

## California Gold—Some Reports to Hawaii

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### CALIFORNIA

We have received per "Louise" our regular files of California papers to the 29th of May.—The only item of interest which they contain is the tidings of the fearful ravages of a terrible fever which has nearly depopulated all the seaport towns and caused a general rush to the interior. It is not exactly the yellow fever, but a fever for a yellow substance called gold. An exceedingly rich gold mine has been discovered in the Sacramento Valley, and all classes and sexes have deserted their occupations and rushed *en masse* to the mines to make their fortunes.—The gold taken from the newly discovered mine is not gold ore, but pure virgin gold. It is procured by the simple process of digging and washing, and is obtained at the rate of from two to four ounces per day by each laborer. It passes current at San Francisco for \$15 per ounce.—Mr. Gray, supercargo of the Louise, brought with him two pounds of the metal. It has been analyzed by the knowing ones here who pronounce it 'worth its weight in gold'. We can assure our readers there is no hoax in this; for we have seen the gold with our own eyes, and it really benefitted our optics. San Francisco was entirely deserted, everybody having gone mining. The Californian announced the suspension of their paper on the 29th of May, and the Star was also expecting to suspend publication. Laborers could not be procured at any price. Ten and fifteen dollars per day were offered and refused. Shovels, spades, pick-axes and other 'digging' implements commanded enormous prices. Many unable to procure these were digging with knives, sticks and their finger nails. Enormous prices were offered for provisions delivered on the ground. Nearly 500 men, women and children were on the ground and crowds were still flocking up. The mine is some way above Sutter's Fort, about 130 miles from San Francisco. Its extent was unknown, but it was believed to be immense. The people with their families were camped out, and the mines being in the fever-and-ague country, many of them are doubtless by this time shaking off what of their finger or toe-nails have not been worn off by digging. It is impossible to foretell the final effect of these discoveries in California. It is doubtful if there be sufficient force in California at present to enforce any government regulations respecting these mines. There being no law respecting mines it will be some time before government can control them.

The discovery of such rich resources will give an impetus to trade and enable our neighbors to pay for their excessive imports. The markets on the coast are quite overstocked and many descriptions of goods sell at less prices than with us. The Sabine, Olga, Eagle and J.R.S. all arrived on the coast within the past few months had full cargoes; and but for the discovery of these mines, commercial business in California would have been greatly depressed. It must exert a beneficial influence on our prosperity as this new resource will enable the California traders to pay the large amounts already due our merchants. There is probably not less than \$150,000 now due here from California.

It was on June 25, 1848 that the *Polynesian* broadcast news of the California bonanza. Two weeks later the editor followed a long report on mining news with this:

GOLD FEVER.—As a faithful chronicler it becomes our duty to make a record of the most important events which transpire on the stage of action. In pursuance of this duty we must record for the information of our present readers and the gratification of the curious in after times, the effects produced upon our quiet town by the discovery of the long-looked for El Dorado. Full particulars respecting the nature and importance of this discovery will be found in another column. The news from the gold region is at present the all-absorbing topic of conversation in every circle of society. That which was at first regarded as dubious has lately been confirmed, and all the restless spirits which our little kingdom has collected from the four quarters of the world are on the *qui vive* for a start. Little clubs assemble at the corners of the streets and engage in eager debate, upon the great inducements in the land of promise. The speculator is planning how he shall best operate [sic] with his capital—one how he shall pay his debts, another how he shall get rid of paying them. The operation of the passport law rather discommodes some of the latter class.

One vessel, crowded with passengers, left on Tuesday last—two sail today, and some half dozen more will shortly follow. There has been a perfect rush upon our office for notices of intention to depart the kingdom during the past week. The mania has invaded our sanctum—our *imp* is in arms—and from present appearances it is doubtful whether we shall be able to retain enough members of the 'art preservative of all arts', to present our readers with a further record of events. Our printers think picking up type nothing compared to picking up gold; but they are sensible fellows and we entertain hopes of pacifying them.

The first symptoms of the fever is a restless sensation—an excited state of the system—a wild expression of the eye—and a light and elastic tread. These symptoms are followed with a desire to obtain implements for digging and washing gold—an effort to pay all debts and obtain a passport—a rush for the 'first boat', when the sufferer quietly passes out of the kingdom. In some cases where the patient exhibits no desire to pay his debts the result is different.—Such cases requiring a violent remedy we would suggest a little *ne exeat regno* and *stoppage in transitu*; but the first named medicine we hope will not be administered in any case where its administration will produce an unfavorable effect upon the body politic.

The little city of Honolulu has probably never before witnessed such an excitement as the gold fever has created. Probably not less than 200 will leave for California in the course of two months if passages can be procured.—There will many mechanics and good citizens doubtless leave; but at the same time we shall rid the community of some whose presence is not particularly desirable. 'It's an ill wind that blows no good.' . . . We doubt not many will better their worldly condition; but it is impossible to foretell the final result.—Gold mines have never yet made a country prosperous or its inhabitants happy. The love of it arouses all the baser passions of man's nature, and we fear the gold regions of California will be the theatre of tragic events—the scene of bloodshed and strife. The sun never yet shone upon a more motely [sic] crowd than will be assembled there. We hope for the sake of humanity, peace and order will be preserved, but we confess we tremble for the result upon the morals of the people and the peace of the country. . . . In the confusion which must prevail there for the next twelve months, the law will be powerless—rights will be disregarded—reason dethroned—and brute force will reign triumphant. To the love of gold will be added the maddening influence of the intoxicating bowl. It is idle to speculate upon the result; time alone can show whether these discoveries will prove a blessing or a curse to the inhabitants of California. The effect upon the prosperity of the islands cannot but be good if we pursue the right policy and adopt the right measures. It will open an immense market for our products. Our planters and traders will doubtless reap a rich harvest. With our present limited export we cannot supply half the wants of California. Shall we sit idle and allow others to outstrip us and secure the market which is now our own?

So off they went—the washed and the unwashed—to their great adventure. Indeed, California was not that much of a mystery to Hawaiians, either native or imported. In the summer of 1847, when San Francisco's population numbered some 459, Hawaiians, with a strength of 40 (including one woman), made up about 10 per cent of the total.<sup>1</sup> But the gold strike brought a dramatic increase. Scores of Hawaiians joined the emigration that emptied Honolulu of a large part of its foreign population. Editor Charles E. Hitchcock of the *Polynesian* was right: trade grew. But so did wages. Speculation thrived on the dizzy ups and downs of the California market.

Transplanted Islanders of course wrote back, describing their experiences in the dynamic environment of El Dorado. Let us follow them through the months before the mighty rush of 1849.

