



KEEPING THE "CORNUCOPIA.:"

A PASSAGE OF CALIFORNIAN ADVENTURE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE GREEN HAND."

II.

THE excitement in San Francisco made head again. Moreover the feeling against various members of the influential class who kept the authorities in countenance increased. The first step on the part of the previous reform committee was to call a new meeting, at which subscriptions were made; and an armed party of determined fellows forthwith started in pursuit of Whitaker, to bring him back to justice at any cost. Meanwhile secret measures undoubtedly went on with a view to an outbreak. A main difficulty in the way had always been the uncertainty of gaining over the body of volunteer night-firemen at the various engine-houses, who formed the Alcalde's real support, and were still by no means easy to convince; but there was another point, even more important. Among the recent settlers across the Bay, on the Contra Costa, was a man who had more bearing on the matter than the whole of them put together. This was the well-known Colonel Asher J. Rigg, originally of New York city, where he at one time held a post in the fire service. He had come out to the Gold State with five sons, who went up with him to the Yerba. They did well there, but were chiefly distinguished for their father's knowledge of Lynch law, and invariable success at it. The sons were not understood to take after him in ability; but the family always kept united, and were now farming together across the bay. It was given out that the Colonel would himself arrive at the right moment. This, if true, made the result a dead certainty. The great point now was, to put off the time for a few days, and avoid

coming to a trial of strength with the Government beforehand. A number of people began evidently to take the Lynch view, while many more were disposed to give in to it. The new word was "Vigilance," which, taken along with the rumour as to Colonel Rigg, appeared fairly to alarm the authorities. None of them except the Alcalde, old Colonel Duggins, seemed to keep their heads in the business, but he proved fully able for it.

In the midst of all this a curious circumstance occurred, causing some amusement in town. It concerned my former employer, Mr. Malloch. He was on 'Change in the public Plaza, opposite the Parker, where he boarded, when a passenger just arrived by Panama mail-steamer came up to the hotel. He proved to be a partner in a celebrated English brewing firm, from which we had had various large consignments during my short period of service. No sooner did he observe Mr. Malloch, whom he seems to have known by sight, than he went to him, and put some question or other, to which very little answer appeared to have been returned. Owing to the brewer's manner, Mr. Malloch had drawn back, and presented a revolver; but next moment it was sent flying overhead. The brewer then attacked him with an umbrella, and the two set to work hand and foot, till they rushed together into the hotel door, amidst immense excitement. It was said that Mrs. Malloch had come out on the balconies with some other ladies, and must have witnessed part of the scene. She had the reputation of having whipped a colonial editor or two when on the stage, and being