

and have the desire to do the best they can for the children, but they lack the intelligent and vital interest which mothers have.

The Poet of the Sierras

WHEN Joaquin Miller used to come to East Aurora, everybody took a holiday. We laughed and played and picnicked until night came on apace. Then we built a bonfire and told ghost stories until midnight.

Whenever I was in San Francisco, I always made a pious pilgrimage to "The Hights."

His estate of several hundred acres at the top of the mountain was purchased about thirty years ago for a few hundred dollars. The site overlooked the city of Oakland, San Francisco, the Bay, and gave a panoramic view of the Golden Gate and the blue Pacific beyond.

It was a tumbled mass of rock, trees, vines, wild flowers, with here and there a great giant redwood, hollow at the core.

For agricultural purposes, it would have bankrupted anybody who owned it. Joaquin Miller bought the land for purposes picturesque and poetic.

Miller got tired of the world at fifty. Perhaps the world was a little tired of him. He had a little money, a few hundred dollars; but he made raids down into the lowlands, and gave lectures and readings for which he received from fifty to a hundred dollars per evening.

Like Thoreau, he loved solitude—when he was able to escape it, any time.

Joaquin Miller was a friend of the Chinese. He worshipped joss. He believed in all religions, but had absolute faith in none. All the gods of mythology were once men, and Joaquin had a great and profound regard for humanity. Humanity to him was essentially divine. He quarreled with no man's religion, always maintaining that religion was simply a point of view.

His conversation was entertaining, illuminating, surprising, witty, profound, contradictory. He had a way of abusing his friends when they called. Before you could formulate a word of greeting, he unlimbered his vocabulary.

I once went up "The Hights" with Clarence Darrow. Clarence Darrow was fresh from Boise City, where he had defended an alleged murderer and got him free.

Joaquin Miller called everybody by his first name. If he didn't know his name, he supplied one.

"Clarisso Darroisso," he said, "you are a murderer with false whiskers. You defended a murderer. You got him free. You took a part of the swag. You are partner with him. Neither you nor your client will be accepted by the devil in hell, and certainly God Almighty will not have you. What finally will become of you, I cannot imagine!"

And so he continued to talk for about fifteen minutes, expressing his opinion of lawyers, as we sat down on the bench and laughed, until the eruption had spent itself.

Miller expressed things by contraries. His heart was friendly, tender, sympathetic. He was a poseur, but he posed so long that the pose was natural.

Joaquin had no respect for law or for society—that is, if you believed his conversation. But he only played in his mind at being a law-breaker.

He got his name through his defense of an outlaw by the name of Joaquin. In merry jest his mining companions gave him the name of the man that he had so vigorously defended and whom they had helped to hang. And finally the name stuck. He accepted it as his own; and instead of *Cincinnatus Heine Miller*, he chose to be called plain Joaquin Miller.

He was born in a moving-wagon, somewhere between Indiana and Oregon, in the year 1841. He claimed Indiana as his birthplace, however, because that is where his parents started from.

Miller was brought up among the Indians, and a deal of their poetic splendor and love of color splashed his soul. At times he was just as dignified, just as impassive, as any Sioux chief.

When I met him first, in 1875, in Washington, he wore his Indian leggings, deerskin coat, high-top boots; and hatless, paraded Pennsylvania Avenue, followed by admiring and wondering crowds, of whom he was beautifully oblivious.

Shortly after this he made a trip to England, and was received by royalty as a pure specimen of the Sure Thing. And he was true to his togs, even when he visited the Queen, by her personal request, at Windsor Castle.

I think a little of this superfluous attention turned his head; and he came back

home, expecting to walk through life and receive everywhere an adulation similar to that England had bestowed upon him.

Alas and alack! Here in America there were many to say that he was an Egotist, a Poseur Plus; and, of course, he was. But his pose was as natural as the strut of a peacock, and his song much sweeter.

Joaquin Miller loved his friends and hated his enemies. He had positive ideas, as long as he held them; and he could change them with lightning-like rapidity. He was writer, actor, speaker, editor, poet, gentleman. In him there was something specially child-like and innocent. Anything he had, he was willing to divide with anyone who wanted it.

