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## Poetry.

### Fallen Snowflakes.

[If words were ever more sorrowfully sounded, or more sadly yet gorgeously grief-woven than these heart-throbs revelling in rhyme, we have yet to embalm them in the myrtle memory of our tears. They are not the lisp-breathings of romance, they must have been uttered from the blighted rose-lips of real life—each word a gem, each line a pearl. Perchance, when her wild word-wail closed amid earth's icicles, some sister spirit of song, listening entranced above, may have flung to earth her starry scarf of sympathy, and caught this loved and lost Peri up to her home in Heaven! Hope inspires it.]

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
Filling the sky and earth below;
Over the house-tops, over the street,
Over the heads of the people you meet,
Dancing,
Flirting,
Skimming along;
Beautiful snow! it can do wrong,
Flying to kiss a fair lady's cheek,
Clinging to lisp in a frolicsome freak,
Beautiful snow from the Heaven above,
Pure as an angel, gentle as love!

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
How the flakes gather and laugh as they go,
Whirling about in the maddening fun,
It plays in its glee with every one.
Chasing,
Laughing,
Hurrying by!
It lights on the face and it sparkles the eye,
And the merry dogs with a bark and a bound
Snap at the crystals that eddy around—
The town is alive and its heart is a glow,
To welcome the coming of beautiful snow!

How wild the crowd goes swaying along,
Hailing each other with humor and song!
How the gay sledges, like meteors, pass by,
Bright for the moment, then lost to the eye—
Ringing,
Swinging,
Dashing they go,
Over the crust of the beautiful snow;
Snow so pure that it falls from the sky,
To be trampled in mud by the crowd rushing by
To be trampled and tracked by thousands of feet,
Till it blends with the filth in the horrible street.

Once I was pure as the snow—but I fell!
Fell like the snow-flakes, from heaven to hell!
Fell, to be trampled as filth in the street;
Fell, to be scoffed, to be spit on and beat;
Pleading,
Cursing,
Dreading to die,
Selling my soul to whoever would buy,
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living, and fearing the dead!
Merciful God! have I fallen so low!
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow!

Once I was fair as the beautiful snow,
With an eye like the crystal, a heart like its glow;
Once I was loved for my innocence grace—
Flattered and sought for the charms of my face!
Father,
Mother,
Sisters, all,
God and myself, I've lost by my fall;
The veriest wretch that goes shivering by,
Will make a wide sweep, lest I wander too nigh;
For all that is on, or above me, I know,
There is nothing as pure as the beautiful snow.

How strange it should be that this beautiful snow
Should fall on a sinner with nowhere to go!
How strange it should be when the night comes again,
If the snow and the ice struck my desperate brain,
Fainting,
Freezing,
Dying alone,
Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan
To be heard in the streets of the crazy town
Gone mad in the joy of the snow coming down,
To be, and to die, in my terrible woe,
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful snow!

## Miscellaneous.

### The Ice Cone at Montmorenci.

Quebec, and Quebec in the depth of winter, with the thermometer at any degree of depression you may choose to imagine; with the St. Lawrence frozen feet deep; with all nature bound fast in an icy chain for months, till spring presses her fetters with his rosy fingers, and at the magic touch she bursts forth once more into life and verdure, may be considered by shivering souls as a place to be avoided; yet in spite of all this, really, a Canadian winter is not a bad thing in its way. Frost-bites are unpleasant, but there is an exhilaration in the clear frosty air, and a music in the sleigh-bells, which leads one to brave them. A flushed young face, and a pair of bright eyes beaming out from beneath a fascinating fur-cap and snow-veil, are not bad things to look upon now and then; and with the fair creature to whom these charms belong by your side, snugly tucked in, and otherwise enshrined in buffalo-robe and bear-skin, with two good horses tandem-fashion in front of you, and half a dozen other men similarly fitted out around you, slashing along some ten miles an hour over the hard crisp snow,—sleigh-bells jingling and plumes waving,—a man may be passably happy, though he be some three thousand miles from Market Harborough, and the thermometer is a dozen degrees below zero. Or, again, what pleasanter place to while away a few hours in than the Skating Rink? This, an enormous wooden structure with a floor of ice, caused by flooding its area, and a slightly raised platform all around it, on which chaperones rest and mammas mount guard, the skaters rest and musicians play, is thronged by youth of both sexes all the winter's day, who skimming lightly hither and thither over the glassy surface, go through all the wonderous evolutions of the "inside" and "outside" edge with an easy grace that might astonish the most accomplished members of the London Skating Club. Ah me! Those mad circlings round the ring, when the band of the Rifles, striking up its wildest galop, would send off a hundred or so of young men and maidens flying hand-in-hand in perfect time and cadence to the music, round that icy hall!

