

## LITERARY WORKERS OF THE PACIFIC COAST.

THE REMARKABLE OUTBURST OF CREATIVE GENIUS THAT MARKED THE EARLY DAYS OF CALIFORNIA—BRET HARTE, JOAQUIN MILLER, AND THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE FOLLOWED THEM IN MANY BRANCHES OF LITERATURE.

AMERICAN civilization had scarcely taken possession of the Pacific slope, the "gold fever" was still in the air, and the freighter's wagon was only beginning to yield before the advent of the railroad, when the world was startled by an outburst of literary genius in the young community of our furthest West.

It appeared as if California must indeed be a land of magic. Her rocks were veined with gold, her climate was that of an earthly paradise, and she seemed to inspire her sons with a new and strange creative

power. The humor of Mark Twain—which was best when it was freshest—the matchless pathos of Bret Harte, and the fervid imagination of Joaquin Miller, were hailed as a literary revelation. These were unshackled workers in an untried field, and everywhere the eyes of hopeful observers were turned to them as to men who had found an unknown treasure.

The brilliant promise of those early days has hardly been fulfilled. Those of its founders still remain the most brilliant names of Californian literature; and of those



Ina Coolbrith.

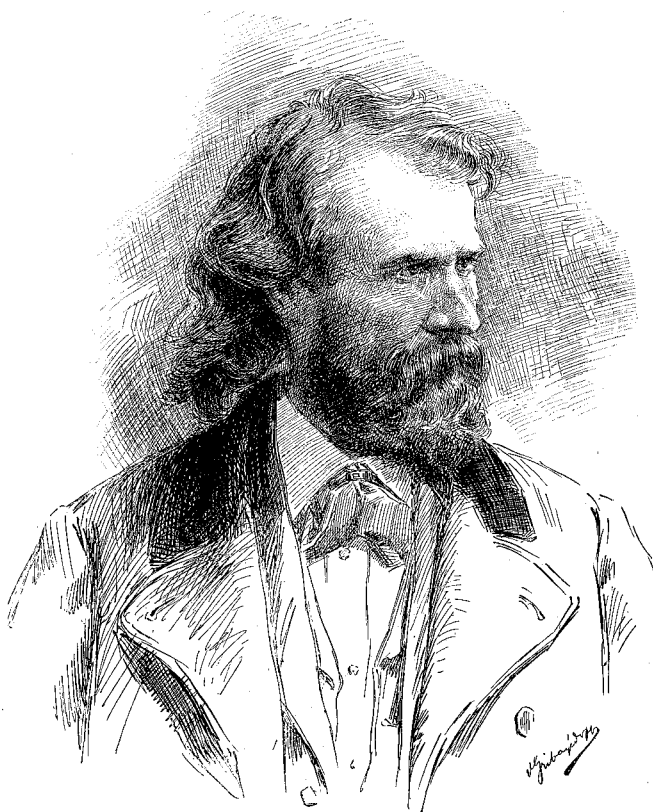
*From a photograph by Rosetti, New York.*

founders, some can no longer be reckoned as Californians. Joaquin Miller's home still looks down upon the busy gate of the Pacific, but Harte and Twain went "back East" twenty five years ago, and have become globe trotters and cosmopolitans. Their successors are many, and have done good work in many branches of literature ;

shores are bathed in the very atmosphere of the "city of the violet crown," whose people, as one of their poets said,

Ever delicately march  
Through the most pellucid air.

It is certainly true that her literary activity is of remarkable extent. It is also true that her influence upon writers who have but



Joaquin Miller.