The Foreign Office and Executive File of the Hawaii State Archives under date of December 27, 1848, extracts the “. . . letter of a former intelligent resident of these Islands to his friend in this place, dated San Francisco, California Aug. 29th 1848.”:

The excitement on the subject of gold still continues. Vessels are almost daily arriving on this Coast, from Peru, Chile and your place, loaded with goods and passengers, the latter destined for our gold mines. Much sickness prevails now amongst the gold *diggers*. Many have left the *diggins* sick, and others are leaving for their homes and the healthy parts of the country, designing to return after the sickly season shall have passed; which will be about the 1st Oct. There are still some 2000 persons at work digging for gold. A majority of those constantly arriving here, from abroad in their eager pursuit after the precious metal, rush straight up the Sacramento regardless of the danger from fevers, and fever and ague, which they are certain to encounter at this season of the year.

The same success which has hitherto attended the labour of the *diggers*, continues. The daily average product of each person engaged is not estimated at less than \$10. after about the 10th or 15th Oct. there will be at least 4000 persons engaged in washing out gold. Almost daily we hear of some new discoveries in some before unexplored part of the country. In fact, wherever explorations have been made to the East and South of the Sacramento, in all the streams and rivulets issuing from the California range of mountains, as far South as Los Angeles, gold has been found. This region embraces an extent of country varying from 50 to 100 miles in breadth and some 5 or 600 miles in length. It is truly wonderful, and what makes it still more so, is the fact that there seems to be no end to the gold. About the same quantity is obtained now, at the *diggins* first worked, as at the commencement. Beside gold, the richest quicksilver mines ever known, have been discovered in different parts of California. The one worked by an English gentleman of the name of Forbes, for some months past, yields on an average, 30 odd per cent of quicksilver, I have seen pieces of the ore that contained 75 per cent of metal. It is very valuable indeed. Silver and lead mines have also been discovered, Iron is common—Coal, I regret to say, has not, as yet, been found in the country. Of gold, it may safely be affirmed that over *one million* of dollars worth has been washed out and collected, since the 1st May last. We have data here, from which we can calculate with almost a certainty, to show, that, over \$500,000 has been, and is now ready, to be shipped out of the country by vessels which have sailed, and one now about sailing, for Mazatlan, Valparaiso and the U. States. There is some 40 or \$50,000, I am told, ready to be shipped to Honolulu, by the first vessel going there. In this estimate, the gold is valued at \$16 the ounce, troy weight, while it is actually worth 19 or \$20.

No country, yet known, can equal California in the extent and value of its ore's. But ore's do not constitute all the wealth of California. This northern section of territory, many parts of it, is well adapted to most kinds of agricultural productions, and all of

California is a fine grazing country. I have seen as fine wheat and corn fields, potatoe patches, and vegetables of all kinds, in this country, as I ever saw in any other. The fruits too, such as pears, peaches and quinces, grow as well, and are of as good quality, as can be found any where. Vineyards of delicious grapes are numerous, and excellent wines, and good brandy, are manufactured from them in large quantities—particularly at Los Angeles.

Fevers and fever and ague prevail along the principal streams emptying into the Sacramento, during the months of July, August and Sept.—With this exception, no country is more healthy than California, and no climate can be more delightful or luxurious.

Within a circuit of 50 or 75 miles around San Francisco there are 4 or 5 good grist mills, and an equal number of saw mills—all doing a fine business. The flour ground at Capt. Smith's Mill, at Bodaga, is as fine and makes as sweet and white bread as any one can desire.

Good Ship-Carpenters have lately established themselves at this place, and while I write about 30 men are hard at work on a large horse boat, designed to run to and from the *embarcadero* on the Sacramento. She will be completed in about one month from the laying of the keel. It has been proved, by actual experiment, that vessels can be *hove down* and repaired at San Francisco, cheaper than at Honolulu. The Government bark, "Anita", a much larger vessel than the brig "Euphemia", was hove down last spring, coppered &c, here at \$500 less expense than was paid for the same sort of job on the "Euphemia" at Honolulu, and at a saving of two months time occupied by the latter vessel in going to and returning from Oahu. All the material for coppering &c, the "Anita" were purchased here at high prices, and when laborers had to be paid 5 to \$6 a day, cash.

Mr. Mellus of the enterprising mercantile firm of Mellus & Howard of this place, leaves here in a few days for the United States. On his arrival there he will procure and dispatch for this port, without delay, a fine large Steam boat, suitable for the navigation of this bay, and the Sacramento river. I have heard of another Company of gentlemen, here, who have also sent home for the purchase of a boat for the same purpose. It will prove most capital stock and will unquestionably pay the enterprising proprietors large profits.

The arrival here of Capt. Stout, Agent for the owners of the ocean steamers, puts the matter of that enterprise beyond speculation. They will commence their regular monthly trips next Jan. from Oregon down the Coast to Panama. We shall then be only thirty days from N. York City. This enterprise will prove most profitable to the proprietors, creditable to the administration of the general Govt. at Washington, and will make a new era in the already remarkable history and advancement of California and the United States.

Hereafter, our letters and papers will come to us direct, in 30 days, from the U.S. instead of being 5 or 6 months around Cape Horn, and *via* the Sandwich Islands; and instead of our merchants sending to Oahu for goods as formerly, the course of things will be reversed—our goods, will be imported directly here, from the United States, S. America, China and England, and if the black or white *Kanakas* want goods, they must send to us for them.

It will not be twelve months either, before we shall have a regularly organized civil government, with an effective police, and a military and naval force sufficient, if necessary, to maintain law and order, and to prevent the desertion of seamen from vessels visiting our ports. San Francisco will then be the headquarters of our Pacific Squadron, and we shall have a line-of-battle-ship, and one or more other vessels of war constantly in this port. Our whale ships can then come here with safety, and will, of course, be subject to no other charges than in any other United States port, and can trade to the extent of their ability. What will then become of Kanakadom? [the writer then launched into a diatribe against "The selfish, narrow-minded, sinister and dishonest policy of those who control King Kamehameha and his chiefs . . .", naming specifically Judd, Ricord and Jarves].

As you have been before advised, I was early attacked with the *yellow* fever. It hung on to me about one month, with very happy and *fortunate* results. Another fever, with the *ague* attacked, then got hold of me. This was not so agreeable but thank Heaven it only lasted a short time, and now I am 'as good as new', and ready for a new trial of the *yellow*.