Or what would you say to an afternoon's "toboggin?" A "Toboggin" is an Indian sledge made of birch-bark and slender rods, exceeding light, yet strong. The Indian uses it to dray his game, &c., in winter expeditions over the snow. We put them to a different purpose. Bear me back, dear memory, to the snowy slope of the glacis of the citadel. I am one of a little group of both sexes clustered on the rampart; we have each our toboggin; one of us is on the point of starting; he seats himself and is pushed gently over the edge, (the ditch is full of snow, it and the glacis are as one,) away he flies, like an arrow from the bow. He steers his vehicle either with his hands or with two short sticks, the slightest touch from which is sufficient to turn him to the right or left, as may be desired; but let him beware of bearing too heavily on the snow, or he will spin round at right angles to his course, be ejected violently from his ticklish conveyance, and roll head over heels down the slope, an object of laughter and derision to those above. O, rare memory! do I not now, in my mind's eye, see the deftest and most graceful of Canadian girls about to start? But she disdains to sit. Erect, and holding a couple of cords or reins which are attached to the head of her toboggin, she makes the exciting rush, her escaped tresses waving behind her, her lithe figure swaying in easy and graceful balance. Not more swiftly does "swift Camilla scour the plain."

But of all the many amusements of the long Canadian winter, of which these are but a few ensamples, commend me to a day's sliding down the Ice Cone at Montmorenci. Few things are more exciting, more amusing, or more delightfully alarming.

Come, let us make one of a picnic and sleighing party to these Falls of Montmorenci. "A picnic?" you ask. "And in the depth of winter!" Precisely so. This is got up by the officers of one of the regiments in garrison at Quebec, to which the invited furnish nothing but their company. Betimes in the day the eatables and drinkables have been despatched to the scene of action under the charge of the mess servants. It is a glorious morning, and we shall have some splendid sliding down the cone; and the clear blue sky is without a cloud; there is not a breath of air, luckily for us, for a nine-miles' drive against the wind to-day might render, on the homœopathic principle, an application of snow to the noses of some of the party necessary. "Sleighs will parade in the Place d'Armes at half past twelve, and will start at one precisely." These are the orders for the "Tandem Club." We will drive early to the rendezvous, and see this gathering of the clans.

Hark! the jingle of bells, and up drives Danvers, the president for the day of the "Club," which musters strongly this morning, with a handsome pairs of black Canadian ponies, green plumes (the regimental color), and silver bells tinkling on throat and headpiece. He is not alone; one of Quebec's fairest daughters sits by his side. He is quickly followed by Mr. Brownwig in a Russian sleigh, with a pair of "two-fifty" chestnuts, and a bewitching little hazel-eyed beauty under his escort.

Here comes another, trotting down from the Governor's gardens at a break-neck pace. That is Joss,—the immortal Joss, who drives like a butcher, and fights like a hero,—bear witness his Victoria cross,—and who appears now, making noise enough for half a dozen! The "Hatter" by Jove! who will play billiards with you, or shoot with you, or fish with you, or fight with you, for anything you like, and back himself at all; he too, has turned out in a Russian sleigh, and has the prettiest little "Muffin" possible for a companion. The starting rapidly approaches, and the arrivals are frequent. Here is Lieutenant Wattel and Miss Partridge, and Captain Pomatum in his one-horse sleigh, with something nice nestled under the robes. It is too cold to stand still, so we circle round the "Place," horses prancing, bells tinkling, plumes—scarlet, green, black, &c.—fluttering, cheery laughter floating around us, and "chaff" pretty thick in some quarters.

And here, while waiting for the start, it may be proper (*en parenthesis*) to observe that, though Canadian girls are less under the eyes of *chaperones*, and have perhaps somewhat more liberty of action than their English sisters, yet that they too possess "the wild sweet-briery fence that round the daughters of Erin grows"; and woe would quickly befall the luckless and ill-mannered wight who attempted to presume upon, or to take advantage of the innocent confidence which trusted itself to his care.

It wants five minutes to the hour; the president drives out of the ring and prepares for the start. "Now then, gentlemen; all here? Time's up! Off!" And away he goes up Louis street, followed in hot haste by all. Up Louis street—down the Esplanade—along John street—down Palace street—past Russell's Hotel, where Yankees come to the door to watch us pass, turn the never-failing quid, spit, and swear a little at those "darned Britishers"—out through Palace Gate, and along the level to Dorchester Bridge. No delay at the toll-bar, for the last man pays for the party. And now we are in the open country the other side of the St. Charles River, the horses well down in the collar, spinning over the crisp and dazzling surface in fine style.