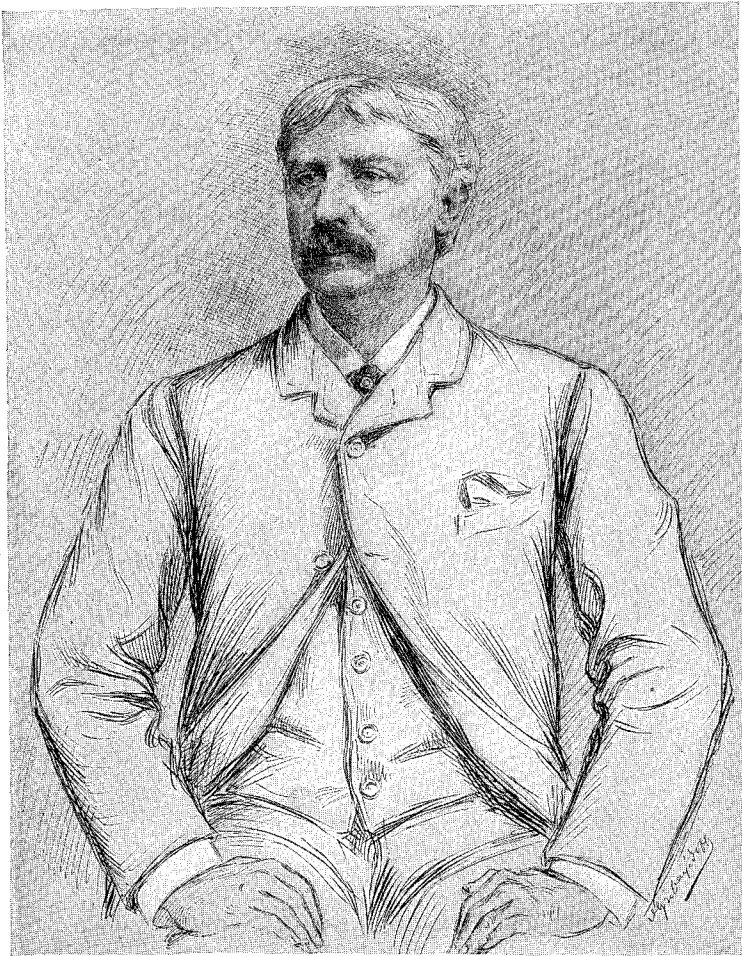
*Drawn by V. Gribaydoff.*

yet none has equaled the fame of the great pioneers.

Unquestionably there is much to stimulate the literary imagination in California. Her physical magnitude and resources, the splendid scenic variety that lies between her snow clad mountains and her subtropical seas; her proverbially glorious sunshine, her opulence in fruit and flower; then her history, brief yet exceedingly romantic, her mixed strains of population, her vast production of wealth, and her promised development as the mistress of the wide Pacific—all these things may well inspire thoughts worthy of expression. Her loyal sons claim for her that nature made her to be the Athens of America; that her sunset

temporarily sojourned within her gates has been deep and lasting. Mark Twain spent only half a dozen years in California and Nevada, yet they colored all his best work. Even Bret Harte, who writes of nothing but the life of the Pacific slope, dwelt there for no more than seventeen of his fifty seven years.

It is to Eastern publishers and periodicals, naturally, that most Californian writers still must look for their means of access to the audience of the world at large. It was at the editorial desk of the *Overland Monthly* that Bret Harte made his first reputation; but though he has had clever successors in such men as Charles Howard Shinn and the present editor, Rounsevelle



F. Bret Harte.

Drawn by V. Grigayédoff.

Wildman, his name yet remains the chief glory of the *Overland's* annals. Meanwhile the daily journalism of San Francisco has touched literature at many points. W. C. Morrow, "leader writer" of the *Call*, is widely known for his short stories. George Hamlin Fitch, who for fifteen years has been writing the *Chronicle's* book reviews, is a critic of rare experience and acumen, and a valued contributor to the best reviews. John Bonner, a Canadian by birth, who was long connected with the *Call*, and who has also made his mark as a journalist in New York, is the author of several legal and historical works. Frank Bailey Millard, literary editor of the *Examiner*, has produced a long list of clever sketches of California life. Peter Robertson, dramatic critic of the *Chronicle*, is a leader in his branch

of the profession, and an author of some successful librettos. It was on the *Chronicle*, too, that Edward W. Townsend, of "Chimmie Fadden" fame, graduated as a newspaper man. Arthur McEwen, who can write stories as well as political satires, is another active figure in the journalism of the Golden Gate City.

