

# California as it is & as it may be; or, A guide to the gold region

CALIFORNIA AS IT IS & AS IT MAY BE OR A GUIDE TO THE GOLD REGION

BY F. P. WIERZBICKI, M. D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY GEORGE D. LYMAN

*Drawings by Valenti Angelo*

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*To George D. Lyman for his Life of Wierzbicki and to Valenti Angelo whose drawings decorate its pages, The Grabhorn Press expresses its thanks for their assistance in the production of this book.  
Douglas S. Watson Editor*

*Ye Exiles, roaming through the world so helpless and long,  
When will your weary feet find rest, O  
broken-hearted throng!  
The wild dove finds its hidden nest, the worm its native clod,  
But Poland's son can only claim of earth a burial sod! — Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz.*

WIERZBICKI THE BOOK AND THE DOCTOR

*WE'RE going to get out a new edition of Wierzbicki's 'California,' " said Ed Grabhorn one night as we lingered after a Roxburghe Club meeting, "and I would like you to write the introduction."  
"Who was this Wierzbicki?" I asked. "I know next to nothing about him." "That's nothing*

*unusual,” laughed Ed. “With the exception of his book on California—and it was a first—and the fact that he was an exiled Pole and a physician, neither does anyone else.”*

vi

FELIX PAUL WIERZBICKI

*“An exiled Pole and a physician,” I repeated after him, “and he wrote a guide-book to the gold regions.” My curiosity was whetted. I wanted to know more about this medical man who had afforded California literature a starting-point. That night when I went home I climbed up to my book-room, took out of a locker a cardboard box in which I kept the rarest of my California imprints, snipped the strings that bound it and turned over the contents until I came to the booklet I was seeking—a square—looking pamphlet bound in orange-colored wrappers. I took it out of the box and held it to the lamp light to read the title-page:*

CALIFORNIA AS IT IS, AND AS IT MAY BE, or, A GUIDE TO THE GOLD REGION.

F. P. WIERZBICKI, M. D. SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

SECOND EDITION. SAN FRANCISCO:

Printed by Washington Bartlett, No. 8 Clay-Street. 1849.

*Even with all that high-sounding title-page it would hardly be called a book. It was more a pamphlet—small octavo in size, sewn loosely together with coarse white cotton thread, and bound crudely within the folds of what looked surprisingly like a sheet of orange-colored wallpaper—once glazed—now discolored. I counted the pages. There were seventy-six of them—sere and yellow, frayed and foxed. So old that as I opened them up they gave forth a musty odor. So brittle that as I turned them over a dog's-eared corner broke off and fluttered to the floor.*

Across the front cover, in fast-vanishing ink, I read an inscription left by a former owner: “The first book written in English to be printed North of Mexico and West of the Rockies.”

Directly below inprinted numerals was the date, “1849.”

That inscription challenged my attention. Could it be possible, I wondered, as I turned the book over, that this little pamphlet was the first book written in English and published in the West?

Surely the printed word in California had a greater antiquity than that. How about Jacob Baegert's "Nachrichten von der Amerikanischen Halbinsel Californien"? And Francisco Palou's "Vida del Venerable Padre Fray Junipero Serra"? I had always understood that the Padre had written the life of his benefactor Serra at the *Mission de los Dolores*, in 1787, and that it was the first book written in San Francisco. I was positive about it. But when I checked my surmise against the book itself, I found that, although the "Vida" was written in the San Francisco mission, it was *printed* in Mexico. Jesuit Baegert speaks for himself. Perhaps his book was written in California in 1772 but it was published in Mannheim. Then I recalled Zamorano's press, established at Monterey, California, in 1833. Surely that indefatigable printer had turned out the first book published in California. From George L. Harding's census of the Monterey Press, published in the June, 1933, issue of *California Quarterly* I had learned that Zamorano turned out seventy-four different printed items. Among them "Reglamento Provicional" and Figueroa's "Manifiesto." Both famed in California's printing annals. But when I reflected upon viii them I realized that, although they were printed in California, they were written in Spanish. Nothing from the Zamorano press could contradict the statement on the front cover of my Wierzbicki.