The road lies parallel to the left bank of the St. Lawrence. On our right is the mighty river, its bosom heaving under fields of floating ice. The river has not yet "taken," as it is called; that is to say, it is not completely frozen over, so that uninterrupted communication may be carried on between shore and shore; but solid ice stretches for upwards of a mile from the bank into the stream, and the track from the Island of Orleans to Quebec is over it. That black line of dots is so many sleighs and carrioles returning from the city to the island, or to Montmorenci. The village of Beaufort is quickly reached and passed, and some two miles beyond it we turn into a field on our right for the short cut down to the Inn. A canter across it brings us to the brow of the precipice that looks over the river, down by the side of which the horses must slide and scramble as best they may. Divers little screams attest the fears of the ladies, but Canadian horses are sure-footed, and there is little danger; even if an upset occurred, we should be quit with a tumble in the feathery snow; though if a horse took it into his head to bolt over the cliff it would be decidedly unpleasant. However, with a firm hand, and a quick eye, we are all safe. Safe, did you say? What does that louder shriek than usual mean? We look round, and there is the Colonel's sleigh on its side, and its two lady occupants on their heads! He has driven into a drift and turned over, but nobody is hurt. The horses stand, the sleigh is righted, and the girls, whose Bloomer-Turco-Canadian trousers, fastened at the ankle, have prevented any embarrassing revelations, resume their seats, laughing, blushing, and shaking their ruffled plumes. We reach the foot of the hill without further disaster, and drive up to the inn, whose ready doors are open to receive us,—an old and time-worn dwelling, coeval, like enough, with Wolfe and Montcalm. It may be that those walls witnessed the repulse of the British when the French swarmed out of their intrenchments above, and drove, with heavy loss, our Grenadiers back through the ford below the Falls. Many a poor fellow parted company with his hair that luckless day, for scalping was anything but rarely practised by Canadian Militia and their Indian allies during the war, as contemporary records show. Its shingled roof is white with snow, and icicles hang from the eaves and glisten in the sun. A gallery runs along the front of the house, which is rapidly filling with our party. A score of young "habitants," *Anglice* French Canadians, are round the door; these take possession of the horses and lead them off to the stables. We enter the inn to "liquor up"; a glass of curacoa and brandy is not a bad thing after such a drive, and on this occasion even the ladies are prevailed upon "to smile."

The inn's best room is a large, low chamber, scrupulously clean, the walls decorated with the effigies of saints in all sorts of impossible devotional attitudes, and the inevitable plaster cast of Napoleon in a corner; but, sight more pleasing than saints or the fat first emperor, the tables are being rapidly covered with the good things that the gallant—th have furnished for our refection, and which we are to fall upon on our return from the Ice Cone.

So now for the Cone: the ladies are ready, and we sally forth from the inn,—a lively, happy, noisy company,—to wend our way to the frozen falls. Some twenty or thirty men and boys await our coming, each with his "traineau" and services as guide, for hire. The traineau is the vehicle that conveys us down the Cone; it is a small sledge, some four feet long and two feet wide, mounted on low runners shod with iron. The intending voyager *sits* on this if he goes with a guide, or *lies* on it (if skilful or foolhardy enough to dispense with one) his head in advance, the legs and feet hanging over the stern of the traineau. These quaint contrivances, which remind one somewhat of a butcher's tray, except that they are not hollowed out in the centre, are dragged along by a cord; they are gayly painted and each has a name: "L'Empereur," "La Reine Victoria," "L'Alliance," and other suggestive appellations, show the bent of "habitant" politics. Seduced by the bright color of a red traineau with the promising name of "La Bonne Aventure," whose proprietor informs us he is "good for slide, sare," we engage him for the day, a skilful pilot being a reassuring possession, as we have not the slightest idea of making the perilous descent alone.

But here we are at the foot of the Falls of Montmorenci, and the Ice Cone is before us. "What is this Ice Cone?" some one may ask. It is simply the frozen spray from the solid mass of ice, and before the winter months are over, reaches the height of seventy or eighty feet; in shape something like an inverted wine-glass without the stem. It is ascended by a series of rough steps cut in the side. At its base several chambers have been hewn out. One serves as a retiring-room for the ladies: another is devoted to the uses of the men, and here, from a speculative Canadian, may be procured brandy, and divers "drinks," by all who choose to buy. Snug enough rooms they are, too, though the wall are of ice, and the floors of the same. Near the large cone is another, formed by the same agency, but smaller, through being more remote from the fall, down which the ladies disport themselves. Few try the large one, albeit we have seen one or two who were bold enough to do so.

But now for the ascent; and then—O horror!—the descent. Several are already climbing the rough steps, and we join the tolling throng. In a few minutes we are at the summit, and, arrived there, we take a glance around. Far away, the eye ranges over a snowy desert to the distant bank of the St. Lawrence and the gray hills of Maine; while nearer the white roofs of Quebec glisten in the cold rays of the wintry sun. Before us, in the middle distance, lies the island of Orleans, its woody summits leafless, gaunt and grim. Immediately beneath us traineaus are darting in all directions, or are being dragged back for another slide. Behind us is the cataract, its spray is falling in hard little pellets on our coats. Have a care! go not too near the Fall side of the Cone, lest you chance to slip over; if so, heaven rest your soul! for earth will never see you more; you would drop into the deep water at the foot of the Fall, and be carried under the ice no man knows whither. Some half-dozen unfortunates have in fact thus slipped, and so disappeared forever.

