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TRANSALLEGANIA.

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THE GROANS OF MISSOURI.

A Poem.

BY H. R. SCHOOLCRAFT.

"The things we know are rich and rare, But how the devil came they there?"

POPE'S LETTERS.

When wilds that were lately the panther's retreat. Were turned to plantations and covered with wheat; When emigrants thickened, and congress debates, Turned full on the west, and they cut off new states: The king of the metals, (who deep, under ground, Reposed with his subjects in slumber profound.) Alarm'd by the tumult he heard on the earth, From Mexico travelled in haste to the north: Nor paused he for river, or mountain, or plain, Till be reached the frontiers of his golden domain: There stopped on a mountain, all reeking with heat, (The Arkansaw winding along at his feet,) And surveyed with amazement the torrent that prest-The stream of migration that rolled to the west. From mountain to mountain a prospect he takes-From the gulph on the south to the northern lakes, And all the wide scene, valley, hillock, and glen, Resounds with the tumult of business and men: They are driving the savage before them amain, And people each forest, and culture each plain. He sees how they struggle with fortune and fate, How toil to be happy, and pant to be great : He hears the axe sounding on every hill, And the woods are re-echoing liberty's thrill;

All countries and climates, " the bond and the free," To people the wilderness closely agree, From Maine's rocky borders the emigrants pour, And are leaving the fruitful Connecticut's shore, The Hudson, Potomac, and Delaware, sigh, For friends who had quit them, they hardly knew why; The exiles of Europe, the poor, the oppress'd, All, all, they are bending their steps to the west. One object impels them, one passion inspires— The rage for improvement, for wealth the desires; And alike in all countries, conditions, and states, This passion is cherished, prevails and inflates; The rich in it see an increase of estate, And the poor are still flattered by hopes to be great. Thus season on season new converts engage, And support and augment the migratory rage: Now here and now there its direction it turns, On Wabash it kindles, on Miami burns, And now on the fertile Scioti delights, And now on the Washitaw fondly invites: Still changing, each season new regions display, No boundaries check it, no streams can allay, No land is too distant, no climate too hot, No forest too heavy, no stream too remote; They move, they inhabit, they cultivate all, And were oceans no check, would encompass the ball: Even now they approach my extensive domain, And Missouri already is peopled with men.

Thus the monarch discours'd, and with sorrow oppress'd, Full many a sigh shook his glittering breast; He thought on the woes he had brought on mankind, In countries remote, and in ages behind; How fatal his friendships, and yet that his hates Had overturned empires, and founded new states. Of Ophir he pondered, and passed in review, His Mexican robbers, and foes in Peru; And he sighed for his friendships so fatally dear. And brave Montezuma recalled with a tear: And he feared that this great, this all-conquering press, This progress of empire, stir, business, distress, Would not only acquire an unlimited bound. But discover his very retreats in the ground; That his subjects and kin would be eagerly sought, And wofully handled, and dreadfully taught; That they all should be dragged out with bucket and chain, And hammered, and pounded, a...d melted with pain. He knew in such tortures men take a delight, And he dreaded a miner, and hated the light. But while thus he debated with reason and fear. A sudden commotion resounds in his ear: There were horses and men in tumultuous throng. Came tramping, and talking, and rattling along; The farmer was ploughing in sensible view, The woodman he chopp'd, and the blacksmith he blew;

There were lawyers and merchants, all nations and brogues, Scotch, English, and French, Irish, Yankees, and rogues; And a school it was building, a master was found, And was drawing out plans and surveying the ground. Such a tumult and toil left no reason to doubt, That his fears were all true, and a town was laid out: But how great was his tremor, vexation, and hate, When "a state" was re-echoed, "Missouri, a state."

