this shock took place, I happened to be in the Odd Fellows' Bank, then on Montgomery street, opposite where the Safe Deposit building now is. A group of us were talking over the first shock. I remarked that I had not been in a building when the first shock came, but that, had I been, I would have remained. I further said that I considered running from a building as highly dangerous, instancing the unfortunate man who was killed on Clay Street as a case in point. All agreed with me. One in particular—a friend named Maillot—remarked:

"You are perfectly right. The man who would run out of a building during an earthquake shock is a d—d fool." The words were scarcely out of his mouth when the half past ten o'clock shock came. I do not remember very distinctly how I got there, but in about three seconds I found myself in the middle of the street. I have no recollection of coming down stairs. Strange to say, all the other fellows were there too. Maillot looked at me, and remarked, with grim humor:

"I thought you never ran from an earthquake."
"I never do."
"But you ran then."
"No, I didn't run. I flew."
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Current Paragraphs.

The German Emperor astonishes everybody by his vitality. He is nearly eighty-seven years old, thirteen years older than his great ancestor, "Old Fritz," when that monarch broke down, and his life has been one of great activity.

Governor Crosby of Montana, says that one day, when the presidential party were crossing a dry gulch in Northern Wyoming, they saw written in charcoal over the door of a vacant cabin the following: "Only nine miles to water and twenty miles from wood. No grub in the house. God bless our home."

Mr. W. D. Howells, while visiting Baltimore lately, was met by a reporter who interpreted his views regarding English and American literature as follows: "In many respects we excel the English in periodical literature. Our illustrations are of a much finer quality. The short stories, which are features of our monthly publications, have few counterparts in England. I think that English customs and English disposition tend more strongly to the publication of books than of magazines."

How some men do magnify their vocations. A correspondent of a Vermont paper who has been sending that paper weekly a patch of items about who has had his barn shingled and who has gone a visiting has "severed his connection," as they call it, with the paper, or had it severed for him, and writes a thrilling valedictory, half a column long, which ends as follows: "Kindred spirits are thrown together for pleasure and labor, the tide lifts our feet, and, with the web of life all unweaved, the delicate silken threads are snapped asunder. We exchange farewells and pass out on the tide. Readers of the Vermont Tribune, we have sailed our heaven-bound crafts a few days together. We are in sound of the breakers! Give me your hand—farewell!"

Chief Justice Begie, of British Columbia, recently said to a jury which had failed to find a murderer guilty: "On your conscience will rest the stigma of returning such a disgraceful verdict, and one at variance with the evidence on which you have sworn to find the guilt or innocence of the prisoner. Many repetitions of such conduct as yours will make trial by jury a horrible farce, and the city of Victoria, which you inhabit, a nest of immorality and crime, encouraged by the immunity from the law which criminals will receive from the announcement of such a verdict as yours. Go; I have nothing more to say to you." To the prisoner, who committed the murder with a sand-bag, he then said: "You are discharged; go and sand-bag some of these jurymen; they deserve it."

There are some very curious laws in Saxony regarding servants, girls more especially. The mistress is obliged by law to allow the servant one pound of butter and one of coffee per month, or the equivalent in money. If the girl furnishes her own bedding she secures 11-2 cents per night for so doing. Seventy cents a month is allowed for her washing, and she receives five per cent. upon all purchases she makes. She is required to give one month's notice before leaving her place. The law also requires that each servant keep a book for recommendations, in which, upon her leaving her place, her mistress is compelled to state the cause and the girl's character.

The question of what becomes of pins has often been mooted but never answered. Yet it is certainly peculiar that an article of everyday use which is manufactured in numerous quantities should disappear in equal proportion. It is estimated that no less than 50,000,000 pins are daily manufactured in England and Dublin, and that out of this number 37,000,000 are produced in Birmingham alone, thus leaving 13,000,000 for the production of Dublin, Stroud and London. The weight of wire, both iron and brass, consumed for this purpose is 1,275-2 tons every year.

Chicago divorces have been universally considered easy of attainment, but it appears that in Switzerland, among the lower classes, a custom prevails that throws Chicago into the shade. There young people marry with the distinct understanding that if they do not like each other they will separate. If, at the end of the year, they shall mutually declare before a court that they do not wish to remain married any longer, because of incompatibility of temperament, they get a divorce. Hymen's chains are loosely worn in Switzerland.

The Fascinating Widow.