From them I turned my attention to the colossal output in books that flooded the market following the gold discovery on January 24, 1848. Surely in that deluge of ink and paper I would find one little book printed in California before Wierzbicki. I examined hundreds of them. Any one might have been written in California, but, without exception, every one was *printed* in "the States," France, England, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Russia, even in the Balkans! My survey convinced me of one thing: many a book on the subject of California antedated Wierzbicki's. Many of them had actually been written and published within the confines of California; but Wierzbicki's stood the test. It was the first book written in English to be published not only in San Francisco but in the state. And the further interesting thing about it was that it was conceived by a foreigner and a physician. On those several counts rests the distinction of Wierzbicki's book.

Yet not entirely. Practically all the others gave exaggerated, fantastic accounts of California and the Gold discovery—but not Wierzbicki's—his was couched in truthful terms and simple, clear language. It was exaggerations in the others that had provoked truth's purest distillation from him. "From this fact, and the interesting character of its contents, it is probably the most important book that was ever printed in California," wrote Henry R. Wagner, authoritative bibliographer of Plain and Rocky. From their shelves, I took down a number of auction catalogues. I wanted to find out what sort of a record Wierzbicki's book had made for itself in the auction room. I quickly discovered that as a piece of Californiana it had attained an outstanding position. With each year, its value had crescendoed. Cataloguers had vied with one another describing it. It was "scarce"—"out of the ordinary"—"absolutely unique"—"of excessive rarity"—"of superlative value." English as well as expletive was impoverished in its behalf.

"One of the best contemporary accounts of the early days of the gold rush," ran the legend describing the book at the Henry E. Huntington sale of Americana. At that auction, at Anderson's Galleries, New York, January, 1923, a copy of the first edition brought \$280. At the Braislin sale, the second edition of the same book, containing two more chapters than the first edition of the same year, one on the "Natives of California," another on "Medical Observations upon the People and Country," brought the fabulous sum of \$410.

Still another copy sky-rocketed to \$660.

I marveled at the book. At that rate each page of the pamphlet was worth about \$10! Every word had a market value of at least five cents! In three quarters of a century Wierzbicki had attained the rank of a best seller.

I found myself more curious than ever regarding Author Wierzbicki. Who was he? What had he been? I began a search for biographical data.

In Holynski's "La California," I found a paragraph. Holynski, a fellow Pole, had known Wierzbicki in California.

“Un Polonais," *he wrote*, “a eu la gloire, et je l'en remercie au nom de la Pologne, de commencer la litterature Californienne par un livre qu'on lit avec plaisir x et qu'on consultera toujours avec interet.”

*Except for that paragraph, and a brief mention in Bancroft's pioneer register, not another biographical word could I find about Author Wierzbicki.* I was puzzled how to proceed. In composing an introduction to the first book in English published in San Francisco, I wanted to have something definite to state regarding the author. I turned to the Abbatt reprint of Wierzbicki's second edition, published in 1927, for further information. His preface was an apologia. He had been unable to unearth anything but “meagre particulars.” He had enlisted the assistance of the Polish consul in New York to no avail. No one knew who Wierzbicki was. When or where he was born. When or how he died, or where he lay buried. I pored over the pages of his book. He certainly had the gift of observation. He could lay claim to accuracy. Historians averred that he gave the most truthful account of California in 1849. Physicians were indebted to him for sound conclusions on medical conditions of the country. Like his compatriot, Conrad, he had mastered a difficult language, and wrote it better than the average native. But that was telling little of the man, himself. If I could locate Wierzbicki's grave, I told myself, get the dates from the headstone—the place where he was born—the time when he died—I would have a beginning. With that information I could locate birth announcement—funeral notices—perhaps even find an obituary in San Francisco papers. Fortified with dates, Polish archives, as well as the Bancroft and the State Libraries, would give up their secrets. It was necessary that I have those dates. So, the next morning, I called the Board of Health by phone. xi “Have you,” I said to the mortuary statistician, “the death records of one, Dr. F. P. Wierzbicki, who was practicing medicine in San Francisco in 1849?”

I could hear the statistician making noises in his throat.

“Why, you know, all those files were destroyed at the time of the great fire in 1906.”

“Is there no record of any kind?” I pursued.

“Perhaps,” said the statistician. “If the doctor chanced to be buried by N. Gray & Company, the pioneer funeral directors of San Francisco, you will find a record of his interment in the ‘Book of the Dead’—their register of every burial they have made since 1850.”

On the wings of hope I flew to N. Gray & Company.