And now to business. The "Hatter" is just off; he slips over the side, and in an instant is out of sight; a few moments more, and he reappears, shooting across the plain at a tremendous rate; in about half a mile his course is finished, and he and his guide (two little black specks in the distance) are seen returning for another trip. Danvers, his black whiskers white with rime, and his nose blue with cold, is about to start. It is our turn next, and before it comes, just a few words as to the emotion of a novice on making his first journey down the Cone. Its shape prevents a glance down the sides; except the limited arena of its summit, no standing-room is visible within a circuit of perhaps three hundred yards; "craning," therefore, is impossible. You are not in the habit or amusing yourself by sliding down the roof of a house, and you feel that you are on the eve of going through an exaggerated performance of that nature. Did not honor forbid, you might prefer returning by the ignominious, but safer, route you have just mounted by; but that is out of the question; in another minute, quitting your scanty foothold, you will be launched into space; there is no help for it—you must make the best of the inevitable! There is no time for hesitation, more sliders are arriving, and we must make room for others. "Now, sare! all ready sare?" inquired my red-capped guide. He is already seated on the front part of the traineau, his legs projected on each side, his heels dug into the ice, to prevent an untimely start. I seat myself behind him, curl my legs round his waist, and place my feet between his knees, take a firm hold of the stern end of the traineau, and commend myself to the care of Providence and my Canadian friend. He lifts his heels; a slight push is given us behind, and—we are off!

Ha, ha! The traineau starts, and bounds clear into the air. I involuntarily tighten my hold. We fall some ten feet, and again touching the slippery surface, bound off again. Another drop, and we are on the more sloping side of the Cone; we fly down it breathless. In another instant we have reached the bottom,—sharp icy splinters, ploughed up by the iron runners, hit us in the face, and sting as shot would, —but nothing stops us; we skim over the level at railway speed for some quarter of a mile or more, when, the acquired velocity exhausted, we roll off our quaint conveyance, shake the snow from our coats, and prepare to return. On our way back, the "Hatter" passes us wildly screaming; he, scorning a guide, has made a second trip alone, and with the usual good fortune that attends his madcap adventures. Not so Rand, a young guardsman, nor Bordon, of the—th. They, equally brave, but not equally lucky, have come to great grief; both have been thrown from their traineaus. Rand is sticking headforemost in a snow-drift, and is lugged out wellnigh black in the face, with his nose nearly broken. Bordon was split almost at starting, and has consequently slid down on the seat of his trousers, to the utter destruction of that garment, and with considerable abrasion of the part it covered. He binds up his wounds with his pocket-handkerchief, despatches his servant for another pair of continuations, and slides no more that day.

Reader, did you ever dream you had slipped over a cliff, and were helplessly falling—falling—falling—until, with a violent bump, you awake, as it were, at the bottom, more frightened than hurt? If so, you have experienced a very similar sensation to that of the first slide down the Ice Cone. The sport, as I have said before, is not entirely without danger; one man was killed and another had his leg broken during one winter I passed in Quebec, by collision with the iron runners of the traineau. Still, accidents do not often happen, and after the disagreeable novelty of the first attempt is over, the bound into the air and lightning-like rush become wonderfully exciting, and the Cone is a favorite resort all through the winter.

With us, in this instance, the game grows fast and furious. The cone is alive with an ascending and descending string of sliders; traineaus are darting in all directions over the plain, and tumbles in the snow are numerous. The ladies too, on their lower eminence, are as busy as we are, and are attended by the less adventurous, or the more gallant, of the men. Two Canadian gentlemen of our party astonish us. Not content with the excitement of the Cone, they climb up the precipitous cliff, which, rising to a height of between two and three hundred feet, bounds the left bank of the Montmorenci River below the Falls. About half-way up the rock they launch themselves on their traineaus. Good heavens! they will be dashed to pieces! Not at all. Rushing down with frightful speed, the impetus they have acquired carries them over the lesser and nearly to the summit of the principal Cone, when, turning, they slip down the side and glide like birds far away over the plain. This is a feat we are unable to emulate, but to Canadians, who are as handy with a traineau as a Madras Indian is with his catamaran, it is a trifle.