A writer in Harper's observes that the feminine mind is often not a little puzzled to understand why the fascinations of a widow are so much more potent than those of a single woman, why it is that in every gathering the widow will carry off the partners from under the very nose of the spinster who is in the very flower—wall-flower—of her youth. Does she speak with the tongues of men and angels more than the rest of us? Is she better bred? Does she flatter with more skill or dress with more effect? Is she prettier? they ask, perhaps. Is it the jointure left by her marquis of Carabas, or because she has been indorsed by a lord of creation? Or is it the shadow of an early grief which attracts, or the exhibition of a most beautiful resignation? In the young girl's estimation the suttie was about the right kind of a widow. Ought not the only flame left for her be that of the funeral pyre? And is there not something ungenerous, she asks, in a world where husbands are scarce, for a woman to appropriate more than one? Is it not a sort of denial of immortality? But the young girl is told that these are the fine-spun feelings of a sentimentalist, that the widow does right to live in the world, and not, like old mortality, among graves. Very possibly she may not wish to marry again, but she may not have buried all her little vanities, her love of admiration, her interest in human kind, especially man-

kind, in the grave with her husband. Is it her fault if she prefer her society? Perhaps it is her very indifference, having pleased one man, whether others are pleased or not, that is irresistible, or the confidence which that fact gives. Perhaps it is because she never preaches to them over somebody else's shoulder; because tobacco smoke does not affect her; because she is not afraid to show her interest; because, knowing their weakness, she yet likes their society; because her unprotected position and her becoming weeds appeal to the manly heart; or because she has learned tact in the scrimmage with her husband's relations. Perhaps through having loved and lost, she has touched a wider gamut of emotions, and her experience has made her more interesting than the callow girl. Doubtless society needs widows just as much as it does single women and married people, to give a spice and variety to life, and it would be a thousand pities if the Hindoo custom were to come into vogue in our day and deprive some of us of a grievance.

The License System in England.

A careful study of the subject enables me to lay before your readers in this letter an intelligent statement of the regulations under which the retail liquor traffic is carried on in this country. First all persons engaged in this traffic must have a license. The victualler's license allows the person holding it to sell all kinds of drinks, but there are licenses for the sale of beer and cider; others for the sale of beer and wine; others for cider and perry, and still others for table beer only or wine only. The houses at which beer is sold, without spirits, are called "beer houses," to distinguish them from "pubs," which operate under a victualler's or "full" license. Of the former, not including those which are licensed to sell only for consumption off the premises, there are 34,977 in the United Kingdom, against 92,348 of the latter class of houses. The total number of persons in Great Britain and Ireland holding license of one kind or another to deal in and retail exciseable liquors for use as a beverage is 229,997, the revenue from these licenses amounting for the year ending March 31, 1883, to nearly \$10,000,000. The houses resembling most closely the American saloon are the two classes already singled out—viz., beer houses and pubs, particularly the latter. A beer license cost \$17.50 a year, and the premises covered by it to meet the requirements of law must be of an annual rental value of 60 to 150, according to location.

A house for which a victualler's license is sought must have at least two public rooms in which spirits are sold, and one in which they are not sold, excessive of the rooms occupied by the family keeping it. In cities having not less than 100,000 inhabitants the annual value of such house must be not less than \$100,000 the minimum is \$150, and elsewhere it is as low as \$75. The cost of a "full" license varies according to an annual value of the premises, said annual value to be taken at either the amount at which the place is rated, or the amount of rent it brings, or at an independent valuation, as the licensing authorities may determine. If the annual value were \$75 and under \$100, the license would be \$40 a year, and so on in fair graduation, up to a \$3,500 house in which case the license would cost an annual sum of \$350, that amount being the maximum. The license for a house of an annual valuation of \$500 would cost \$150 a year.

The power of granting or refusing licenses rests with local magistrates, but should these dignitaries refuse to renew or transfer a license when requested to do so, the licensee, having given bonds for the costs, may carry his grievance to the general or quarter sessions—Correspondence Philadelphia Press.

A Spanish Dandy, Seventeenth Century.

His hair was parted on the crown of his head and tied behind with a blue ribbon about four fingers' breadth and about two yards long, which hung down at its full length; his breeches were of black velvet, buttoned down on each knee with five or six buttons; he had a vest on so short that it scarce reached below his pockets, a scalloped doublet, with hanging sleeves, about four fingers' breadth, made of white embroidered satin. His cloak was of black bays, and he, being a spark, had rapped it around his arm, because this was more gallant, with a very light buckler in his hand, and which has a steel pike standing out in the middle; they carry it with them when they walk in the night on any occasion; he held in the other hand a sword, longer than a half-pike, and the iron for its guard was enough to make a breast and back plate. These swords being so long that they cannot be drawn out unless a man has the arms of a giant, the sheath therefore flies open in laying the finger on a little spring. He had likewise a dagger, whose blade was very narrow; it was fastened to his belt on his back; he had such a straight collar that he could neither stoop nor turn about his head. Nothing can be more ridiculous than what they wear about their necks, for it is neither a ruff, band, nor cravat. His hat was of a prodigious size, with a great band twisted about it, bigger than a mourning one. His shoes were of fine leather as that whereof gloves are made, and all slashed and cut, not withstanding the cold, and so exactly close to his feet, and having no heels, that they seemed rather pasted on. In entering he made a reverence after the Spanish fashion, his two legs cross one another, and stooping as women do when they salute one another; he was strongly perfumed, and they are all so. Countess Danois.

Twenty-eight parishes of Louisiana were inundated by the Mississippi overflow last year, and the damage is reckoned at \$60,000,000.

Seven new hotels, four with 1,000 rooms each, are being built in London.