“I want to locate the grave of a Polish doctor—Felix P. Wierzbicki,” I told the young woman in the office at Gray’s. “Perhaps you have a record of where he was buried. He was born in Poland—so you’ll probably find him in the Catholic Cemetery.” I watched as she ran a slender finger down the index of the dead. “No,” she said, “not in the Catholic Cemetery. But—here he is, on Lone Mountain.” As she spoke she jotted some words on a slip of yellow paper and handed it across to me. I read:

“Laurel Hill—Chain Plot—Tier 3—Grave 55.”

I thanked her kindly and hurried away.

I hailed this discovery with considerable joy. Now, I told myself, I would learn who Wierzbicki was, where he was born, when he died. All anticipation, I headed my motor-car toward Lone Mountain.

Up Pine Street, through the Bush Street gates to Laurel Hill, I sped. At the office—braked to a stop.

“The Chain Plot,” I said to the superintendent. “I am looking for the Chain Plot.” At the same time visualizing xii to myself a greenswarded spot surrounded by low iron posts from which swung heavy black chains.

“The Chain Plot—“ repeated the superintendent, as if endeavoring to recall some long-forgotten part of Lone Mountain. “The Chain Plot? Oh yes—over the hill yonder—beyond the mausoleums of those Washoe millionaires.” He indicated a spot to the right. When I still hesitated, “Come along,” he said, “I’ll show you.”

Across a mound-marked turf, as undulating as waves on a sea, we walked. And as we walked I was telling the superintendent about Wierzbicki. How he wrote the first guide book to the gold region. That it was published in old San Francisco. That it was valued by book collectors and those who cherished an unvarnished account of California in 1849. About the Grabhorn reprint and the introduction I was hoping to write. “I must locate his grave,” I said conclusively, “and get the dates of birth and death from it. The introduction depends upon them. Without dates,” I assured him, “there is no possibility of preparing a suitable introduction.”

All this time we were climbing a weed-choked path. Wild birds were singing and scolding over their nests in nearby yews. Earthworms were burrowing through upturned sods. Gates sagged and grated on rusty hinges. Blades of grass, like points of green swords, poked their spears through the mold of last year's leaves. On every side was the continuous cycle—beginning—end—beginning again. “The bird has a nest—the worm a clod—each man a country,” I quoted, “but the exile only a grave surrounded by chains.”

We reached the brow of the hill. Over the high walls along California Street came the clangor of heavy traffic. Lone Mountain was far from being a peaceful spot. Beyond xiii roof-tops I could glimpse a blue expanse of Pacific—and the bar at the entrance to the Golden Gate.

Before a long, moldering heap of ruined turf the superintendent had come to a stop. “The Chain Plot,” he said, indicating the disarray before me.

“The Chains?” I asked. “Where are they?”

“Long since rusted away, and parted—too much fog and damp on Lone Mountain,” he said.

“Tier 3,” “I read from the yellow paper. The superintendent looked about. He couldn't even locate Tier 1. Everything was leveled or in the process of being leveled to the dust. “Eighty years is a long time in this damp,” he said. “Neither iron nor marble can weather mold. This is the first plot on Lone Mountain. The pioneers of old San Francisco lie here.” I looked over the walls and down

on the shining roofs of the city. And I wondered if anything still stood that these dusty tenants had builded.

There were graves all about us. To the right—to the left— before—behind—wrecked—uncared-for mounds and fell depressions. Marble slabs leaned this way—that. Some toppled half forward—some leaned far back—others, having lost their foundations, had pitched completely over. I peered into their ancient faces—trying to read their inscriptions — white — gray — rusty inscriptions. Repeating, as I did so: “Felix Paul Wierzbicki. Felix P. Wierzbicki,” that in the confusion of the new names my eyes rested upon, I might not forget the one I sought, “F. P. Wierzbicki—F. P. Wierzbicki. F. P. W.”

“Here's 55,” called the superintendent. I hurried forward. He was hovering over a sunken spot.

“The marker?” I asked.

“Wood,” he replied. To prove it, he picked up a nearby stick, crumbled it and blew away the dust with a breath.

**xiv**

I was disappointed. He turned to go. I had expected more from the Chain Plot. Exiled—and the doctor couldn't even claim a sod. The Polish poet had been wrong—the wild bird might have a nest—the worm a clod—any man a country—but Wierzbicki hadn't even a grave. I summed up the situation. There was nothing left of the doctor but a few hundred words the bibliomaniacs fought over in auction rooms. The book was worth \$600. But its author was not worth even a ruined gravestone.