In the same location is an extract of a letter from San Francisco dated September 10, 1848:

Sickness amongst the *diggers* & those trading & visiting amongst them has been on the increase lately. We hear of numbers who are sick at the mines. Every launch or boat that comes from the *embarcadero* of the Sacramento is full of passengers & generally every one more or less sick with the fever & ague. If not sick when they reach here they soon become sick from some cause or other.

Those lately arrived from the Isles in the *Mary Francis* & *Rhone* will not go up to the mines until after the first of next month, when it is supposed there will be no further danger from sickness until the next summer.

This morning I attended the funeral of a young gentleman by the name of Richardson from Boston, lately in the employ of Messrs. Mellus & Howard, he has been on this coast for three years or more, acting as clerk & supercargo for Boston vessels engaged in trade for hides &c. He was a young gentleman of excellent character of the strictest integrity, of fine business capacity & habits, most generous and kind hearted, and highly esteemed & beloved by all who knew him. His funeral was attended by a large concourse of citizens & strangers. The impressive burial service of the Protestant Episcopal church was read at his grave with much solemnity of feeling by a young gentleman, who had been his warm friend in life. He died of the prevailing fever supposed to have been contracted on the Sacramento. He had accompanied Mr. Comr. Ten Eyck, on his recent visit to the mineral country & was taken sick a few days after their return to this place. It will be gratifying I am sure to Mr. Ten Eyck's numerous friends at the Islands to know that he sails in the schooner Honolulu tomorrow for the Oahu with his health entirely restored. . . . On account of the sickness at the mines mechanics who have lately arrived here & those who have returned from the mines are employing themselves for the present in working at their various trades, they find plenty of employment here & at wages varying from \$5 to \$10 a day cash. Much building is going on just now. Mr. B. A. Parker is building a large Hotel on the east side of the public square, Messrs. Mellus & Howard have just laid the foundation for a large brick store on the s. e. corner of their business lot, Messrs. Sherman & Ruckel have just completed a large store & ware house on their lot. Mr. Janion I am told has sent an order to Liverpool for an Iron ware house to be sent out immediately to be put up on his lot; the plane & the hammer are heard in every quarter of the town & everything about satisfies you that the Yankees are a *go ahead* people, without any doubt —

A Mr. Wetmore (I believe that is the name) who came passenger in the *Rhone* from the U. S. is building a large *horse boat* to run on the bay & Sacramento, she is expected to be ready for use in three or four weeks—Two steamboats suitable for the same navigation have been or are about to be ordered out from the U. States. The arrival here in the *Rhone* of Capt. Stout agent for the U.S. ocean steamers, to ply between this and Panama has in connection with the treaty of peace settled all doubts respecting the future destiny of California. Henceforth her course is onward & upward —

Since the proclamation of Gov. Mason announcing the ratification of the treaty of peace between the U.S. & Mexico the U.S. volunteer troops have been disbanded, most of the men have gone to the mines—Capt. Fulsom USA who has been acting as collector for this port has asked to be relieved from that duty. The Gov. has consented & has appointed Mr. Harrison late a clerk in the quartermaster department as collector—Mr. H. enters upon his duties tomorrow; the tariff of duties upon goods &c entered now in California is regulated by the Tariff act of the U. States passed in 1846—The Laws of the U.S. regulate all commercial affairs in this country now.

The Am. whale ship *Euphrates* Capt. Edwards sailed from here on the 12th ult. full bound home; he lost a part of his crew while here. He was to stop for recruits on the

coast of Chile—The Am. whale Bark *Minerva* Capt Perry sailed for Valparaiso on the 24 ult. The Capt has knocked off whaling & is doing a great business in Merchandise. He sold a large quantity of goods here at large profits [sic]—He has gone to Valparaiso for a cargo of merchandise for this place. The Am. Whale Ship *Fabius* Capt. Smith anchored in whalemans harbour on the 10th ult. He was fortunate enough to get out the next day without loosing [sic] any of his men; he was bound for the coast of Chile.

The following vessels have sailed for Val. for cargoes of merchandise—

Brig *Correo de Talcuhuana*

Schrs. *Seis de Junio & Lambayana*

Bark *Minerva* The following will sail soon Barks *Casso & Mary Francis* It is said the *Rhone* will go to Callao for a cargo The *Malek Adhel* sails in a week or two for Mazatlan for a cargo—The Schr *Mary* sailed on the 1st inst for that port she was chartered by T. O. Larkin Esqr. Capt. King late master of the Brig *Elizabeth* goes as Capt. Mr. Tiddy is going gold hunting.

The Schr *SS* sailed from here on the 23d for Oahu. The Peruvian Bark *Callao* arrived a day or two since from Callao with an assorted cargo.

The Eng. Brig *Laura Ann* Capt. Thomas arrived on Thursday last 68 days from Manilla [sic]. Under the U.S. navigation laws she would be prohibited entering her cargo. The peculiar circumstances under which she now visits California may induce the Govr. to permit her to land her cargo. I learn that Capt. Thomas has made application to the Governor to that effect—

If Capt. T. can land his goods, he will make a splendid voyage of it. His goods are in great demand—Supercargoes & consignees find no difficulty in disposing of their goods nowadays.

By the vessels which have sailed & which will soon sail from here Gold to the amt of 5 or \$600,000 will have been shipped from this place. Full that amt is still in the country & all this is the product of Gold digging in California for the last three or four months—This is a *great country*. The Brig *Euphemia* has just anchored (6 Oclock PM) after a passage of 38 days from your place—With the exception of 2 companies of U.S. Dragoons, much reduced by desertions there is no military force in California—The U. States Naval forces have none of them made their appearance here since the news of peace—one or two vessels of war are much needed here now to prevent desertion from merchant vessels.

We can form no satisfactory opinion as to the whereabouts of the U.S. squadron—Some think they may have gone to the Islds. Mr. Ten Eyck I believe inclines to this opinion.—

The *Honolulu* which left Columbia River on the 24th ult. reports the Am. whaleship *Maine* Capt. Netcher of Fairhaven a complete wreck—In attempting to enter the River on the afternoon of the 22d or 23d ult. she struck on what is called the *Middle Sands* of the bar, where the English Bark *Vancouver* was wrecked in May or June last. She dragged at her anchor all night, the Sea making a break over her, in the Morning or perhaps during the night, the officers & crew left her in the Boats & reached the shore in safety, she soon went to pieces, nothing was saved—she was 23 months out & had 1400 Brls oil—no pilot on board.