Joaquin Miller's characteristic home on Oakland Heights has often been pictured, and was described in a former number of *MUNSEY'S* (June, 1893). Near it there has grown up something of a literary colony. About a quarter of a mile below lives Charles Edwin Markham; a little further down, Adeline Knapp, author of the "social problem" story, "A Thousand Dollars a Day"; still nearer to the city, Ina Coolbrith, whose poem "California" was so much



admired by Whittier that he learned it by heart. Miss Coolbrith is librarian of the Oakland Public Library.

Professor Markham is one of the best known Californian writers of the day. He is a genuine son of the Pacific slope, born in Oregon and bred in California. He was "discovered," a good many years ago, by Edmund Clarence Stedman, and since then



Mrs. Riggs (Kate Douglas Wiggin).

his verses have made their way all over the country. His metrical work is the relaxation of a busy life as a teacher, for he is principal of a large school in Oakland. Yet he has the highest literary ideals, as may be seen from his lines on "The Poet":

His home is in the heights; to him  
Men wage a battle weird and dim;  
Life is a mission stern as fate,  
And song a dread apostolate;  
The perilous music that he hears  
Falls from the vortex of the spheres.

He is a social philosopher, too, and shares his neighbor Miller's belief in "the doctrine of toil." A few years ago he left his books and his pupils, set himself to labor at a forge, and resumed his teaching only when he had mastered the blacksmith's craft.

Ambrose Bierce is a younger writer, a man of great powers, much promise, and some achievement. As a literary personality, he suggests both Miller and Poe. Master of a strong and individual style, he

draws faithful pictures of human nature as he sees it through the distorting lens of a pessimistic temperament. He is a bitter satirist, an inveterate foe of sham and pretense, and a scorner of convention. He has published fables, short stories, and novels. "The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter," a curious study of medieval life and passion, is a characteristic specimen of his clever yet uneven fiction.

Gertrude Atherton has left California, to settle in a New York suburb, but her work classes her with the far Western school. The early days of the missions and of Spanish rule have given Mrs. Atherton her most congenial field, and she has successfully reproduced their atmosphere in her best novels, "What Dreams May Come," and "The Doomswoman." Against a background of their romantic traditions, she paints the world old story of passion—vague, dreamy, idyllic, yet strong and elemental.

Turning from fiction and poetry to a widely different field, several Californians have won fame in the literature of science. Foremost among them stand Edward S. Holden and the veteran Joseph Le Conte. The former is director of the famous Lick Observatory, and is prominent as a writer upon astronomical and historical subjects. The latter's name is indissolubly linked with that of his friend and teacher, Louis Agassiz. He has followed up the great Swiss geologist's studies in almost every branch of natural history, and has written a series of volumes that are standard authorities upon a wide range of scientific topics. His works on geology are text books in schools and colleges, and his "Religion and Science," "Sight," and "Evolution" are equally well known. At the University of California, with which he has been connected for more than a quarter of a century, the largest class room is always crowded when Professor Le Conte lectures.

In the line of dramatic literature, the work of Peter Robertson has already been mentioned. David Belasco, one of the best known American playwrights, is a Californian, and served his theatrical apprenticeship in San Francisco. Daniel O'Connell, who was one of the *Overland* staff in the days of Bret Harte, has written librettos as well as verse and fiction. Mrs. Romualdo Pacheco, the author of "Incog" and other plays that have been successfully produced, spends much time in New York, but still acknowledges the Golden State as her home. Her husband is a native Californian, and



A GROUP OF CALIFORNIAN AUTHORS.

Edward S. Holden.  
John Vance Cheney.  
W. C. Morrow.

Rounseville Wildman.

Ambrose Bierce.  
Charles Edwin Markham  
Charles F. Lummis.





Gertrude Atherton.

*From a photograph by Thors, San Francisco.*

served for several years as the American consul at Guatemala. Mention should also be made of Archibald Clavering Gunter, author of "Mr. Barnes of New York"—though literature has little to say to his stories and plays. Like Mr. "Chimmie Fadden" Townsend, it was from San Francisco journalism that Mr. Gunter migrated to the metropolis.