Feeling a bit cynical, I returned down the weed-choked path. Down that same path up which Wierzbicki's friends had brought him to the Chain Plot, I thought. They didn't even put up a marker to his memory. A fine lot of friends! Back I threw a reproachful look. A clump of myrtle with shining leaves that was cascading over a low white marker, half hiding it, caught my eye.



“Back in a moment,” I said to the superintendent as I swept myrtle and sand aside, disclosing a low white stone on which was carved three initials: “F. P. W.” I read them again: “F. P. W.”

Shall I name the feeling that possessed me? It was extravagant. Perhaps Balboa, when he gazed on the bosom of the Pacific, felt it. Satisfaction, out of all proportion to the low white foot-marker I gazed upon, welled within me.

“Have you a knife?” I called.

In answer, the superintendent flashed forth a long pruning-knife. I grasped it by the haft and plunged the blade here and there into the mound until I felt, and heard, iron rasp against rock.

“There,” triumphantly from the superintendent as his ear caught the sound, “the headstone!” Together we rolled sand, dirt and myrtle aside. The base of a shivered funeral urn, from which the urn itself had been broken away, xv greeted our eye. But nothing more. That was disappointing.

I looked up. From a near-by tree—a spreading oak or cypress—a limb was missing. I had it. One night there had been a tempest on Lone Mountain with driving wind and pelting rain. That branch had snapped loose and fallen across Wierzbicki's grave, severing the chains, breaking the urn from its base, the stone from its foundation, and the slab, like a plummet dropped in water, had sunk foot first into soft unresisting sand and buried itself.

“Got a shovel?” I asked.

Deep into the mound I sank the blade. Again iron grated harshly against stone. I shoveled away the sand. The top of a marble slab disclosed itself—gray-colored—and, because it had been so long buried, slimy to the touch. We tugged at it, the superintendent and I. This way. That. It was slippery. There was nothing on which to get a hold. It resisted our combined efforts and scarcely budged. We grasped at it more firmly and moved it violently back and forth. I must have those dates.

Upward we pulled. The sand loosed its hold. We felt it give. With a sucking noise the square top of a marble slab emerged, ever so slightly, above the level of the mound. I leaned forward to read—shall I confess?—with what exultation:

#### SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF DR. FELIX P. WIERZBICKI

*I have never thought I could feel joy on reading the name of any man—not even an arch enemy—had I one—carved on his tombstone—let alone smile triumphantly while doing it. Yet when I beheld that of Wierzbicki a feeling closely akin to rejoicing seized me. I felt more like xvi shouting. I looked at the superintendent. He, too, was wreathed with satisfaction.*

“Higher-higher,” I called. “There is more carved below, and I can't read it yet.” The superintendent tugged with might and main, but made little impression. The sand sucked at the marker and it slipped out of sight. I went to his assistance. Like two possessed, we struggled with that piece of marble. Perspiration in riuets coursed down our faces. Sand sunk into our shoes. But little by little the sand slackened its hold. Inch by inch we raised the tablet. Again I leaned over to read: “Born in Charniawce, Poland, January 1, 1815 Died December 26, 1860 Highly esteemed by all who knew”

There I had it in a brief statement. What I had sought to know. The summation of Wierzbicki's life. The date of his birth. The period of the grave. And a concise appraisal of his life. The epitaph, not a flowery one such as a man like Wierzbicki would have despised, but a brief, austere one such as he would have approved. I was elated. Fortified with those dates, I told the superintendent, the rest would be possible. In the records at the Bancroft and State Libraries, and Polish archives, my problem would be solved.

So, as the tombstone pointed out, I found that Wierzbicki was born at Charniawce, province of Wolhynia, Southeast Poland, New Year's Day, 1815. His father was but just home from Napoleonic wars. A few days later Pan Wierzbicki took his infant son to the Catholic Chapel in the village and had him baptized Felix Paul.

Wierzbicki's father was known in Charniawce as a DZIEDZIC—a nobleman—the proprietor and heir of the village in which he lived. In the thatched cottages that xvii dotted his vast holdings lived the serfs who tilled his black soil and herded his cattle and geese.

Pan Wierzbicki sent Felix to the village school. When he was fifteen years old Felix was in high school preparing to enter the medical college at Warsaw. By that time, 1830, both school and university were hotbeds of revolution. Every boy in them had but one ideal, the breaking of the chains that bound Poland to Russia. In the dusk of a November twilight, with cries of “Death to Tyranny!” twenty university youths crept up the stairs of the Belvidere, bent on the assassination of the Grand Duke Constantine.