In so sad a dilemma, dejected and grave, The monarch withdrew to his closet, a cave: Bethinking all peaceful to take into view The course it were proper a king should pursue. He pondered, and plotted, in fear, and in haste, Now gnawed on his quill, and now writ, now erased; Alternately flagging in fear and in doubt. Or bent on campaigning with courage devout: Now bending his thoughts upon leaving the land. And now on the fame of a resolute stand: At length, now concluding his foes to harass, He resolved to assemble his subjects en masse: And appointed a time, and provided a place, Where they all might assemble, talk, plan, and embrace. For, quoth he, to prevent being dragged out to light, We more can accomplish by planning, than fight; And however the mortals on earth may deny it. There is more to be got without fighting, than by it; For though they gain treaties, they lose it in bones. And such points are not valued by fossils and stones.

The monarch of metals, whose absolute sway, Not minerals only, but mortals obey; Wherever he journies, whatever betide, Has always companions and slaves at his side; And hide as he may hide, and go where he will, Has mica-slate, granite, and quartz with him still. Hence the king had no sooner resolved on a plan, Than he bid them proclaim it throughout his domain: " Tell the Metals I summon them all to this shore. Or in person to come, or by delegate ore: To the uttermost mines of my kingdom go haste, Search dell, traverse mountain, explore every waste. Let no cave be unentered, no rock unexplored, Where metal could harbour, or oxide could hoard; Every bank, every hill, every stone, every shore, Search by fire and by acid, hunt over and o'er! That all kin of my ancient and glorious line May hear of my summons, and know my design: Go tell them, I hail their approach with a kiss, I study their safety, I pant for their bliss; And I would not intrude on their solid repose. Were it not that my enemies drive me to blows. But be cautious, friend Granite, lest thou shouldst be seen In thy tour by our foes, mineralogical men; Fly the face of the earth, keep the underground wave, Bystratum, or cavity, crevice, or cave;

So our scheme shall be secret, and no body scan, Our flinty designs on our enemy—man."

The courier mounted on mettlesome steed, Departed full gaily, a trooper of speed; Nor paused he for pleasure, nor stopped he for bait. He spurred on through limestone, and sweated through slate; He travelled through gneiss, where metals were in't; He galloped through green-stone, and worried through flint; He cantered through gravel, where porphyry lay, And floundered through gypsum, and trotted through clay; Nor could sienite stop his unparalleled course, Though adamant injured the heels of his horse; But whene'er his steed lingered, (a hint for hussars,) He urged him to canter by pelting with spars; For he gave him no rest for refreshment or bait, Till he'd traversed the empire, and summoned the state: Then for all his unkindness he promptly atones, By feeding his horse with some beautiful stones. A cave on the Arkansaw, spacious and dread, The monarch had chose for the regal parade; Where, guarded by minions, he patiently waits The gathering council, and coming debates.

The first who attended was blue-visaged Lead, Who had quitted Potosi in haste, as he said; For his friends they were many, and occupied ground For seventy leagues in the country around; And the momeut he heard of his majesty's will, He set off with speed over dingle and hill; And so great was his haste, and the journey so far, Carried only one friend, it was ponderous spar. Then raising his voice, though with sorrow opprest, Thus vented the feelings that burned in his breast: " My friends in Missouri, my kin and compeers, All smarting with pains, and all bathed in their tears; After many long years of oppression and grief, At length are encouraged to try for relief: And assembled in council from seventy mines, I bear their commission, and speak their designs. It is more than a century, since we were first Discovered by mortals, discovered and cursed: Since erst we were hunted in rock and in clay, And exiled to the terrible regions of day: O that era, no time and no sorrows can blot, When hunted by Reno, and found by La Motte: O then what a series of griefs was begun, What minerals plundered, what metals undone! We were picked, and were hammered, bruised, injured, and broke. And jostled in buckets, and smothered in smoke: We were carried, like culprits, along in a cart, And plunged in a furnace, and tortured with art: So heedlessly handled, so rough, so severe, Our injuries multiplied, year after year, Till our woes and our insults all measure excel, And we feel all the torments of roasting in hell.