Joaquin wrote several successful plays, notably "The Danites," in which McKee Rankin scored a big success.

His poem entitled "Columbus" or "Port of Ships,"

is the best poem ever written by an American; and I am inclined to stick to the opinion although I realize that poetry is largely a matter of time, tempo, and temperament.

Joaquin Miller is dead. His body was burned on the funeral pyre that was built with his own hands, with the fuel that he had provided. His ashes were scattered to the four winds, as the sun went down, a golden ball, in the west, sinking out of sight beyond the Golden Gate.

We do not mourn the passing of such a man. He did not fear death. Most certainly, he did not want anyone to shed any tears for him. His faith in what he called "The Divine Economy" was supreme.

The Abolition of Vice

THIS is the age of scientific heating, lighting, drainage, and ventilation. The motto of Robespierre, "Give me the luxuries and I'll waive the necessities," has gone out of fashion.

It has changed into utility, comfort, sanitation. The password is hygiene.

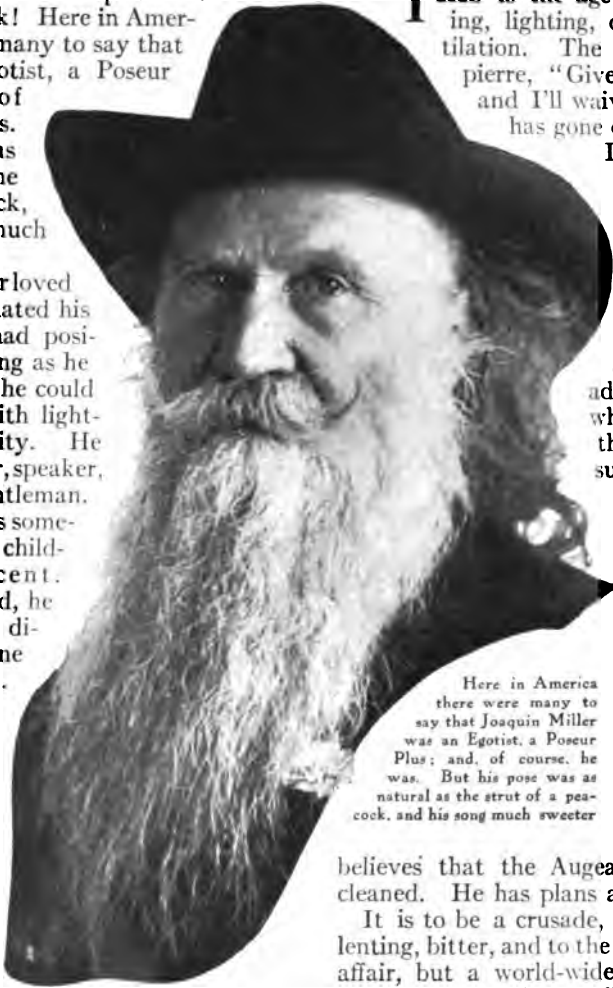
Hygiene is all powerful. Still it has never been applied to the maladies of the soul, of which the denizens of the underworld are suffering. To introduce hygiene as a reforming body into one social system does not seem to be out of place. It is a Herculean task. The Bureau of Social Hygiene of New York City seems to have undertaken it. Its sponsor, John D. Rockefeller, Jr.,

believes that the Augean stables can be cleaned. He has plans and aims galore.

It is to be a crusade, enthusiastic, unrelenting, bitter, and to the end. No sporadic affair, but a world-wide movement. The Holy Land of Virtue will be wrested from vice, crime, and graft.

The cleaning of the stables of vice will be systematic and scientific, as the parts once taken by the rivers Alpheus and Peneus will be assumed by leading lawyers, physicians, business men, bank presidents, presidents of commercial organizations, clergymen, settlement workers, social workers, labor leaders, and reformers.

Vice hitherto was such a fascinating expression of the human temperament. It was the safety-valve of our emotional equilibrium. Even if we did not indulge in it ourselves and kept the valve tightly shut at all times, we were interested to watch it in others.



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