Another of the many Californian litterateurs who have drifted away from the shores of the Pacific is John Vance Cheney, now head of the Newberry Library in Chicago, to which he went after several years' service at the San Francisco Public Library. Mr. Cheney is a New Englander by birth, but the work that made his reputation was done in California. It includes critical essays, fiction, and verses, the latter collected into volumes of which "Thistle-drift" and "Woodblossoms" are the best

known. His poems are essentially lyric—songs of the woods and fields, the open air and the sunshine, with a quality that sometimes suggests Bryant's.

It was in California, too, that Kate Douglas Wiggin—now Mrs. Riggs—first became known for her kindergarten work, and for her clever stories, written primarily for girls, but worthy of almost any audience.

It was several years ago that the poem "Liberty Bell" drew attention to its author Madge Morris Wagner. Mrs. Wagner's literary work has been greatly impeded by ill health, and for long she had written but little when she was called to Chicago from her retirement in southern California, at the time of the World's Fair. It was her verses that first suggested the project of making a great new "liberty bell" for the White City, and it was very appropriate

that she should have been invited to take the leading part in the ceremony of its dedication. Her hand pressed the electric button that set it ringing and awoke the echo of other bells all over the Union.

Another member of southern California's "health colony" is Charles F. Lummis, who sought that life giving climate some years ago at a time of overwork and physical

Jerome Case Bull, who finds his favorite field in prose idyls of the old mission days, and the author of "Robert Atterbury," the thoughtful and notable story concluded in this magazine last January. Another is Juliet Wilbor Tompkins, author of "On the Way North," and "The House They Took." Miss Tompkins is still very young—she graduated at Vassar only five



Mrs. Romualdo Pacheco.

*From a photograph by Marceau, San Francisco.*

exhaustion. In its wealth of scenery and legend, among its relics of Indian and Mexican days, Mr. Lummis has found not only renewed strength but a literary mine which he has exploited with marked skill. "A Tramp Across the Continent," "The Land of Poco Tiempo," and "The Spanish Pioneers" are his published volumes.

Some of the best things in the pages of MUNSEY'S come from the Pacific coast, or from writers who have found their inspiration there. Among these may be mentioned Clarence Urmy, a clever verse maker:

years ago—but her stories sparkle with a quality that is not less than brilliant. She is a daughter of the late Edward Tompkins, who was a regent of the State university, and well known in public life. Her home is a farm near San Leandro, an old Spanish grant that has changed hands but twice since it was given by the King of Spain to Ignatio Peralta. Her sister, Elizabeth Knight Tompkins, recently published a successful novel, "Her Majesty," and the work of both these young writers shows remarkable promise.

*Helen Gregory Flesher.*



# THE STAGE

## THREE "PRISONERS OF ZENDA."

The three distinguished successes of the present London season were all produced first in America. They are "Trilby" at the Haymarket, with Beerbohm Tree as *Svengali*; Wilson Barrett in "The Sign of the Cross" at

woman, and that she is a talented one as well is proved by a glance at the parts she has created, which include *Lady Windermere*, and *Noeline* in "The Amazons." Hilda Hanbury came to America with the Tree company, understudying her sister, an office she has also per-



Hilda Hanbury.

From a photograph by the London Stereoscopic Company.

the Lyric; and "The Prisoner of Zenda" at the St. James. *Flavia*, in the latter, is played by Evelyn Millard, the regular leading woman of the house, who Mr. Alexander decided was not equal to *Mrs. Tanqueray*. The *Antoinette de Mauban* is Lily Hanbury, who was here last year with Beerbohm Tree. As our portrait shows, Miss Hanbury is an exceedingly pretty

formed for her cousin, Julia Neilson, now touring this country with John Hare.

Miss Neilson's début was made with the Irving company, a few seasons ago, at the Lyceum. When Hare opened his engagement at Abbey's with "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith," Miss Neilson, in the title rôle, carried the piece by her cleverness and tact. Her work in