And what is distressing beyond all our woes,
Our tears have turned gems in the chests of our foes;
Our blood and our groans have procured them delight,
And de cked them with riches that dazzle the sight.
One only solace we have found for our woes,
'Tis the bullets we've sent to the hearts of our foes.
And yet all we feel in so high a degree,
O, king of the metals, is suffered for thee?
Go therefore on earth, men are panting for pelf,
Relieve our distress, and discover thyself."

He longer had spoken, but silver-faced Tin. With air consequential, abruptly came in: And, quoth he, "Out of pebbles and aggregate sand, I am come from the depths to obey thy command; But the place of my dwelling, my lonesome repose, No name yet designates, no mortal yet knows: Tis a wilderness all; from the savage and deer, No mischief I dread, and no sorrow I fear: For they know not my usefulness, nature, or kind, And they sweep o'er my home like a rattling wind. This is all I may venture: a stranger to woe. My heart is as light as a Chippewan doe; And so sweetly I rest, so securely I lie, That chemist and miner I both may defy." Now Tin was a metal of Cornish descent, Where the haleyon days of his boyhood were spent. But his kin were so tortured, exhausted, distress'd, He fled for relief to the woods of the west: Where, although in retirement, remote, and unseen, He often would boast of European kin; Of friends he had left on the Gallic confines, Or hid in the rocks of Bohemian mines; Of German connexions, and boast that his name Gave Devon her opulence, Cornwall her fame: He would even advert to more elderly kin. For Asia too, is a country of Tin: But the thought of Siam, or of Banka ne'er rose, Unmixed with a curse for his Belgian foes. And while thus he descanted of ancestry free, (Like brainless pretenders of mortal degree,) Forgot that his friends were most bitterly poor, Had endured many griefs, and had more to endure; That their mines were expensive, exhausted, and old, And worked at the price of the product when sold. However, when thoughts so unpleasant oppress'd, He brightened to think of his friends in the west: How they all lay concealed from their enemies' sight, Unburned by the miner, uncursed by the light; And of all their rich ores in American ground, In Chili alone had a morsel been found.

The next who addressed the imperial throne, Now heaved a deep sigh, and now uttered a groan: His rusty appearance, and sable attire, Bespoke him afflicted by furnace and fire:

He seemed like some flinty, degenerate ore, So dull was his visage, so earthy and poor; And each bosom with manly compassion was shook. When Iron thus pensive and feelingly spoke: " If e'er sorrow wasted, or misery bent, If pain e'er distracted, despair ever rent; Or if injury wounded, or feeling oppress'd, They now throb, they now rage, they now burn at my breast. O my woes are unnumbered, and all of my race Are plunged in despair, and o'erwhelmed in disgrace! In vain we from country to country may roam, No spot on the earth will afford us a home: We are hunted on mountain, discovered in dale, Nor will rock, nor will thicket, nor streamlet, avail: In vain the earth hides us, in vain we may groan, They find us in rocks, and extract us from stone: All men are our foes, and unceasingly strive, To catch us, and bruise us, and burn us alive; And such is our number, and such are our fates, We are found in all countries, oppressed in all states; No rock but affords us, no soils but disclose, Our place of concealment, our beds of repose; And such is our rustic and simple disguise, Every clown may detect, every zany descries. Thus sought, and thus plighted, in misery high, We hope not, we cannot—we droop, and we die; For our very entrails they are gnawed and picked out, And who lives without bowels is sturdy—no doubt." Here, catching new spirit, he brightened his tone, Paused, banished his sighs, and thus manly went on: "Yet to all our distresses, for every woe, No stop can we put, and no cure do we know; For although, like my friend, the unfortunate Lead, For your majesty thus we have suffered and bled; Still my case is more cruel, my fate more severe, And I still should be sought should you even appear. For, though Gold is the object our enemies crave, Iron too is of value, on land or on wave: And though you in a gentleman's pocket may glow, I only can furnish the farmer his plough."

