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Discoveries of Gold in California and Australia.

(Continued.)

UPPER ITALY, what is now the province of Astoria, in Piedmont, produced iron, gold and other metals, also the country around Aquileia, and the whole district of Noric Alps, now Illyria, was exceedingly rich in gold. At one period it was labored so extensively, that the great quantity produced caused a decrease of one-third in price through all Italy.

The mines of Hungary were worked about the year 745. The country most productive of silver in the remote ages, was the Spanish peninsula. If we may give credit to the historian, Agatharchidas, there was a time when the value of silver in Arabia was ten fold to that of gold, owing to the abundance of the latter and scarcity of the former metal. The silver mines near Carthage, in Spain, were very productive. Forty thousand workmen were constantly employed in them, the pay of whom was 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per day. The soil of Sicily has also contributed something to the aggregate of metallic wealth.

The passion for seeking gold by mining, has raged at certain periods in all ages of the world. Such

The mines of Sweden and Norway have continued to be productive of more silver than gold; they, however, have been of small comparative amount. Britain was so exhausted of silver and gold, or any metal in form of money, that the Saxon writers assert that they used what was called living money, say cattle of all kinds, including slaves.

In the reign of Henry IV, in 1442, by an act of Parliament, a pound of silver was ordered to be coined into thirty shillings, and thus the value of money became double that of our present currency. The increase of the precious metals had become gradual and sure, so that in 1484, Henry VIII, coined the pound of silver into 45 shillings. Again in the third year of Edward VI, 1550, when the pound was coined into 72 shillings—this, in a few years, was found to be a too extended value—it was reduced, when 60 shillings was coined from the pound, and this continued through the reign of Mary, to the forty-third of Elizabeth, when 62 shillings was coined to the pound, which has continued, with a recent exception, to the present time. As late as the end of the fifteenth century, about the time of the discovery of the mines of America, but before any considerable part of their product had circulated in Europe, a family of such distinction as to