Revolution broke out. Immediately all Poland was aflame. Felix threw down his books to join a regiment that was being recruited in Wolhynia and marched away with the revolutionists.

At dawn, on the 10th of February, 1831, Felix went into his first battle, the memorable one of Grochow, fought within sight of the walls of Warsaw. It was a day of horror. On the 26th of May he fought in the terrible hand-to-hand conflict at Ostrolenka—a struggle fearful to witness. Felix called it a Polish victory but, as the Poles withdrew from the field, the Russians considered the victory theirs. Thus began the siege of Warsaw. On the 8th of September a white flag appeared above the ramparts and the hopes of Polish youth became a lost cause. To Felix the face of Poland was covered in dust.

Then Patriot Wierzbicki began to witness horrible things. By thousands his compatriots were exiled to Siberian Steppes. Suckling babes were snatched from maternal breasts and impaled on Cossack lances. All Poland resounded with the shrieks of her agonized women.

The regiment in which Felix had fought retreated into xviii Austrian Poland and Felix, as a revolutionist, was thrown into prison. The horror of the scenes through which he had lived left an indelible imprint upon his mind. “Is man eternally damned to political and spiritual bondage?” long

after, he cried. "Is the destiny of a freedom-giving Christianity to be despised by a times-serving priest-hood?"

In his reactions to the defeat Felix got it into his head that Jesuit aggressions had betrayed Poland's cause. "They have sapped the foundations of liberty," he stormed, "abolished truth with lies." In this frame of mind he renounced the faith of his fathers.

For three years Patriot Wierzbicki was interned in Austria. When he was nineteen he was liberated, not to return to his parents at Charniawce, but to go into life-long exile.

In 1834 he found himself in America. As a Polish exile, the Congress granted him a tract of farming land in the State of Illinois. But as a farmer the youthful Wierzbicki was not a success. He had no money with which to develop his grant. Penniless and alone, the exile was given a home in an American family. They were good people and helped him to acquire an education. Then he began teaching school so as to earn money sufficient to continue a medical education. For a while he taught French in a New England academy. To pursue still further the cause of medicine he wrote a book, "The Ideal Man — a Philosophical Treatise Between Two Friends Upon the Beautiful, the Good, and the True as Manifested in Actual Life." This was followed with elementary books on French, Polish, and German grammar. No stone was left unturned that would yield a medical degree.

## xix

Neither during these efforts did he forget his distressed country. Heart, pen and eloquence were always at her service. When the fifteenth anniversary of the breaking out of the Polish Revolution of 1830 was celebrated at a huge fete in New York he was one of the speakers of the occasion. During the same year he wrote four articles on Poland and her problems which were published in the American Whig Review. The first appeared in the May number. The last in the August. With these writings he hoped to make the calumnies cast upon his country redound upon the heads of her enemies.

At last, with the moneys obtained from writing and teaching, Felix entered upon his medical career and was graduated. Somewhere in Connecticut—say the Polish records. Where—when—who knows?

In the year 1846 Dr. Wierzbicki was practicing in Providence, Rhode Island. He was against drugging his patients with calomel and quinine as was the fashion of the day. Thus he became a pioneer of the principles of hydropathy. All pathological conditions, he claimed, would respond to water internally administered or externally applied.

Just as he was getting well started, out broke the Mexican War. President Polk was determined on the conquest of California. He appointed Jonathan D. Stevenson, a New York politician, Colonel of the California expeditionary forces and called for volunteers. Troops were wanted, he proclaimed, not only to free California but to occupy the province, as colonists, as soon as it was freed. The project of freeing California appealed to Dr. Wierzbicki. At the call he gave up his practice and hurried to New York to investigate.

There the doctor found his friend, Captain Francis xx Lippett, recruiting Company "F" of the *California Volunteers*. Wierzbicki enlisted on condition that he would be elected a sergeant of the company under Captain Lippett. At the same time he applied to the War Department for the post of regimental surgeon. On the morning of August 1st, Sergeant Wierzbicki in a neat uniform, gray pantaloons with scarlet stripe up the seam, a short blue coat with scarlet trimmings on the sleeves, and a zouave cap, marched with Company "F" through thronged New York streets to the Battery. A salute was fired. The regimental band played martial music. A vast concourse on wharves, vessels and along river front huzzahed wildly as Company "F" embarked for Governor's Island. From the government wharf on Governor's Island Sergeant Wierzbicki marched along the New York side of the Island to an open lawn on the south slope of Castle William. Here tents and tent-poles were supplied and Company "F" pitched their tents in two rows—one facing the other. The snow-white encampment on the green grass, with the frowning batteries above and the blue waters of the ocean beneath, presented a startling picture. It was broiling hot by the time Sergeant Wierzbicki had pitched his tent. Too hot to lie within its canvas walls. So, stretching out at full length, he flung