After a couple of hours of this, it is time to think of dinner, or, to speak more correctly, dinner will be thought of; so with tingling veins and flushed faces we stroll back to the inn. Here a goodly repast is ready: tureens of steaming soup, mighty joints and pasties, savory curries and dishes of snowy potatoes, deck the board. A side-table bears an array of sundry sweets in reserve. A whole army of bottles invites attack, and mulled port and claret dispel delicious odors. All are quickly at table, and the assault begins, but instead of the jar of bayonets, the boom of cannon, and the groans of the wounded, we have the clash of knives, the sharp popping of champagne corks, and the fire of motto bonbons, and merry laughter. The viands stand the attack bravely, but suffer enormously. The Amazons present during the heat of the fray shortly retire, but the men continue hostilities yet a little longer, and dozens of luckless "marines" are victims in the fight.

The rage of hunger and thirst appeased, the field is cleared of all traces of conflict; half a dozen of the regimental musicians make their appearance; the soft strains of a valse draw forth the ladies, and soon manly arms are encircling slender waists. Quadrille, polka, and galop follow in quick succession till midnight, when the moon, rising over distant hills, gives light enough for our return. The sleighs are at the door; one more "good-night" galop, and we start for home.

The merry bells ring out once more; the horses paw and champ the bit, impatient to be off. We wind up the hillside,—a long black line against that snowy background. The level is soon reached, but we do not drive back at the reckless pace we came. Songs from fair or bearded throats, and joyous choruses, swell on the night air. The drowsy peasants of Beaufort are roused by the clatter, and watch us from their casements as we dash through the village street, their dogs yelping savagely at our horses' heels. Sentiment succeeds to song; a hush creeps over our party, and low whispers tell how deeply some hearts are feeling. But be that as it may, we are now nearing Quebec. The bridge is past and we are in the city. The sleighs here begin to disperse, for we must drive the ladies we escort home All are soon safely deposited with papa and mamma; all, with the exception of the luckless young lady under the charge of our friend the "Hatter," who, more intent, perhaps, on flirting than driving, lags behind, gets into a snow-drift, breaks both shafts, is without the means of mending them, and has to trudge home some two or three miles through the snow, with his horses reins on one arm, and his poor little "muffin" on the other.

Our adieux made, and our partners fairly housed, by kind invitation of our gallant entertainers we drive up to the citadel. Here blazing fires, grilled bones, and a snug billiard-room await us; and after supper, grog, cigars and a chatty game of pool, we retire to bed to dream of bright eyes, flushed cheeks, sleigh-bells, and our happy day's sliding over the snow.

### The Iron Horse Among the Sierra Nevadas.

[From the Sacramento Union, December 10.]

Within five hours' ride of Sacramento, where roses still bloom in the garden, and the air is balmy as the breath of spring, snow has fallen to the depth of three feet on a level, and the sleigh-bells are making music along white highways, fenced with spears like pines. One can breakfast here in the valley, where ice is chiefly known as an imported luxury for cooling drinks on sultry days, and where snow is a tradition; dine where frozen lakes tempt the graceful skater, where cutters and buffalo robes and bells offer the swift and rollicking satisfaction of New England sports, and not far from the spot where the snow walled in and shrouded the Donner party to death; and sup in time to see the curtain rise at the theatre in Sacramento on the same evening. The locomotive makes this concentration of seasons—this transition from spring flowers to wintry delights—ou the same day, a possibility.

The Central Pacific railroad company now run four passenger trains daily for a distance of twenty-three miles within the snow belt of the mountains—that is, from Alta to Cisco—and are already testing another of those "insurmountable obstacles" which are conjured up to destroy confidence in the enterprise, but which have been vanquished from time to time, in the progress of the work, by energetic attack. The experiment is of great interest to the people of this coast, as well as to all others who realize the importance of regular communication by the continental highway; but it should be said that the officers of the company have little or no doubt operating the road up there during the season of storms. Something may be learned foreshadowing the result from the equipment of the railroad for the contest, and the manner in which the snow has been handled thus far. The snow-plow placed in front of each locomotive is the one usually employed on the roads in the Northern States on the Atlantic side of the continent, calculated to clear the track of the white obstacle, immediately after a storm, provided the depth is not more than two feet. If the trains are frequent during a storm, accumulation to a greater depth upon any considerable section of the road is hardly probable. Heavy drifts might occur, and, be heaped to a great height on each side of the track, but to prevent delay from such obstructions a large force of laborers are ready for service above Alta, and a huge snow-plow—an independent machine—has been built for throwing the snow over the ravines, away from the line of the road. The first heavy storm of the season, leaving, as we have intimated, a depth of three feet on a level, was easily disposed of without having recourse to the big machine. During that tempestuous visitation, it happened that a train was stopped by running against a bowlder, but the snow itself did not delay the regular passenger trains an hour.

