## THE ADVANCE.

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MINING DECADENCE OUT WEST. The Comstock, Euroka, and Other Mines

(City. Chichgo Horaid.) No official report of the alver yield of the country for 1885 has yet been made public, but it does not need statistics to show that, so far as the region west of the Rocky mountains is concerned, the production of silver has fallen to but a

fraction of former years. The great silver state of Nevada, for instance, has fallen from \$48,000,000 in 1876 to less than \$3,000,000 in 1884, and now has to be rated second to several of the terri-tories. The great Comstock lode alone, which has produced \$371,000,000 in gold and silver, does not now turn out enough to pay for oil to run the ma-chinery of the mines. The Eureka, White Pine, Pioche, Austin, Tuscarora, and other districts which once turned out their millions, are now almost wholly unproductive.

The whole state of Nevada, indeed, is marked by abandoned shafts and tun-nels, and strewn with idle and rusting machinery, while the population of the state has dwindled from 65,000 in 1880 to less than 40,000 in 1885. There were but 13,000 votes cast in the whole state in 1884. Utah and Arizona, the only other silver-producing regions of the Pacific coast, are not so unproductive as Nevada, yet their glory has, in a great degree, departed. The mines of Tombstone, Pinal, Bisbee, Prescott, and Yavapai, in Arizona, have all fallen off, and dividends now are like the vis-

itations of angels, few and far between. Nowhere is this wreckage of the mining interests of the west more apparent than in San Francisco. Speculation in mines and mining stocks is as dead here as literature on the Congo. The streets formerly devoted to the business of speculation, and which were the headquarters of hundreds of mining companies, are deserted and quiet. The thousands of feverish operators who made the air ring with their shouts and the excited hum of business have scattered to the four winds. Some are in New York; some who saw in time the coming of the end retired with fortunes; some are in Washington begging offices from the new administration; many have gone to farming, others wander listlessly about the streets, seedy and poverty stricken, and a few, alas! fill suicide's graves.

The massive stone stock exchange, erected at a cost of \$1,000,000, stands desolate, its windows dotted with placards "To Let" and its great "toawood" doors yawning for victims. Its portals are thrown open once a day—a little knot of gray and haggard brokers, each grasping for the fraction of a commis-sion which he would have scorned in the days gone by, gather in the middle of the floor, make their little transactions involving a few hundred dollars, and the business of the day is over. To those who remember the excitement and uproar and swirl of ten years ago the sight is almost ludicrous, for it seems like children playing at speculation in

the back yard. The old operators, of the Ralston, Keene, Mills and Flood type, long since vanished from the scene. Lent, Roberts, Latham, Hall, Sherwood, Grayson, Dodge, Budd, Peckham and scores of others of a later period, how not been seen on the took of the exchange for years. Some of them are dead, others scattered. The wealth which poured into their lans often in a night has for into their laps often in a night has for the most part gone with them. In some cases it has been dissipated and its

cases it has been dissipated and its former owners reduced to penury.

With the decadence of speculation there has come, too, an end to sensational mining. There are no longer discoveries which set the public wild. Indeed, there has been nothing of great value found by any of the vast army of prospectors since 1879. Now and then a gold pocket is found in the quartz region of California, which yields a fortune to a few lucky individuals, but it has no effect upon the public. The "find" is not extensive enough to arouse "find" is not extensive enough to arouse more than a passing interest.

No Such Creatures as Coral "Insects." [Cor. New York Post.]

This single coral animal (quite unlike an insect, and it is quite time for books to omit that designation—coral insect) is like the sea anemones, Actinias, or sea-flowers, some species of which we see on the rocks of our northern coast. It is a small tube of flesh, with a stomach, and tentacles surrounding it, which move about in search of food and conduct it to the mouth. The nervous system and blood system are of the most simple kind. Of course, in a creature so low in the scale of life, there is no head, nor are there special organs of sense, such as for seeing and hearing. They are popularly called animal flow-

This little creature soon develops a bard covering or shell, secreting from its exterior a shell from the lime which is held in solution by the sea water, just as the clam or any shell-fish secretes the lime coverings are analogous to the skeletons of higher animals, though in one case the lime skeleton is inside, in the other outside. After a little the soft young coral, having settled itself upon a solid footing on the bottom of the sea, like myriads of others around it, exhibits a white calcarious coating on portions of it, and in a short time has deposited from its soft exterior and partitions of its interior a solid lime tube, with dividing walls. This is coral

"pure and simple. DUNLAP A great block many feet in diameter is no more than simply a congregation of many of these. When the little single coral is perfect in its lime tube, it buds. and increases itself thereby, adding con-stantly either in this way or by the emission of eggs.

[C2 leave Journal.]

Plumbago is the basis of stove polish, and comes mainly from the rich mines of Guaymas, Mexico. The plumbage comes from the mines in sacks weigh ing 150 pounds each. It is then crushed and separated by the use of huge pans, the coarse quality being sent through the crusher again, and only the very fine going into the bins to be mixed with oils and made into stove polish. A factory with a capacity of a ton of blacking per day has just been started in San Francisco, the first and only one on the Pacific coast.

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