*himself on the greensward before his camp. On the same day Sergeant Wierzbicki was sworn in by an officer of the Regular United States Army. Guard duty commenced. From then on he drilled six hours daily. As Colonel Stevenson was anxious that only perfect specimens of manhood should be sent to California his regiment was subjected to a gruelling physical examination. One hundred and fifty of the rank and file were rejected xxi as physically unfit. As the remaining were barely over twenty, the New York papers dubbed them the "Baby Regiment."*

"Who goes there?" one night challenged the sentinel on duty.

"A friend," came the reply.

"Then say 'Newport,' or I'll shoot."

Came September 5th. The regiment was drawn up in hollow square formation. A chain of sentinels was needed to keep spectators at respectful distance. Dr. McVicar, the chaplain of the Island, made his appearance in the midst of the troops. Sergeant Wierzbicki's name was called. When he stepped up, Dr. McVicar presented him with a Bible. "In behalf of the American Bible Society," he said to Wierzbicki, "go to California not only with a sword, but with the olive branch of peace."

Applicants for the posts of surgeon and assistant surgeon of the California Regiment were so numerous that Sergeant Wierzbicki failed to obtain the coveted appointment. In view of this disappointment and his medical training, Colonel Stevenson detached him from Company "F" and made him Hospital Steward aboard the transportship *Loo Choo*. At the same time the Colonel advised him to retain his Sergeancy in Company "F" and offered hope of a future medical appointment. Secretly at dawn on September the 26th the California conquering flotilla with Hospital Steward Wierzbicki aboard the *Loo Choo* slipped down the Narrows. It was a noble sight. The *Perkins*, *Susan Drew* and *Loo Choo* had all yards manned, all sail spread. Fort Columbus, on Governor's Island, spat forth a parting salute. The *Loo Choo* returned the compliment. The regimental band played "The Girl I Left Behind Me." When the *Loo Choo* reached xxii Sandy

*Hook, the tugs cast her loose and hauled in their hawsers. As night closed in the Loo Choo was making ten knots an hour toward Cape Horn and the Golden Gate.*

Crossing the Gulf Stream, everybody aboard the Loo Choo was taken deathly ill. Hospital Steward Wierzbicki had his hands full bathing and compressing. One night a soldier in the delirium of fever jumped overboard and was lost. There followed the usual excitement of rounding Cape Horn: flying fish, racing dolphins, spouting whales and menacing icebergs. Hurricane alternated with doldrums, a girl baby was born to the wife of a sergeant—for there were a number of women on board—and christened “Alta California.” One of the finest lads in the regiment fell overboard and was drowned. One of the worst ne'er-do-wells was swept into the sea and saved.

Overcome with attending excitement, an officer had a stroke of apoplexy, died, was sewn in tarpaulins and given to the depths. For days, at the Equator, the Loo Choo was becalmed. Not a ripple on the sea, not a shred of canvas moved.

The Perkins and Susan Drew sailed on toward their destination.

It was an interminable passage—this voyage to California. Three months—four months—five months dragged on leaden keel. It seemed to Hospital Steward Wierzbicki that he would sail on forever. Came a March day of 1847. A sailor went aloft into the crow's nest.

“Land ho!” he shouted.

“Where away?” called the mate.

“Starboard bow,” came the reply.

That afternoon the headlands of California burst into view. Steadily the Loo Choo crept toward the Golden Gate. Standing at the gun wales on March 26, Hospital Steward xxiii Wierzbicki could see white caps breaking over the bar at its entrance. On shore, stretching away interminably, were sand dunes. One, a lone mountain, in their geographical center, overtopped all others.

As she glided through the Gate the Loo Choo had all sails set—even the topgallant. Over at Sausalito, taking in water, was a hide drogher. The Perkins and Susan Drew had already arrived. The Loo Choo dropped anchor opposite Clark's Point. From the gun wales nothing was in sight but sand hills as drear as any steppe in Siberia. Over them an ocean gale raced. In the running rigging of the Loo Choo, drawn taut as harp strings, it sang dirge like music.

