

will ever retain. So much for the origin of Mineral Point. I will now venture a few remarks regarding the manners and customs of its inhabitants in days of yore.

The continued prosperity of the mines, in a comparatively brief period, increased the population of the village to several hundred, comprised as is usual in mineral regions, of representatives from every clime and country, and in such conglomeration, it is fair to presume, of every stripe of character. This increase of population, including many of those expert in the "profession," warranted the establishment of numerous gambling saloons, groceries—a refined name for groggeries—and other like places of dissipation and amusement, where the unwary, and those flushed with success in digging, could be "taken in and done for," or avail themselves of opportunities voluntarily to dispose of their accumulated means, either in drowning their sorrows in the bowl, or "fighting the tiger" in his den.

Notwithstanding such were the practices almost universally, more or less, indulged in by the denizens, yet the protracted winters in this then secluded, uncultivated and sparsely populated country, and, for that reason, the absence of those more reputable enjoyments which mellow and refine sociality in other regions, in a measure justified a moderate participation in this mode of driving *dull* cares away. These congenial customs, peculiarly western, were as firmly based as the laws which governed the Medes and Persians, and woe to those, from lands of steadier habits, who would endeavor to introduce innovations adverse to the established policy of those days! Hence the propriety and necessity of harmonizing with, and following in the trail of the popular will. But such, I am happy in the conviction, is not *now* the case—virtue, in the progress of events, has naturally succeeded profligacy, and Mineral Point, freed from contamination, stands redeemed of her former errors.

Among the most distinguished of the earliest pioneers of Mineral Point, yet upon the stage of action, are Col. Robt. C. Hoard, Col. Robert S. Black (now of Dodgeville), Col. Henry M. Bil-