On the 27th ult, the Am. whaleship *Flora* Capt. Potter of N. London anchored in Whalemans Harbour on the opposite side the bay, the Capt. came over here in one of his boats he was advised to return weigh anchor & leave immediately for the Islds or he would lose his crew. He returned the next day to his ship with a view to follow up the advice he had received; directly he had weighed anchor & the crew discovered the ship was heading out to sea they refused duty & the Capt. was obliged to come to anchor in this harbour. The next night nine of the men gagged the watch (without resistance probably) took one of the boats & made off. One or two nights after nine more did the same thing, they have not been heard of since & are now probably at work digging Gold. This ship is *laid up* effectually, along side Capt. Dring's Bark *Janet*. The *Rhone* has lost half her men & the wages of the others has been increased to 30 or 40\$ per month to keep them—The *Mary Francis* crew have *all* run, so with the Schr. *Courier de Valparaiso*.

In fact every vessel that comes here now is almost certain to lose [sic] her crew—When men can go to the mines & pick up 10\$ to 20\$ a day, it must be confessed the temptation to desert can hardly be withstood by those professing more honor & morality than sailors.

The *Flora* is 26 months out & has only 750 Brls oil.

George T. Allan of the Hudson's Bay Company wrote to R. C. Wylie on October 7, 1848:<sup>2</sup>

I find that instead of the accounts of this wonderful gold discovery having been exaggerated they by no means came up to the truth—I sold the goods I brought with me belonging to the Company at a very great profit and received in return gold dust at 16 dollars per oz. so that I . . . have now resolved instead of going from hence direct to the Columbia or returning there via the Islands, to remain here until I hear from both places, as they may perhaps send on more goods, in the meantime I mean to go up the Sacramento with our friend Suwerkroop in order to see the real state of matters there, and also, with a view of collecting Captain Sutters debt to the Company—there seems not to be the least doubt here with regard to the purity of the Gold—It is astonishing what changes the discovery has made here in the price of every article and labour of any description it is almost impossible to procure and even when you do succeed in getting a man to work he must be paid at the rate of six dollars a day.—

I saw Ricord here, he is off again to the mines he is amassing the gold, I believe, fast, but his appearance is wretched. . . .

Chief Trader Allan was about to announce his retirement from the H.B. Co. With an eye to the future he continued:

I have just written Judd and transmitted him gold dust for about three hundred dollars in Bolivian halves which he sent with me and which I think will have a profitable speculation as I procured the gold dust at a low rate—I have asked him to appoint me Government Agent here and hinted to him that he ought to receive a proportion of the Taxes in Coffee and Sugar for both of which articles there will be great demand on the market and consign them to me—I think if he consults the interests of the Government he had better make the arrangement at once as I can get as many consignments of those articles as I choose from the Islands from other parties. . . .

On the same day, E. A. Suwerkrop, Consul at Honolulu for Denmark and Hamburg, sent bad news:

I have to report a most melancholy occurrence that has happened to John von Pfister [formerly a Honolulu merchant, and whose wife yet remained in the Islands]—He was keeping a store some 50 miles above Suter's fort on the Sacramento and a few days since having retired to bed was disturbed by a person demanding to buy goods on his urging that he was tired and had laid himself to rest words I suppose ensued when the man drew von Pfister's own knife and inflicting several stabs *murdered him*, in cold blood—The villain [sic] is said to be an Englishman and is in custody at the Fort—The American Government must soon adopt some laws here or else life and property will not be secure up at the mines and in the mountains. This news has only just arrived and if I can get more particulars previous to the sailing of this vessel I will communicate them.

Meanwhile the rigors of San Francisco life diminished not, as one E. R. Falkner attested on October 8:

The Gold Fever rages here with unabated fury, & facts too palpable occurring every day to doubt the reality [sic] of its existence, nevertheless I am scarcely reconciled to the fact, tho the greater part of my time is taken up in weighing the Dust. Business is

very good but you have to pay most enormously for every thing—common labour & with difficulty—obtained \$5 a day—I have not yet been able to procure board any where at any price & am living on board the *Tepic*.

As Island merchants tried to siphon wealth from both mines and miners, the Hawaiian government acted to get trade advantages. The *Polynesian* of October 7 carried (much to the anger of the U.S. Commissioner in Hawaii) this announcement:

Theodore Shillaber, Esquire [a prominent Honolulu businessman], the King's Commissioner to the Governor of Alta California, with the view of effecting with His Excellency, subject to concert with the U.S. Commissioner, and approval of the American Government, a provisional arrangement, based on a fair reciprocity of Flags and Goods, between the ports of that territory and those of this kingdom, sailed with his secretary and servants on the 30th of September, in the King's yacht Kamehameha.

The same newspaper two weeks later used the gold-rush emigration as an argument supporting foreign residents' push for land law reform to allow them to buy Island real estate:

The effects of the emigration to California is beginning to be severely felt by all classes of society, and will undoubtedly produce a great decrease in the revenue of these islands. Not less than three hundred foreign residents, besides a goodly number of natives, have left the Islands for California since the discovery of gold there. Although some are disposed to treat the matter lightly, it is, in reality, a subject of serious interest, as can be shown by a simple calculation. Many of those who have left the Islands were engaged in lucrative business, and it would probably be safe to calculate their average earnings at \$500 a year. Taking this as the basis of our calculation, we find that there is a loss to the national wealth, from the emigration of three hundred men, of \$150,000 every year, besides the loss of the labor of at least one thousand natives, employed by those who have emigrated. . . . Had the three hundred men who have left for California held each one hundred acres of land, we question much if many of them would have gone.

Noting that 20 vessels had cleared for San Francisco from June 10 to October 11—with 7 more scheduled to sail soon, the same issue of the *Polynesian* commented:

The rage for going to California continues, although the symptoms are less violent than formerly. Most who can go, have gone, and those who can't go will of course stay. The natives appear to be quite as anxious to go as foreigners; some have gone, and many more would go if they had the means. Our *imp* has asked for his discharge, and is shortly to sail as supercargo of one of the 'musketoe fleet' . . . Some of the gold hunters will soon be here from the coast, when another rush will probably take place.

Editorial wisdom was vindicated. On October 28, Hitchcock published under "WEEKLY GOSSIP":

As we predicted in our last number, some of the gold-diggers have come, and another 'rush' has taken place. On Monday morning the *Mary Frances* arrived from San Francisco, bringing a large quantity of the glittering treasure—quite a number of passengers—and later tidings from the 'land of promise'. Several of our residents who left here a few months since, have returned. Three or four gentlemen—not so greedy as the rest—came in the *Mary Frances*, and are shortly to sail for the United States—having during their stay in California, acquired a little fortune by digging. Gold is procured in greater abundance than before—wages are high—living ditto—and sickness general. The news has caused an increase of the fever. Several natives returned in the *Mary Frances* at \$5 a day wages—rather good wages for foremast hands. One lucky '*maoli*' [native] formerly in our employ, returned with about \$500. He sailed from

here in the Sabine [departed Aug. 7], and was ashore in San Francisco only about twenty days. Such a dash as he cuts, and such a lot of friends as his money secures for him, is not often seen.

