

Godfrey Morgan



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(Karianne Deckow)

GODFREY MORGAN

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An island to sell, for cash, to the highest bidder! said Dean Felporg, the auctioneer, standing behind his rostrum in the room where the conditions of the singular sale were being noisily discussed. Island for sale! island for sale! repeated in shrill tones again and again Gingrass, the crier, who was threading his way in and out of the excited crowd closely packed inside the largest saloon in the auction mart at No. 10, Sacramento Street. The crowd consisted not only of a goodly number of Americans from the States of Utah, Oregon, and California, but also of a few Frenchmen, who form quite a sixth of the population. Mexicans were there enveloped in their sarapes; Chinamen in their large-sleeved tunics, pointed shoes, and conical hats; one or two Kanucks from the coast; and even a sprinkling of Black Feet, Grosventres, or Flatheads, from the banks of the Trinity river. The scene is in San Francisco, the capital of California, but not at the period when the placer-mining fever was raging-from 1849 to 1852. San Francisco was no longer what it had been then, a caravansera, a terminus, an inn, where for a night there slept the busy men who were hastening to the gold-fields west of the Sierra Nevada. At the end of some twenty years the old unknown Yerba-Buena had given place to a town unique of its kind, peopled by 100,000 inhabitants, built under the shelter of a couple of hills, away from the shore, but stretching off to the farthest heights in the background-a city in short which has dethroned Lima, Santiago, Valparaiso, and every other rival, and which the Americans have made...

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