If further of Iron, or its uses ye seek,
Bid Husbandry answer, let Chemistry speak;
No art but on this it is forced to depend,
For aid and assistance, a patron or friend;
Without it no trade could exist or progress,
And mechanics would fall on the tomb of distress.
Go call Navigation its use to support,
And Pharmacy summon, Astronomy court;
Metallurgy also, and Surgery call,
To join in the praise of this patron of all;
Let music and painting acknowledge its aids,
For sweetness of sounds, and for beauty of shades:
In fine, through all nature, all life, and all art,
See this favourite agent mix, enter, impart,
VOYAGES and TRAVELS, No. 5. Vol. IV.

It fattens our soils, it impregnates our floods,
Tints the flowers of our gardens, the leaves of our woods,
We eat it in food, and we wear it in dress,
Our constant companion in health or distress.
It gives the rich hue to the gem of the mine,
And glows in the features of beauty divine:
The patron of arts, the philosopher's theme,
And favourite agent of wisdom supreme.

He scarcely had ceased, when with visage of ink, A stranger approaching announced himself Znc. He was coldly received, till Galena, his friend, Addressing the monarch, assured him 'twas Blende; And he would not have ventured on taking the floor, Unacquainted with Blende, or his use as an ore; And the reason he had not metallic attire. He ne'er had been tortured by furnace or fire. Thus kindly excusing, without any fuss, All ended, when Blende, with some modesty, thus: " My home is Missouri, on Merrimack's shore My relatives slumber, a numerous ore: Mine Reno can witness. Potosi declare. The wealth I possess, and the fame that I share: But does any one hear me who doubting opines? My proofs are at hand, I appeal to the mines; But I still am a stranger to pain or distress, My sorrows are little, my injuries less: No pick-axe or hammer has battered my bones. And I peacefully rest with my neighbouring stones: For as few or my uses or properties scan, I lie untormented by meddling man; And whatever this august assembly decree, But little affects or my kindred or me."

Now rosy-faced Copper, a metal of fame, The wrongs of his country arose to proclaim. His ancient descent we to periods trace, Remote as the arts of the civilized race; Remote as the arts of the civilized race; E'en the primitive ages his ores would amass, And Tubal-Cain, he was a worker in brass. To ages less distant he furnished employ, Renowned throughout Egypt, Assyria, Troy. So nobly descended, no wonder we trace Some lines of ambition and fire in his face: He talks of his ancestry, famous and high, And proudly on new metals glances his eye, As if crude, or of some alchemistic degree, And doubting their konours, if smelted per se.

Such then were his claims, who succeeding address'd The king of the metals, enthroned in the west:
"I rise with emotion my woes to reveal,
And boldly to speak what so strongly I feel;
Unprepared as I am, and all troubled within,
I hope I may still be of use to my kin:
And I trust—" (here he used some pathetic expression,
Exordium-like, or a kind of digression,

Groans of Missouri.

A rapture of feeling, a burst of the heart, Peradventure a stroke of the congressman's art. Which the muse who reported, and not being near, Now fails to remember, as then to o'erhear.) "But if any indulgence can justly accrue, For services rendered or uses in view; If aught can arise from chivalric degree, It must now, potent monarch, be due unto me! Supreme is my power, supreme my design. I glow in the palace as well as the mine; I serve in all places to show or excell, I shine on the steeple, and ring in the bell, I frown in the statue, in bronze, or in brass, And thunder in cannon, and glitter in glass! The seaman adores me, his needle and ship, I both must encompass, adorn, and equip; And the navy without me, our strength on the deep, No foe could encounter, no glory could reap! The painter without me would die of the spleen, Deprived of his favourite beautiful green: And wrought into wares an incongruous pile, I cause merchants to flourish, and ladies to smile: Whence a quadruple charm we in Copper can see, Making wealth, beauty, valour, and fashion agree. But I groan with distresses. I ache with despair, And my kindred they die with the weight of their care. Yet it is not from furnace or fire that they flow, The miner's oak bucket, or ore-dresser's blow: Ah, no! these create nor distress nor alarm, For our virgin appearance secures us from harm. Our home is a region all distant and drear, Where the tempest is howling one half of the year; Where the rock towers high, and the waters divide, And Superior lashes the shore at our side. Here, lone and neglected, my family groans, Confined by the pressure of ponderous stones, That are squeezing their bowels, and crushing their bones. And so massy they are, and so heavy they lie, That we grieve, and we tremble, we pant, and we die. O, king of the metals, now hear our request! Remove, we beseech you, the rocks from our breast; Allow us the sun, and the air, and the light, However exposed to our enemies sight; For already oppressed with so weighty a curse, A change may be better, but cannot be worse." Who slowly now entered the parliament cave, Looked sooty, and dark, unmetallic, and grave: He bowed, but no one would his interest promote, For Manganese n'er was a metal of note. Though known to antiquity, hard was his case, Called oxyd, and metalloid, brittle, and base; And, although in the arts he was useful indeed, Yet suffered for ages to languish and bleed-Unclassed as a metal, unhonoured in books: Till chemists began to examine his looks;