The newspaper then listed three vessels sailing with some 67 passengers, and two others with the number of travelers not known.

The press of course carried many comments based on receipt of news from California correspondents. But back to the letters themselves. On October 17 Suwerkrop wrote again:

E. von Pfister is in town and arranging as far as possible his brothers affairs—the murderer [one Raymond] has been allowed to escape whilst under the guard of our old friend Mr. Haan—But the inhabitants have offered a reward of several thousand dollars for his *head!*

Honolulu you will soon be deserted and I do not see reason why the head should not come and make his fortune—

Bye the bye dont you think those Hawaiian subjects who show fidelity to their masters ought to receive some sort of recompense laudatory of course—Establish an order of “Merit of Fidelity”—my boy whom I pay 5\$ has strenuously refused 40\$ per month—would you believe it. Allens boy also sticks to him and what is more washes his shirts. . . .

Shillaber, the King’s Commissioner, arrived in San Francisco on October 26; on the 28th he sent news to Wyllie:

I have been here but two days, and so constantly employed, with pressing business matters, that I have not had a moment to attend to the duties of public office. Indeed, I do not know at present where my despatches would be likely to find Govr. Mason, as he, in company with Commodore Jones, is in the interior roaming about among the mines. However he is expected to arrive here soon, when I shall give my best attention to the interests confided to my care. With regard to this, and other matters which will surprise you, I will write at length p “Kamehameha” to sail on 2d Proxo [Nov. 2]

I have sold my invoice in a lump for cash at 150 p. cent advance; and goods of the right description are still in great demand; but for further particulars I would refer you to Everett, whom I address at length.

Gold is more plentiful than ever, and every blackguard one meets in the streets has his pockets full of it. Labor is valued at \$1 the hour. Real estate has advanced 500 p% within 6 months, and is increasing in value at a ridiculous rate; but I think it will come down in the spring when the place shall have become stripped of the gold dust, and the operatives now here, and flocking in from the inclemency of the season, shall have returned to the *placeries* for fresh supplies.

Gummer [formerly Wyllie’s clerk in the foreign office, and whose wife kept a private school in Honolulu] has as yet obtained no employment; but I am in hopes to be able to influence a share of the good things in his way.

On November 1 Gummer went to work for “the first mercantile house” in San Francisco—Messrs. Mellus and Howard—as bookkeeper and corresponding clerk, at \$2,000 a year. His letter of the sixth had a postscript: “Ricord is at the Gold Mines.”

By the twenty-second, Joseph C. Gummer was very cozily settled:

I have one of the most comfortable situations that can be imagined—a Bedroom to myself adjoining the counting house & a good fire, on the hearth, to sit by in the Evengs. M Howard is a most excellent man & seems to take pleasure in seeing every one happy around him. . . .

But he missed his family. As he said, “. . . their numeration being extensive . . .” he could hardly afford to bring them to San Francisco; therefore, he wanted Wyllie to finagle cheap transportation through the U.S. consul. Gummer continued:

As you have considerable stake in the Schooner “Starling” it might interest you to know that she arrived here with a valuable cargo from Columbia River abt. a fortnight ago, when Shillaber immediately sold her flour @ \$20, Salmon \$20 & Beef \$40 per barrel; Cheese 60¢ & Butter 75¢ per lb. . . . Shillaber is desirous of procuring a duplicate of Aladdins lamp to transport his “Bungaro” (as he calls it) over here [Shillaber’s “bungalow” was a pretentious and costly coral stone mansion, built somewhat on the East Indian pattern, and located on the site of the present main postoffice].

The climate from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. is unexceptionable, but antecedent & subsequent to those hours, in every 24, it is too cold for a person long accustomed to the tropics to relish without a shiver.

Your fellow countryman, McIntyre, has abandoned the idea of going to the “Diggins”. At present he is keeping a boarding house for Mechanics, & by & by he intends, I believe, working at his Trade. His Wife has been much indisposed since their arrival, thro’ over-exertion.

Singleton made a second start for the gold mines on Friday last. At his first excursion he did not reach farther than the Fort—a sort of half way establishment where there are public houses & stores—. There he took more grog than did him good—consequently was ill treated & robbed of what few traps he possessed. For the first fortnight after Macintyre’s arrival, I believe, Singleton acted as private Secretary to that gentleman.

Hugh McIntyre had run a victualling-house and bowling alley in Honolulu before his departure for California; subsequently he founded the McIntyre bakery and grocery at Fort and King Streets. Singleton is a mystery.

Shillaber had presented his credentials to Col. R. B. Mason, Governor General of Alta California, on November 17—asking at the same time for an interview to start negotiations. Mason’s short reply was that nobody in California had the authority to act. Not surprisingly, Shillaber—in a long letter written December 21—resigned his commission. He touched on many things:

an extreme prejudice appears to exist here against the Hawaiian flag, which, I am told, has prevailed on this coast for many years, not only against *it*, but against all persons coming from the Islands; & which of late increased, owing to a rivalry in business.

I learn that Dudoit [former French consul at Honolulu] is organising a company to come hither with his Schooner for the purpose of proceeding to the Gold washings; and that he has already gone to a considerable expense for an outfit. For this I am sorry. Similar expeditions have thus far proved complete failures. The consciences of the men who compose them are not to be bound by any agreement that, on their arrival here, may appear will result disadvantageously to themselves. They will work together so long as it may be for their interest so to do; but not one moment longer. The nature of the business has shown that he succeeds best who depends on himself. If nothing else would break up a combination, sickness would; and it is extremely prevalent in the interior. The strong, and healthy, will not labor for the weak, and the diseased. Nor, from what I hear of the terms of his agreement, can Dudoit be aware of the immense expense of transporting Provisions to the *Placers*. Freight is now 3@5\$ p-cwt to Sutter’s fort, and will be doubled when the Spring opens, unless the number of launches be greatly increased; yet, at Sutter’s, the difficulties and expense of carriage only commence. . . .

Gummer is well, and perfectly contented with his situation. At one time he was foolishly sad on account of being absent from his family; but I scolded and laughed him out of the Blues, and he is now merry as a cricket. He has desired his family to take passage for this place in the "Quixote", which vessel will be in Honolulu about the end of April.

The excitement which appears lately to have prevailed in Honolulu, owing to the talked of impeachment of the Minister of Finance [Dr. Judd], has extended to these shores; and hundreds are anxiously awaiting to hear the result. I had no idea that any event of the kind could have created so much interest here. . . . It is the general opinion on this coast, that you [Wyllie] are the only man with any real honesty of purpose in the Hawaiian Govt.

