

**A TRAMP THROUGH
THE BRET HARTE
COUNTRY**

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A Tramp through the Bret Harte Country by Thomas Dykes Beasley

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THOMAS DYKES BEASLEY

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PLATE I
Ruins of Colonia,
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'Forever Associated
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FOREWORD

IN California's imaginary Hall of Fame, Bret Harte must be accorded a prominent, if not first place. His short stories and dialect poems published fifty years ago made California well known the world over and gave it a romantic interest conceded no other community. He saw the picturesque and he made the world see it. His power is unaccountable if we deny him genius. He was essentially an artist. His imagination gave him vision, a new life in a beautiful setting supplied colors and rare literary skill painted the picture.

His capacity for absorption was marvelous. At the age of about twenty he spent less than a year in the foot-hills of the Sierras, among pioneer miners, and forty-five years of literary output did not exhaust his impressions. He somewhere refers to an "eager absorption of the strange life around me, and a photographic sensitiveness to certain scenes and incidents." "Eager absorption," "photographic sensitiveness," a rich imagination and a fine literary style, largely due to his mother, enabled him to win at his death this acknowledgment from the "London Spec-