For though found as an oxyde, an earth-coloured ore, They were pleased with his weight, and the texture he bore, They studied his nature by acid and heat, Then proved him a metal beyond a deceit; Showed what were his uses, and dwelt on his part, In the potter's and bleacher's and glassmaker's art. Thus rescued from darkness they brightened his name, And established for ever his title to fame. When the monarch first summoned his metalline corps, And convoked to the cave all his subjugate ores. Black Manganese slumbered all peaceful in clay, On Merimack, hid from mankind and the day, Whence rising he sought the congressional cave, And entered all sooty, unpolished, and grave. He bowed all respectful, then silently sat, Now biting his fingers, now twirling his hat, But spoke not, he wished, but had nothing to say, And sat down to hear others debate, and obey. A murmur without now announced the approach, All hot, of a member who came in a coach, And all eves were directed to see and to know What prince had arrived with such turnult and show; But they shrunk with amazement, when bending in weeds, A weeping, pale form, to the council proceeds. So solemn, it seemed like a prodigal, rent For estates he had squandered, or money mis-spent; And many bethought some untoward design, (Some mortal of Pluto in search, or a mine.) Had news of their meeting, and came in disguise, To seek and secure the auriferous prize: That they all should be crowded with papers and dust, In a miser's damp closet to slumber and rust: Or proffer'd, as prospects should brighten or fail, To keep rogues from the gallows, or thieves from the jail; No eye but what sparkled, no heart but what beat, And some thought of battle, and some of retreat; Yet no murmur escaped, e'en the monarch of mines, Nor thought of migrations, nor spoke of designs: A silence ensued like the sleep of the dead, So great was their panic, confusion, and dread. But while thus they reflected in reverie high, The stranger his veil threw all pensively by; And they saw with delight a device on his breast, Where silver commissioned the mystical guest: Twas the Genius of Paper, of bank-paper trash, A substitute sent, both for honour and cash. "You will pardon, (the genius desponding and weak,) You will pardon my sorrows, I cannot yet speak: I am weeping for woes which I cannot endure, For evils I caused, but I never can cure. I am pining for all that a nation can claim, For honour, for character, credit, and fame: And thus plunged in despair, and all buried in tears, I have sighed for long months, I have wept for long years; But all fruitless, my malady daily grows worse, And the heavier my sorrows, the lighter my purse.

I first was suspected, it fretted me sad, This grew to refusal, conviction, and bad: And I daily sink deeper and deeper in woe, And my friends are all broke, and to ruin we go. I once was supported by silver—ah, me! How fatal the friendship, we could not agree? For as I grew in credit, he flew to retreats, And slumbered in vaults, while I flaunted in streets; And as I daily rose, so he daily declin'd, Till a dollar in metal we scarcely could find. So great my renown, it sunk deep on his heart, And for once he determined the land to depart: So he crept off in parcels, a dollar has legs, And they waddled away both in boxes and kegs, Till our banks they were empty, my kindred alone, Now rule in oak drawers, and coffers of stone; While he to those countries has taken a cruize, Where paper's applied to a different use. When therefore your majesty, vexed and in heat, Bid all your dependents in Congress to meet, There was only one dollar in silver, lone guest, In all the dark vaults of the wide-spreading west; Even that being funded, could not travel out, Though he sighed and implored, the Cashier was a lout! So he begged I would"—(here in a clamorous roar, Echoed, "counterfeit—paper-rag—swindler, no more;") And the king all enraged seized the genius with might, And hurled him amain to the regions of night.