You will perceive from my official despatches to H.H.Ms M of F.R. [Wyllie] that I have resigned my Commissionership. Allan has declined to receive the appointment of Consul; but I have advised him to retain the introductory letter to Mr. Livingston of N. York, as it may be of service to him.

A great deal of doubt prevails in this community relative to the value of California gold dust [Shillaber wrote from San Francisco]. By the last advices from Mazatlan it would sell for but \$14 the oz. Troy. Mr. Cross, Hobson's partner, informs me that in Valparaiso it will not net over \$14.46 p. oz. Troy. I trust that we shall soon have decisive news regarding it from some credible quarter.

Commodore Jones is inclined to place no restrictions upon commerce, but, under present circumstances, to deal with all marine interests on a most liberal policy. All vessels of whatsoever flag, or bottom, that were *bona fide* the property of citizens of Alta California at the time of the ratification of peace between the U.S. & Mexico, are allowed the . . . flag. Small craft of almost every description, adapted to traffic on the inland waters of this Bay, are permitted so to do, for the purpose of supplying the miners wintering in the mountain passes; and the Commodore has also declared that he will, where not actually prevented by law, take the responsibility of sanctioning such acts as the representation of the principal merchants here may show are necessary under the peculiar circumstances which press upon commerce. "Look upon this picture, and on *that*." How unlike the griping policy of the Hawaiian Govt., are the open, liberal, attractive *allurements* of the Republic! She will glean from the former her flesh and blood, as she has already done from Europe, because with her, liberty, and common sense, are not words, but things. . . .

As 1848 ended, Suwerkrop and Allan wrote to Wyllie. The former harpooned Shillaber:

I feel annoyed more than you can imagine, at the way that a certain person, has spoken to me *before others* of the way in which he got the use of the Schooner,—he wonders you did not see the object of his accepting the appointment conferred upon him, and chuckles at the Yankee trick he has played [it will be remembered that Shillaber was sent to San Francisco on the King's yacht *Kamehameha*].

The care of native Hawaiians, is a subject that must be fully entered upon as at the present numbers are destitute of means, sick and without medical attendance, dying and without the means of decent sepulture. This latter demands *in the name of Humanity the Government's Earnest attention*.

Allan in his note of December 31 declined Wyllie's offer of the Hawaiian Consulate at San Francisco. In other paragraphs he sent the news:

Coffee is at present very abundant in this market and is sold as low as 11 cents by wholesale—Sugar there is also, but the second rate quality brings about 12 cents—Coffee when imported here in American bottoms enters free and in other Flags pays 20 pct. duty—the Sugar pays the same duty under any flag say 20 pct.—

I made a long trip of it in the mining country having walked at the least calculation 200 miles and 25 miles of the distance heavily loaded but I liked it upon the whole and I think have ascertained the fact that Gold will continue to be found in California for a series of years. I also found out that it cannot be procured without great labour.

P.S. Many of the poor S.I. natives have died in California this winter—please consider if something cannot be done to have them attended to—I think that Dr. Tennant who is a very nice young man and has settled here would attend to their medical wants did the Government allow him something per annum and if this could be arranged many of the poor fellows lives might be saved—I mean those Natives who cannot pay for medicines themselves—G.T.A.

Allan's refusal of the consulate was not superfluous. On January 2, 1849, H. W. Halleck, Lt. of Engineers and Secretary of State for California informed Wyllie:

I am directed by Gov. Mason to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of Novr 15th 1848, giving notice of the appointment of George Frail Allen Esq. as His Hawaiian Majesty's Consul for the ports of California; and to inform you that he will be recognised in that capacity, until he obtain the necessary *ex-equatur* from the proper authorities at Washington.

The same day Suwerkrop composed a chatty letter:

I hear that Mr. Shilaber is *now* loud in his laudatory praises of the S. I. Govt. which *before* he was not very particular in condemning as paltry & insignificant. I write you this in complete confidence and with the knowledge on your part that I would not write you anything that I was not well convinced was true and correct. As I said before what I wrote you in my last I *fully confirm* regarding Mr. S. he is as *much liked* here as he was in Honolulu.

Our business prospects are good—very good.—There are a great number of the Oregon people here to whom Allan is personally known, and I need hardly add, by whom he is universally esteemed we shall get all the *Doctors* business as well of those persons who have come down just for the purpose of picking up a few grains of gold, but who possess farms in Oregon.

The poor S. I. natives are suffering dreadfully & my boy has been ill almost all the time since I arrived. Dr. Lemmon of Maui has been constant in his attendance and he is now recovering—Under the Consulate something must be done for the poor Devils in the way of Relief and medical attendance. You may say that in Oahu there is nothing done in that way for them then why here? In answer I say here they are in a foreign land and climate, with no relatives to apply to in the time of their distress—with you they are *at home* a different case you will allow.

Mr. Frederick Wundenberg, late of Hanalei, Kauai, and a friend and former employee of Wyllie, had left for San Francisco at the end of November, 1848. Now, on January 3, 1849, he wrote:

On the 31st. ultimo I had the pleasure of receiving by the Schr. "Honolulu" the two letters from my wife, which you was so very kind to forward to me, and for which I beg to return to you my sincerest thanks.—I arrived here on the 16th. ult. after a quick passage of eighteen and a half days. I found immediately employment through your very kind recommendation in the House of Messrs. J. Bawden & Co., of which Firm Messrs. Sewerkrop and Allan are members.—I intend to remain in that situation until the beginning of April, when I intend starting for the mines.—Mining operations have at present nearly ceased on account of the frost and snow in the mountains, and a great number of people are assembled here. It is my intention to remain at the mines until the latter part of June, when it is said the sickly season begins there. I shall then by the first opportunity leave for the islands, where I hope to be by the latter part of July.—It would be superfluous to say anything with regard to San Francisco,—as you will have received from other sources a better description of the place than I am able to give; only so much I will say that the living here is not to my taste; drunkenness and all kind of vice are the order of the day; there is besides a very little intercourse amongst the residents except on business. Gold dust is here the deity, next it stand intoxicating drinks.

