

gress of their fellow-men through the difficulties of travel, and rendering assistance in desperate cases. New-comers often landed from shipboard, rigged in their Sunday best, and with boots brightly polished, intending to strike the natives with surprise by such tokens of high civilization. But scarcely had they touched terra firma, when they made the deep discovery that terra firma was not there; and they were glad to get back to the ship, with the loss not only of Day & Martin's polish, but of the boots themselves, which they were constrained to leave deep buried in the streets of San Francisco!

It is cause of regret that the history of that winter has been left so much at the mercy of memory and tradition, and that exact observations of the quantity of rain were not recorded. To hear the eloquent narrations of the survivors, one might suppose that the windows of Heaven were kept steadily open, from the commencement to the end of the rainy season. The few exact records in our possession, published at the time in the newspapers, tell a different story. It appears that the rains set in regularly with a storm from the S. E. on the 13th of November, and terminated sometime in March, and that the number of days on which rain fell in that period was seventy-one. That is to say, just one-half the days during the rainy season were free from rain. Building operations were not entirely suspended. The brick building of Burgoyne & Co., and several other brick edifices were completed during the winter.

On the 21st of February there was a considerable fall of hail, which remained on the ground for some hours, among the spring flowers that covered the hills.

In those days, before the recent improvements in the delivery of letters, the Post Office exhibited the most curious scenes on the arrival of the mails from the Atlantic States. People crowded by hundreds into the long lines, to march to the windows in quest of letters from home. Desperate efforts were made to secure a place near the window, in anticipation of the opening of the office. Men rose from their beds in the middle of the night for this purpose. It was a common practice to provide a chair, and hitch up, step by step, as the procession slowly advanced, and to while away the time, with cigars and other appliances. Persons were exposed for hours to the most drenching rains, which they bore with heroic fortitude, rather than relinquish their post. Men of speculative views who expected no letters, secured advanced places, and then sold them, sometimes for as much as eight or ten dollars.

The most motly population in the world was then congregated in San Francisco, and the capricious taste of the citizens in regard to dress served to add to the apparent diversity. Every man had his own standard of fashion, entirely independent of the rest of the world. A ludicrous account of their costumes was printed in the Alta California newspaper, referring to the short waisted frocks, the cut-aways, the high collars, the broad tailed and the swallow tailed dress coats, the double breasted jackets, the surtouts, the bang-ups, the Spanish wrappers, the serapes, the blankets, the bear skins—the boots, high topped and low topped, fair topped, red topped and green topped, fisherman's boots and horseman's boots and miner's boots, brogans, gaiters and shoes of patent leather, calfskin and cowhide; There was also a marvellous variety of hats, though the most popular was the California slouch, which had the virtue or pliancy and was convertible into a pillow.