From so sad an affright, such tumultuous heats, The members had scarcely arrived at their seats, When a delegate reining a satin-white steed, Alighting, announced himself Silver indeed, He was plainly attired, and without any fuss, Accosted the monarch full wittily thus:-" My favours to win, and to find my retreat, While mortals toil, jockey, drudge, murder, and cheat, While merchants are broken, and lawyers are bent, To gain my acquaintance—at twenty per cent. For me, while the miser at midnight may groan, And the creditor's turning his heart into stone, While dullness through me, is for talents caress'd, And merit without me, is merit unbless'd; While for me, female beauty is worshipped by man, And friendships are proffered, and hatreds began, For me, while inventions and fashions are made, And honour is sullied, and virtue betrayed; Sure in such an assembly of metal as this, I may safely all fears of detection dismiss; And regardless of danger, unmindful of woes, Describe the retreats where my kindred repose: On Tennessee's borders they slumber in lime; On Arkansaw known from the earliest time; On Red River strewed by Almighty fiat, And dispersed on the shores of the pleasant La Platte. The Sabine, the Trinity, Teché, and Del Norde, Glide smooth along banks which my treasures afford; And my blood many a vein, nook, and cavity fills, In Mexico's mountains, and quartz-covered hills.

For these I determine, for these I appear. Their safety my trust, and their danger my fear: But I plead not for parleys, men cannot grow worse, And I fear less their tortures than they do my curse. Now members arrived in a body so dense, A throng so tumultuous, motley, immense, And so rapid they spoke, with such fury of word, That the muse was unable to hear or record: And so ill could she list to an orator's rave, She determined to quit the congressional cave: Yet before her departure recognised a few. Whose forms were familiar, whose visage she knew. There was Bismuth from Kanzas, and Scheele from the Plein: And Nickel from Yazoo; and Prarie Du Chein; Platina from Mora; from Erie Uran; From Yellowstone Arsenic; Chrome, from Itan; With Cobalt, and Mercury, high from the Stony; Columbian, Cerium, gray Antimony, All jumbled together in contact so hot, Twere hard to decide or who spoke or who not! They bawled, and they ranted, they begged, and they press'd. Now flush'd with delight, now with sorrow depress'd, And such heats were begat among metals and stones, That the cave filled with sulphur, and bellowed with groans; And the earth, as if grasped by omnipotent might, Quaked dreadful, and shook with the throes of affright; Deep northwardly rolled the electrical jar. Creating amazement, destruction, and war; The rivers they boiled like a pot over coals, And mortals fell prostrate and prayed for their souls: Every rock on our borders cracked, quivered, and shrunk, And Nackitosh tumbled, and New Madrid sunk.

Now the Monarch of Metals perceiving it vain. Or the heats to allay, or the peace to regain, Exerted a power to royalty dear, And prorogued the convention to meet in a year; But afterwards learning how mortals distress'd Were shook with affright, and were leaving the west; Exulted: he saw from an accident flow, What planning and fighting might never bestow; That the progress of empire was partly allayed; That emigrants flagged, and plantations decayed: And they now might repose without thinking with woe, On the crucible, hammer, pick, bucket, and hoe; That a spirit was dampened, which driving amain, Forboded such grief to his golden domain: And he fancied the dread would a season arrest, The fame, population, and growth of the west. When, therefore, the monarch maturely surveyed The woeful effects which a quarrel had made, All stately he rose, and proclaimed the behest, Dissolving the sittings, and all was at rest.

So great was the tumult, confusion, and groans, Such horrors arose from the clashing of stones.