The section of railroad within the snowbelt is a wonderful monument of energy and engineering skill, and the region through which it passes is a succession of the grandest scenes the Sierra can afford. A stranger, coming from the eastern slope and finding a locomotive puffing amid the snows in the shadow of the Black Butte and Rattlesnake Peak, six thousand feet above the sea, cannot fail to be startled by such an apparition, and his wonder will not diminish as he descends and looks at the precipitous mountains and stupendous gorges over which the way has been smoothed for the track of the Iron horse. There are but two tunnels on this section—one through Grizzly hill, 600 feet long; and the other through the ridge that divides the waters of the American from those of the Yuba, at Emigrant Gap, only three hundred and fifty feet in length. The line has been so skillfully run that the ascent is accomplished by cuts, embankments, and blasting a road bed in the solid rock of the mountain side, where an experienced hunter would be troubled to climb. The deepest cut is found at Prospect Hill, ten miles above Alta, and measures one hundred and twenty-eight feet. The embankments are many and huge, and the settling of these during this, the first season of their use, is the point that requires of the superintendent more constant attention than the obstruction of the snow.

The construction trains are continually employed in restoring them to the proper grade. From the tunnel at Emigrant Gap to Cisco the road is blasted out of granite in a mountain side overlooking Bear Valley and the canon of the Yuba. Here, and at a point below, whence may be seen the forks of the American and the Giant's Gap, (lately Jehovah Gap,) are the grandest views to be obtained on the line of the railroad. Towering heights and dizzy depths—craggy cliff and velvet sward—forests of fir and pine and summits of glittering snow—are the chief elements of the scenes which artists of the future will delight to paint. At this time, flecks of snow are first seen by the traveller ten miles above Alta, and thence to Cisco it gradually deepens, until it clothes the earth with a thick and far-spreading robe of white, and gracefully festoons every tree on the mountain side. One may see at Cisco the sleighs of the stage company waiting for their daily freight of migrating humanity. To those who have pursued the routine of life in the valley for years, and have caught only distant glimpses of the winter on the summit of the Sierra, a visit to this Artic land at this season gives a strange and delightful sensation. We have the best authority for asserting that snow is very white, very pure, and very cold, and for adding that sleighing in California is just as good fun as ever it was in the East.

### Cotton Culture in the South.

A distinguished officer in the army, on duty at New Orleans, takes a gloomy view of the prospects for the cotton crop for the present year, in a letter to a friend at Boston: "The same story is told everywhere about the crops. Major Gunkle, a Cincinnati man, planted 2,800 acres in cotton, and made 300 bales; a loss of $80,000 by the operation. Still he told me he had done better than his neighbors, and will try it one year more. Another man told me he had worked 45 hands and made 43 bales. Another northern man, Col. Bisbie, had planted some 4,000 acres and was completely ruined. A merchant in this city (New Orleans) who travels much up the river and through the State, and advanced supplies to many planters last year, told me he knew that nine out of ten had lost all they invested, and he says it will be impossible to plant as much this year as last, because the means are wanting. Credit was exhausted last year, and the merchants who advanced for planters will, in many cases, not be able to collect their bills. There are splendid farms on the Mississippi, but the risks are greater than in North Carolina. As to the price of cotton, I find the general impression is that from two thirds to three fourths of the crop is now in the market. A majority of planters have been obliged to sell to meet their bills. The crop will hardly go above a million bales. Therefore the price must go up by and by.

## MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT.

### Veto of the Colorado Bill.

The President yesterday sent to the Senate the following message, assigning his reasons for objecting to the bill to admit Colorado into the Union:

*To the Senate of the United States:*

I return to the Senate, in which house it originated, a bill entitled "An act to admit the State of Colorado into the Union," to which I cannot, consistently with my sense of duty, give my approval. With the exception of an additional section, containing new provisions, it is substantially the same as the bill of a similar title passed by Congress during the last session, submitted to the President for his approval, returned with the objections contained in a message bearing date the 15th of May last, and yet awaiting the reconsideration of the Senate.

A second bill, having in view the same purpose, has now passed both houses of Congress and been presented for my signature. Having again carefully considered the subject, I have been unable to perceive any reason for changing the opinions which have already been communicated to Congress. I find, on the contrary, that there are many objections to the proposed legislation, of which I was not at that time aware, and that while several of those which I then assigned have, in the interval, gained in strength, yet others have been created by the altered character of the measure now submitted.

