

they were adventurers, they proved themselves little better than children, and as such they were grossly misused by the gold-thirsting rabble brought down upon them by their discovery.

Marshall and Sutter kept the Mormons at work on the saw-mill as best they were able, until it was completed and in operation, which was on the 11th of March. The Mormons merited and received the acknowledgments of their employers for faithfulness in holding to their agreements midst constantly increasing temptations. Both employers engaged also in mining, especially near the mill, claiming a right to the ground about it, which claim at first was generally respected. With the aid of their Indians they took out a quantity of gold; but this was quickly lost; and more was found and lost. Sutter mined elsewhere with Indians and Kanakas, and claims never to have derived any profit from these efforts. The mill could not be made to pay. Several issues before long arose between Marshall and the miners regarding their respective rights and the treatment of the natives.

Marshall was less fortunate than almost any of the miners. This ill success, combined with an exaggerated estimate of his merits as discoverer, left its impress on his mind, subjecting it more and more to his spiritualistic doctrines. In obedience to phantom beckonings, he flitted hither and thither about the foothills, but his supernatural friends failed him in every instance.²³ He became petulant and querulous. Discouraged and soured, he grows restive under encroachments on his scanty property,²⁴ and the abuse

²³ 'Should I go to new localities' says Marshall, 'and commence to open a new mine, before I could prospect the ground, numbers flocked in and commenced seeking all around me, and, as numbers tell, some one would find the lead before me and inform their party, and the ground was claimed. Then I would travel again.' Twice Sutter gave him a prospector's outfit and started him. He was no longer content with his former plodding industry. 'He was always after big things,' Sutter said. I have wondered that he did not in the first instance attribute his discovery to the direction of the spirits.

²⁴ Early in 1849, after Winters and Bayley had purchased the half-interest of Sutter in the saw-mill, and one third of the half-interest of Marshall,

and butchery of his aboriginal protégés. Forced by the now enraged miners to flee from his home and property, he shoulders his pack of forty pounds and tramps the mountains and ravines, living on rice. He seeks employment and is refused. "We employ you!" they cry ironically. "You must find gold for us. You found it once, and you can again." And it is told for a fact, and sworn to by his former partner, that they "threatened to hang him to a tree, mob him, etc., unless he would go with them and point out the rich diggings."²⁸

There is something unaccountable in all this. Marshall must have rendered himself exceedingly obnoxious to the miners, who, though capable of fiendish acts, were not fiends. While badly treated in some respects, he was undoubtedly to blame in others. Impelled by the restlessness which had driven him west, and overcome by morbid reflections, he allowed many of his good qualities to drift. In his dull, unimaginative way he out-Timoned Timon in misanthropy. He fancied himself followed by a merciless fate, and this was equivalent to courting such a destiny.²⁹ It is to be regretted

miners and others came in and squatted on the ground claimed by Marshall, regardless of the posted notices warning them off. 'Thirteen of Sutter & Marshall's oxen soon went down into the cañon,' says Marshall, 'and thence down hungry men's throats. These cost \$100 per yoke to replace. Seven of my horses went to carry weary men's packs.' The mill hands deserted, and before the mill could be started again certain white men at Murderer's Bar butchered some Indians and ravished their women. The Indians retaliated and killed four or five white men. So far it was an even thing; the white men had met only their just deserts. But the excuse to shoot natives was too good to be lost. A mob gathered, and failing to find the hostile tribe, attacked the Colons, who were wholly innocent and friendly, and many of them at work about the mill. Of these they shot down seven; and when Marshall interferred to defend his people, the mob threatened him, so that he was obliged to fly for his life. After a time he returned to Coloma only to find the place claimed by others, who had laid out a town there. Completely bankrupt, Marshall was obliged to leave the place in search of food, and soon he was informed that the miners had destroyed the dam, and stolen the mill timbers, and that was the end of the saw-mill. 'Neither Marshall, Winters, nor Bayley ever received a dollar for their property.' *Parsons' Life of Marshall*, 188.

²⁸ "To save him, I procured and secreted a horse, and with this he escaped." Affidavit of John Winters, in *Parsons' Life of Marshall*, 178. See also Marshall's statement, in *Dusbar's Romance of the Age*, 117-23.

²⁹ "I wandered for more than four years, he continues, 'feeling myself under some fatal influence, a curse, or at least some bad circumstances.'