

life had been sacrificed in the effort. I have never succeeded in satisfying myself that I did right in leaving them. Father's dying admonition had not been complied with, and I realized more than ever that she had been a dear, good sister to me, and that, perhaps, her life might have been spared had I done differently. Letters from home had been the bright spots in my solitary life; hers had been a little longer and more frequent than others and were full of love and a longing for the time when we should all be together again in "the old home." Now all was changed, but I could go home and help those who were left, so with this object in view I shaped my affairs for a year's absence; determined to go home, place mother and Mira in easy circumstances and return to California, where I would spend the remainder of my days.

I disposed of my ranch and other property to advantage, loaned my money, as I supposed, to a good party at two per cent. per month—a very low rate of interest at the time—and securing a one year's option on 480 acres of land, a Spanish mile square, over which I had many times cast a wishful eye, on the first day of April, 1857, I bade my friends good-bye and started for the States. I arrived at William Gillis's in Kinsman April 27th. The time coming home was 173 days less than in going out. Mother was sick in bed at Hartford, but my return proved an antidote for all her ills, and we were soon settled in our old home, which was an agreeable contrast to my bachelor home in California, although bachelor life has its good points.

An incident occurred in connection with my return which made a deep impression on my mind and satisfied me that a "Power greater than human" watched over and protected me. Henry Mathews and I arranged by letter to come home together, and had we started at the time agreed upon we would have been on the *Central America*, which was lost at sea between Aspinwall and New York, with all on board. Henry could not get away at the time set; I did not wish to wait, so came two weeks before the set time; thus we both escaped. On my journey home I enjoyed for a brief time the title of Commodore. It was generally understood that we were to stop at Manzanillo to take on silver bullion. As we neared that port, I at once recognized it, and to my surprise we sailed by. I was standing at the time near the Commodore and noticed that he appeared perplexed. I remarked to a fellow passenger that I supposed we were to land at Manzanillo, but I see we are passing it. The Commodore heard the remark and asked me if I was acquainted with the coast. "Yes, I knew that was Manzanillo; on our voyage up we had put into that port in distress and I could not mistake the place." The Commodore immediately gave command to "'bout ship," and we retraced our steps only to find out that Manzanillo was twelve miles down the coast. They gave us the laugh, and neither the Commodore nor I felt elated over the blunder. I apologized, and remarked that there was a striking resemblance between the two places. "Yes," he said, "there was; but a commander that did not know enough to run his own boat without consulting passengers ought to get into the wrong port." From this until we landed in New York I was dubbed "Commodore," and many amusing questions were propounded to me about the boat and coast.

I was in California during the operations of the Vigilance Committee of 1856, and I want to say a word in its justification. I know it was condemned in the minds of many, but in California the greater number approved of it. It was a necessity of the times, for California was an open field for gamblers and desperadoes to enter, and they