The constitution under which this State government is proposed to be formed, very properly contains a provision that all laws in force at the time of its adoption and the admission of the State into the Union shall continue as if the constitution had not been adopted. Among those laws is one absolutely prohibiting negroes and mulattoes from voting. At the recent session of the Territorial Legislature a bill for the repeal of this law, introduced into the council, was almost unanimously rejected; and the very time when Congress was engaged in enacting the bill now under consideration, the Legislature passed an act excluding negroes and mulattoes from the right to sit as jurors. This bill was vetoed by the Governor of the Territory, who held that by the laws of the United States negroes and mulattoes are citizens, and subject to the duties as well as entitled to the rights of citizenship. The bill, however, was passed, the objections of the Governor to the contrary notwithstanding, and is now a law of the Territory. Yet in the bill now before me, by which it is proposed to admit the Territory as a State, it is provided that "there shall be no denial of the elective franchise or any other right to any person, by reason of race or color, excepting Indians not taxed." The incongruity thus exhibited between the legislation of Congress and that of the Territory, taken in connection with the protest against the admission of the State, hereinafter referred to, would seem clearly to indicate the impolicy and injustice of the proposed enactment.

It might indeed be a subject of grave inquiry, and doubtless will result in such inquiry if this bill becomes a law, whether it does not attempt to exercise a power not conferred upon Congress by the Federal Constitution. That instrument simply declares that Congress may admit new States into the Union. It nowhere says that Congress may make new States for the purpose of admitting them into the Union, or for any other purpose; and yet this bill is as clear an attempt to make the institutions as any in which the people themselves could engage.

In view of this action of Congress, the House of Representatives of the Territory have earnestly protested against being forced into the Union, without first having the question submitted to the people. Nothing could be more reasonable than the position which they thus assume; and it certainly cannot be the purpose of Congress to force upon a community, against their will, a government which they do not believe themselves capable of sustaining.

The following is a copy of the protest alluded to, as officially transmitted to me:

"Whereas it is announced in the public prints that it is the intention of Congress to admit Colorado as a State into the Union; therefore

"*Resolved by the House of Representatives of this Territory*, That representing, as we do, the last and only legal expression of public opinion on this question, we earnestly protest against the passage of a law admitting the State without first having the question submitted to a vote of the people, for the reasons—first, that we have a right to a voice in the selection of the character of our government; second, that we have not a sufficient population to support the expenses of a State government. For these reasons we trust that Congress will not force upon us a government against our will."

Upon information which I considered reliable, I assumed, in my message of the 15th of May last, that the population of Colorado was not more than thirty thousand, and expressed the opinion that this number was entirely too small either to assume the responsibility or to enjoy the privileges of a State.

It appears that previous to that time, the Legislature, for the purpose of ascertain the exact condition of the Territory, had passed a law authorizing a census of the population to be taken. The law made it the duty of the assessors in the several counties to take the census in connection with the annual assessments, and in order to secure a correct enumeration of the population, allowed them a liberal compensation for the service by paying them for every man returned, and added to their previous oath of office an oath to perform this duty with fidelity.

From the accompanying official report it appears that returns have been received from fifteen of the eighteen counties, into which the State is divided, and that their population amounts in the aggregate to twenty-four thousand nine hundred and nine. The three remaining counties are estimated to contain three thousand, making a total population of twenty-seven thousand nine hundred and nine, (27,909.)

This census was taken in the summer season, when it is claimed that the population is much larger than at any other period, as in the autumn miners in large numbers leave their work and return to the East, with the results of their summer enterprise.

The population, it will be observed, is but slightly in excess of one-fifth of the number required as the basis of representation for a single congressional district in any of the States, that number being 127,000.

I am unable to perceive any good reason for such great disparity in the right of representation; giving, as it would, to the people of Colorado not only this vast advantage in the House of Representatives, but an equality in the Senate, where the other States are represented by millions. With, perhaps, a single exception, no such inequality as this has ever before been attempted.

I know that it is claimed that the population of the different States at the time of their admission has varied at different periods; but it has not varied much more than the population of each decade, and the corresponding basis of representation for the different periods.

The obvious intent of the constitution was that no State should be admitted with a less population than the ratio for a representative at the time of application. The limitation, in the second section of the first article of the constitution, declaring that "each State shall have at least one Representative," was manifestly designed to protect the States which originally composed the Union from being deprived, in the event of a waning population, of a voice in the popular branch of Congress, and was never intended as a warrant to force a new State into the Union with a representative population far below that which might at the time be required of sister members of the Confederacy. This bill, in view of the prohibition of the same section, which declares that "the number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand," is at least a violation of the spirit, if not the letter of the constitution.

It is respectfully submitted that however Congress, under the pressure of circumstances, may have admitted two or three States with less than a representative population at the time, there has been no instance in which an application for admission has ever been entertained, when the population, as officially ascertained, was below thirty thousand.