Business is at present dull on account of the mining being nearly suspended; there plenty goods in the market here, and I should not wonder at it, if articles such as flour etc would soon be reexported to the islands, there being a number of vessels expected from Valparaiso. Central American coffee was sold here the other day @ 9 cts per lb.—Flour from \$17 to 19, etc. retail.—

I have inquired after Mr. Ricord, but he is not here in the place. I learn that he stops up the Sacramento; near Sutters Fort, where he keeps a small store, Mr. Isaac Montgomery, formerly of Honolulu; now residing in this place being his partner, so I am told by Parties who came down lately.—

One George C. Hay, a man of capital living in San Francisco, had been corresponding with Wyllie for some time regarding the possibility of establishing himself in the Islands. A vocal critic of the existing Hawaiian regime, Hay on January 15 informed Wyllie that:

Should you come to hold the reigns of govt. & be able to pursue the liberal policy which you advocate, especially with regard to the introduction of foreign labour & sales of crown land I believe that hundreds from here would be induced besides myself to settle in the islands in the course of the next few years so soon as they found themselves possessed of sufficient capital to carry out their operations. I sincerely hope to see this change effected & am perfectly confident that the islands would then rapidly advance in prosperity.

In answer to your question as to the amount at present of consumption of coffee in California & the prospects of the demand as there has been no census as yet taken of the population my answer must be very vague. When the American flag was hoisted it was supposed there was a population of 10,000 in California, say, & it is with latitude that 5,000 have since been added to that number, if we take about one half only or say 8,000 on account of children or tea or chocolate drinkers (which most of the Spaniards are when they can get it) & allow for each person 1 lb. coffee per week I believe it will give us as near a guess as in these guessing times as we can come to. As to the prospects of demand they are of the largest scale as the influx of people into this country will be altogether unprecedented in the history of emigration.

At the same time, Wundenberg was composing another effort:

The Schooner "Honolulu" being about to sail for the Islands, I beg you will excuse the liberty I take in enclosing to your care a letter for my wife.—I wrote to you by the "Julian" on the second of this month; nothing of any importance has occurred

here since that date. The Barque "Minerva" with Mr. Dickison on board arrived here yesterday with a full cargo from Valparaiso, and several other vessels from that port are expected here in a few days, and it is said full passengers. The "Minerva" brought 29 passengers here.

The weather is here at present very disagreeable; it is stormy, wet and cold; the mountains close around us are covered with snow, and yesterday and this morning it was snowing in town here.—By a Schooner which arrived yesterday from the embarcadero near Sutters Fort, the news arrived here that the miners which are still encamped on the ground were attacked by the Indians and that some hard fighting had taken place, but there are different tales about it, some contend it to be only a contest between a small party, others say it was a general attack; by the next vessel we shall hear the particulars.—Business is still dull here; some few goods and arms, powder, shot etc. sell good,—other goods are still cheaper as when I wrote last.—The "Ohio" has left here and gone down the coast; Commodore Jones is still here, his pennant flying on board the St. Mary, Sloop of War.—After the return of the "Ohio" the St. Mary I understand is going to the Islands.—Mr. Shillaber is to leave here in a few days for Mazatlan, and thinks to return again here in the "Ohio."—I hear he is to stay here permanently and sell off his property on the Islands.—From what I can see and hear here, I am sorry to say, there is a very little prospect of monied men settling over from here to the Islands. There are a very, very few men here who think favorably of the policy pursued on the Islands. . . . It is generally admitted that the Islands coffee and sugar are very superior and would fetch good prices hereafter in this market, besides many people would like to go to the Islands, but every one thinks it useless to make the attempt; all say they would not wish to risk their funds under the present odious system; and they seem to think even that there is no security; the leasing system is generally looked upon as disastrous.—

San Francisco could be hazardous, as Gummer testified on February 1:

Mr Shillaber left us on the 29th Ult: in the Barque "Mary Frances," for Mazatlan. He calculates on returning in all next month.

Mr. Leese will tell you what a villainous attack was made upon Mr Shillaber's life on the evening preceding his departure; when he was returning home, in company with Cap. Goodwin, after their spending the Evening with me.

The Americans, in San Francisco, are all first rate Men; generous, noble-hearted & ever ready to oblige, even at, sometimes, an inconvenience to themselves.

On February 2, Wundenberg made a good report of current doings:

I wrote to you last by the Schr—Honolulu under date of January 15<sup>th</sup>. and in charge of Mr. McFarlane. The state of affairs here since then has very little altered. A number of vessels has arrived, principally from Valparaiso, all crowded with passengers, who are obliged to encamp in tents, it being impossible to procure houses.—Lumber demands 15¢ pr. foot at present, but a good quantity is soon expected from the Columbia and other places; All foreign vessels which were in port before the first of January being permitted to coast for the period of six months from the first of January on; most all have gone for lumber. Thick clothing arms and ammunition, sugar and *Salt* are in great demand. With other merchandise the place is filled. Flour @ \$10 pr. 200 weight.—Pork \$30 pr. Bbls, sale dull; and so forth. Yet considering the season plenty business is going and, in the Spring it will be very brisk.—Ready made houses demand almost any price.—Gold dust is gradually but firm rising; it demands at present \$14.50 pr. Oz but few sales; all keep on to the dust and it is generally believed that it soon will be up to \$16.—pr. Oz.—The weather has been very bad here and the winter uncommonly severe, but since the beginning of this week has been good.—

Mr. Sewerkrop left here on the 28<sup>th</sup>. ult. together with Mr. Shillaber in the "Mary Francis" for Mazatlan. Mr Sewerkrop goes overland by way of Mexico and Vera

Cruz to the U. States, there to procure a Steamer for this House to run on the Bay and Sacramento river; but this must for the present remain a secret. M. S. afterwards intends to proceed to England and the Continent, but expects to be here again in about eight months hence.

Col. Stevenson is a very influential man at Washington and is very much liked and respected here.—There is some rumor afloat here in regard to the duties levied here on foreign vessels.—The gentleman above named thinks it not unlikely at all that the Custom house here would receive orders to restore the duties levied on Hawaiian vessels according to the American Tariff; he has taken exactly the same view in the matter as His Majesty's Government.—

Please excuse my hasty writing as I am constantly in good employ and have very little time to myself, yet I shall not neglect writing you whenever an occasion offers until I leave for the mines in the beginning of April, when, I believe, it will be difficult to get letters forwarded.—One Point more and I must conclude. I have enquired after Mr. Ricord again, and I have now found out from a gentleman who saw him about three weeks ago that he got a store near the mines on the Mackellemy river, is doing good business there and quite comfortable off. Part of the goods are his own and part of them are on commission. He has cleared last season about a couple thousand dollars and is expected to do very well next season.—This information you can rely on to be true.—

The same correspondent wrote two excellent letters in March—the first of them on the fifth:

I beg to thank you for forwarding to me by the Schooner Ann the letter from my wife received by me on the 21<sup>st</sup> ultimo. I wrote to you last by the Brig "Eveline" under date of Febr. 2<sup>nd</sup>. which letter I have no doubt has reached your hands before this time. Since I last wrote more life and excitement has sprung up again. Numbers of emigrants from all parts of the coast are daily arriving and on the 28<sup>th</sup>, ultimo the New Mail Steamer "California" arrived for the first time from Panama with 400 Passengers on board. By that Steamer we have papers up to January 8<sup>th</sup>, from New York which state that the excitement throughout the Union is immense. As there is also a mail for the Islands on board which will no doubt be forwarded by this opportunity I abstain from giving you any News items.—San Francisco looks like a large encampment; to procure houses is of course impossible and many who had a house gave them up now to the ladies which arrived in the Steamer and from other parts of the coast, and live in tents. It is impossible to make any calculation as to how matters will be here shortly. It is supposed that by the month of May already twenty thousand men will be on the mines; in the fall of the year I think the number will be four or five times larger on account of the immense emigration coming by way of the Rocky mountains.—With regard to the market here things seem to come more to their proper level, yet no one can foretell here how things will be in the next few days and the best calculations may be thwarted [*sic*]. Some of the articles which a little while ago demanded enormous prices here, are down now to the lowest rates and all the last Shipments coming from the Islands will not near come up to the expectation of the owners and some I am afraid will prove a total failure. Provisions and clothing are at present as cheap here as on the Islands and as daily a number of ships is expected direct from the States, which enter their goods duty free, the consequence is that sales are dull and that goods coming from foreign Ports cannot realize any longer large profits.—Some few articles demand still high rates such as Spirits, Lumber and ready made houses; (lumber sold yesterday at the enormous rate of \$600. . —pr. M. ft.) Other articles find scarcely buyers, although a little while ago they demanded good prices. (Woolen Blankets for example sell this moment @ \$5.—pr. Pair.) Gold dust @ \$15 pr. Oz., but very few wish to sell at that rate; in trade it is equal to cash.—With regard to the payment of duties here there is no more any doubt. By the last steamer all the due instructions came out for the Collector and all the Custom house regulations of other Ports of the United

States are in full force. Also a Postmaster came out and a regular Post office is established.—But things take here sometimes a singular turn. It is very difficult for any vessel to leave, they cannot procure crews. The Harbor is full of Ships wishing to sail but no men to be got. It is even doubtful to say whether the Steamer will be able to leave again. The engineers of the same have declined going in her again unless they agree to pay them \$50.00.—pr. month wages and payment in advance. If not they will leave for the mines. The men of wars men deserte in great numbers and I believe they soon will be oblige to leave port on that very account. The “Ohio”—“St Marys”—“Dale” and “Warren” are as yet in port.—The people begin already to move and there soon will be a general start for the mines. I myself intend starting in about ten days from now. So I will not be able to write again before I come down again in June. If I shall return again then or remain longer absent will depend on my success; any how I shall be down here again by that time and if I intend to remain longer I shall then again take the liberty of writing to you.

P.S.—

I hereby beg to enclose to you a copy of a circular petitioning congress to grant a railroad to California.—Probably none of these circulars will reach the Islands as only a very few are in town. I got it from Mr. Mc.Dougal a U. S. Officer who arrived here in the Steamer.—Please forward the copy after having perused it, at your leisure to my wife.—

By the 20th, Wundenberg was ready to try his luck at the mines:

On the 5th inst. I wrote to you by the Russian Ship “Prince Menzikoff”; and yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving thro the kindness of Mr. G. T. Allan your much esteemed favour dated Febr. 5th, pr. Tahitian Schooner “Sophia.”—As I am leaving for the mines tomorrow I got merely time to thank you for your kind note and beg that you will continue to repose in me that confidence and that good will which I ever have had the pleasure to enjoy since I had the honor of serving you as Clerk in H. B. Ms Consulate General and afterwards as Clerk in your high Office under H. H. Majesty, for which kindness and confidence I beg again to express to you my most grateful thanks.—

Nothing of consequence has transpired here since I wrote to you last except that the number of emigrants coming from the U. States and all parts of the coast are daily increasing and that we have had already several vessels direct from the States, the commencement of a large number which left the States last winter, said to amount of upwards of two hundred sails; amongst which are several Steamers.—Next winter I think we shall see some of them on the Islands, as there is scarcely a chance for any vessel to come out of port again until the people return again from the mines.—

Prices of goods are still low and will I believe never raise again as there will be an immense influx of goods to this market; goods are already now cheaper here than at the Islands and the last shipments from there will all prove a loss to the owner.—But some things still are in good demand; Lumber and ready made houses very high. (\$500 to 600 pr. M ft) Brandy great demand and good sale;—Sugar 12¢ pr. lb.—Coffee rather slow @ 13 to 14¢ pr. lb. sometimes S. I. Coffee as high as 16¢ pr. lb.—I have done here my best to induce respectable gentlemen to invest capital in lands at the Islands. Mr. Allan will write to you about settling over to Kauai on Koloa, a place I have strongly recommended to him.—Mr. Probst a german gentleman of high respectability and connected in business with Messrs, Barron Forbes & Co. of Tepic, will also in all probability take up a place on Kauai for growing Sugar, and will in that case empower me on my return to the Islands to make a suitable selection for him.—I shall not be wanting in exertions to induce respectable people to invest in lands on the Islands as I feel a lively interest in it to see principally Kauai girded round by a circle of flourishing plantations.—

I hereby also beg to send for your perusal a chart of that part of California where the gold is principally found, the chart was made out by Mr. Ehrenberg whom you

will recollect having been some years ago on the Islands, and with whom I shall go together to the mines; he took it up when last winter rambling over the mines and it will be correct in the principal features. After you having perused the same you will greatly oblige me by forwarding the same together with the enclosed letter to my wife to Hanalei.—As the Firm of Joseph Bawden & Co. is dissolved you will have the kindness to address any letters you should wish to favour me with to the care of L. A. Smith, Esquire of this place and a former partner of the above firm.—Mr. Allan soon expects to leave for the Columbia, but intends to leave the Hudson Bay Co. service and retire to Kauai; but Mr. Allan will write to you himself; . . .

It was the spring of 1849 in El Dorado. The hard winter gone, miners surged into the diggings again to pursue their golden dreams. And already on the trail were eager thousands who, with yet other thousands, would soon make California the fabled empire of the American West.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> P, Oct. 11, 1847, quoting the *California Star* of Aug. 28, 1847.

<sup>2</sup> FO & Ex. All letters are in this file, arranged by date; there will be no further footnote references to letters, all of which were addressed to R. C. Wyllie.