Were there any doubt of this being the true construction of the constitution, it would be dispelled by the early and long continued practice of the federal government. For nearly sixty years after the adoption of the constitution no State was admitted with a population believed at the time to be less than the current ratio for a representative; and the first instance in which there appears to have been a departure from the principle was in 1845, in the case of Florida. Obviously the result of sectional strife, we would do well to regard it as a warning of evil rather than as an example for imitation; and I think candid men of all parties will agree that the inspiring cause of the violation of this wholesome principle of restraint is to be found in a vain attempt to balance those antagonisms which refused to be reconciled except through the bloody arbitrament of arms. The plain facts of our history will attest that the great and leading States admitted since 1845, viz: Iowa, Wisconsin, California, Minnesota and Kansas, including Texas, which was admitted that year, have all come with an ample population for one representative, and some of them with nearly or quite enough for two.

To demonstrate the correctness of my views on this question, I subjoin a table containing a list of the States admitted since the adoption of the Federal constitution, with the date of admission, the ratio of representative population when admitted, deduced from the United States census tables—the calculation being made for the period of the decade corresponding with the date of admission:

| States. | Admitted. | Ratio. | Population. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vermont | 1791 | 33,000 | 92,820 |
| Kentucky | 1792 | 33,000 | 95,308 |
| Tennessee | 1796 | 33,000 | 73,864 |
| Ohio | 1802 | 33,000 | 92,443 |
| Louisiana | 1812 | 35,000 | 75,212 |
| Indiana | 1816 | 35,000 | 84,110 |
| Mississippi | 1817 | 35,000 | 53,077 |
| Illinois | 1818 | 35,000 | 47,274 |
| Alabama | 1819 | 35,000 | 111,150 |
| Maine | 1820 | 35,000 | 298,335 |
| Missouri | 182[illegible] | 35,000 | 69, 60 |
| Arkansas | 1836 | 47,700 | 65 175 |
| Michigan | 1837 | 47, 00 | 158,073 |
| Florida | 1845 | 70,680 | 57,451 |
| Texas | 1845 | 70 680 | 189,827* |
| Iowa | 1846 | 70,680 | 132,572 |
| Wisconsin | 1848 | 70,680 | 250,497 |
| California | 1850 | 70,680 | 92,597 |
| Oregon | 1858 | 93,492 | 44,630 |
| Minnesota | 1858 | 93,492 | 183,809 |
| Kansas | 1861 | 93,492 | 107,206 |
| West Virginia | 1862 | 93,492 | 349,628 |
| Nevada | 1864 | 127,000 | Not known. |

*In 1850.

Colorado, which it is now proposed to admit as a State, contains, as has already been stated, a population less than twenty-eight thousand, while the present ratio of representation is one hundred and twenty-seven thousand.

There can be no reason, that I can perceive, for the admission of Colorado that would not apply with equal force to nearly every other Territory now organized; and I submit whether, if this bill becomes a law, it will be possible to resist the logical conclusion that such Territories as Dacotah, Montana and Idaho, must be received as States whenever they present themselves, without regard to the number of inhabitants they may respectively contain. Eight or ten new Senators and four or five new members of the House of Representatives would thus be admitted to represent a population scarcely exceeding that which in any other portion of the nation, is entitled to but a single member of the House of Representatives, while the average for two Senators in the Union, as now constituted, is at least one million of people. It would surely be unjust to all other sections of the Union to enter upon a policy with regard to the admission of new States which might result in conferring such a disproportionate share of influence in the National Legislature upon communities which, in pursuance of the wise policy of our fathers, should, for some years to come, be retained under the fostering care and protection of the National Government.

If it be deemed just and expedient now to depart from the settled policy of the nation during all its history, and to admit all the Territories to the rights and privileges of States, irrespective of their population or fitness for such government, it is submitted whether it would not be well to devise such measures as will bring the subject before the country for consideration and decision. This would seem to be evidently the case, because, as has already been stated, if it is right to admit Colorado now, there is no reason for the exclusion of the other Territories.

It is no answer to these suggestions that an enabling act was passed authorizing the people of Colorado to take action on this subject. It is well known that the act was passed in consequence of representations that the population reached, according to some statements, as high as eighty thousand, and to none less than fifty thousand, and was growing with a rapidity which by the time the admission could be consummated, would secure a population of over a hundred thousand. These representations prove to have been wholly fallacious; and, in addition, the people of the Territory, by a deliberate vote, decided that they would not assume the responsibilities of a State government.

By that decision they utterly exhausted all power that was conferred by the enabling act; and there has been no step taken since in relation to the admission that has had the slightest sanction or warrant of law. The proceeding upon which the present application is based was in the utter absence of all law in relation to it, and there is no evidence that the votes on the question of the formation of a State government bear any relation whatever to the sentiment of the Territory. The protest of the House of Representatives previously quoted is conclusive evidence to the contrary.

But if none of these reasons existed against this proposed enactment, the bill itself, besides being inconsistent in its provisions in conferring power upon a person unknown to the laws, and who may never have a legal existence, is so framed as to render its execution almost impossible. It is, indeed, a question whether it is not in itself a nullity. To say the least, it is of exceedingly doubtful propriety to