Not even six months at sea could rob Yerba Buena's shores of their bleakness. In little valleys between sand dunes Hospital Steward Wierzbicki could see Spanish women in rebosos, *as gay as any shawl in Warsaw's Rynek*, washing clothes. On the waterfront was the one-story adobe of Howard and Mellus, and the Stars and Stripes floating over the old Custom House. Nothing else could he have seen, but crude corrals and a few adobes near shore. One superb spring morning Hospital Steward Wierzbicki was ordered ashore to get the kinks out of his legs. Blackbirds were thick in his path. They were birds of omen. He booted them out of his way for fear of stepping on them. Then he was marched straight up the hills back of Yerba Buena. On the summit burst into view that bleak area of wind-swept sand dunes that he had marked from the sea. In its geographical center loomed the lone mountain. Down the other side of the hills he marched and along a sloping stretch of beach to the ancient Spanish fort—the Presidio. The Presidio buildings were in wretched xxiv condition. Tile roofs had fallen in. Carriages had rotted from under guns that lay spiked and rusty where they had fallen.

On his arrival at the Presidio, Wierzbicki found himself reduced to the ranks. That was a blow. There had occurred a vacancy in the medical corps. But, forgetful of his promises, Colonel Stevenson filled the post with a man who had acted as hospital steward aboard one of the other transports. Private Wierzbicki felt aggrieved. He had been deceived. He was better qualified to fill the vacancy than the man appointed. There was no hope now of becoming an army surgeon. Worse, he had been reduced to the ranks without cause and with no forewarning of the blow that was in store for him. On March 31st, by official orders, he was transferred from Captain Lippett's Company to Company “H.” But the crowning catastrophe came when Private Wierzbicki was put to work making the Presidio barrack habitable for the troops that were to hold San Francisco.



There followed for Private Wierzbicki a monotonous run of days—of tides and ebbs—of reveilles and taps. For six hours a day—three in the morning, three in the afternoon—he drilled on the slippery adobe of the parade.

By April 12, 1847, Private Wierzbicki could stand it no longer. He sat himself down and penned an appeal to his Excellency, Governor-General S. W. Kearny, the only authority in California that could release him from his “sad position.” He wrote in the third person. “It would have been under any circumstance, the remotest from his mind to enter any army as a private; and that, at this moment, thus seeing himself placed by a concatenation of causes not foreseen by him,—he sees his future prospects are blasted, particularly so, if he be retained in service as xxv long as it may be necessary for the country to retain the regiment.

“The undersigned knows that in his present capacity he cannot render the country any service which cannot be rendered much better by thousands of others, while if he be released from the service, he may serve his country in a much more efficient manner as his professional pursuits would enable him to promote good feelings between the natives of California and the citizens of the United States.

“Under the circumstances the undersigned feels himself constrained to ask not for reinstatement in the office of Sergeant to which he was legally elected—but for a full discharge from the service—believing that neither his adopted country would require from him such a sacrifice of personal interest that might involve the prospects of his whole life—as this blasting of his professional career would imply—nor would his General doom him to such a fate.”

General Kearny lent a sympathetic ear to Private Wierzbicki's appeal. “There being no vacancy of (a medical capacity),” wrote the General, “his situation is a very disagreeable one and his case, one of great disappointment,” and he referred the matter to Colonel J. D. Stevenson.

“I have no knowledge whatever of any promises ever having been made Sergeant Wierzbicki as to medical employment,” retorted the Commander. “I have no hesitation in saying that he is perfectly useless as a soldier and in that capacity can be of no service to the Government.”

On April 28, 1847, by special order No. 10, Hdqrs. 10th Military Dept., Calif., Private Wierzbicki was discharged and returned to civil life.

Next, Dr. Wierzbicki was visiting in Sonoma with General xxvi Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo at his place Lachryma Montis. *So greatly did the General appeal to the doctor that he gave him a copy of his work, "The Ideal Man."* Then came January 24, 1848, and the discovery of gold on Rio de los Americanos. And Wierzbicki was off to the rich diggings and the rowdy town on Mokelumne Hill—some two hundred miles inland. Four months panning gold-dust on the river followed. The doctor was in his element in the diggings, indulging his hobby for metals to his heart's content. He made no money but he developed a formula for the miner: "Wherever there is oak, there is apt to be gold. When oak give place to pine, quartz 'pinches out'." The doctor made the best of those days of freedom, rambling over the Sierra in every direction, even crossing them to the verge of the Great Desert. In the wake of freedom stalked economic pressure forcing the doctor back to San Francisco. There he acquired sand lots, built an office, and hung out a shingle:

FELIX P. WIERZBICKI

PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON

Then commenced busy medical days. About the premises, Wierzbicki was forced to be nurse as well as doctor. His practice smacked of the emergency type; gun-shot and knife wounds preponderated, although there was typhoid and dysentery aplenty. All his cases he handled successfully on the principles of hydropathy. He was still against drugs. Calomel, quinine and opium particularly—still the three chief weapons of every medical man of the period. Opiates masked disease. Quinine reduced fever, that was all. As for calomel he was against the idea that it was of help in biliary conditions. He took a prominent xxvii part in the formation of the first

medical society in San Francisco. From his pen in 1856 came the first paper on medical history to be published in the state.

Besides writing and practicing medicine, the doctor found time during quiet periods to indulge his hobby for treating metals. He developed his knowledge to the point that his services were often in demand by the United States branch mint in San Francisco. He was working there late in December, 1860, when he was taken down with a cold.

At the time he was living at Mrs. Leland's—a boarding house for men—at 190 California Street between Kearny and Dupont Streets, for thus the numbers then ran. His cold grew worse. On a day, shortly before Christmas, he found himself so ill that he could not go to work. His friends sent for a doctor to examine him. “Congestion of the lungs,” diagnosed the medic. “You must stay in bed and take these medicines,” he said to the patient; and he left several prescriptions behind him. But Patient Wierzbicki had little confidence in drugs and refused to have the prescriptions filled. Hydrotherapy was the only thing that would help him. He was gradually recovering when he decided that he must have a vapor bath. A favorite Muscovite remedy in these cases, he said.

Without the knowledge of friend or physician, he hid himself to a Turkish bathing establishment. His doctor heard of it and remonstrated with him. But, strange to say, if anything, Wierzbicki found himself much better when he awakened on Christmas morning. His improvement convinced him of the efficacy of vapor baths.

It was a beastly rainy Christmas morning. Feeling so well, Patient Wierzbicki chafed about staying in bed any longer. Outside, foghorns blew warningly and wind was xxviii whispering about the eaves. But the storm left the patient unimpressed. His vast improvement convinced him that another Turkish bath would cure him entirely. Out of bed he hopped, threw on his clothes, and let himself out the door onto California Street. By then rain was pouring down in sheets.

Hours later, the patient crept back to his room in great distress. Heart—stomach—what matter? He was in agony. He poured himself out a powerful emetic, gulped it down and threw himself, exhausted, upon his bed and gradually sank under the ordeal. Two hours after midnight—December

26, 1860—the date carved on that marble headstone in the lee of Lone Mountain—Patient Wierzbicki drew his last breath.

It was December the 27th that those friends who esteemed him so highly left the doctor in a well-ordered grave in the Chain Plot. It was acknowledged as the choicest spot on Lone Mountain—the best kept—the only one surrounded with black chains. But according to his friends nothing was too good for Felix Wierzbicki. When it developed that the doctor had left no estate these friends clubbed together and provided a white-marble slab for his head, the eulogy, a lowly marker and a clump of myrtle for his feet.

So have I followed Felix Paul Wierzbicki from New Year's Day, 1815, to Christmas night, 1860, and now I go back to the illustrious part he played in the summer of that glamorous year 1849. The fame of James Marshall's discovery had been heralded far and wide. Sailing ships from every quarter of the globe blocked San Francisco Bay with masts. Men of every tongue—incoherent between wonder and despair—were making babel of the streets. They had been led astray by false reports, xxix they complained. They had been betrayed by exaggerations. The good luck of a few has been magnified into a possibility for them. Their sufferings aroused Wierzbicki. “Shall lies have the mastery over truth?” It was criminal to broadcast false accounts about the mines—to mislead people. He wanted to rectify those feverish statements. He decided to write a book and to tell the truth about California.

So he set to work. He wrote for days, for months. When the manuscript was finished he turned it over to Washington Bartlett, No. 8, Clay Street, to do the printing. Swiftly Bartlett turned out a small octavo-sized book of sixty pages.

Its leaves are crisp and fresh smelling. It is sewn with cotton thread. There is no bindery. So Bartlett binds the book with a square of orange-colored wallpaper. The book is an epitome of truth. It causes a great commotion along Clay Street. It is the first, original book written in English to be published in California. Men are curious about it.

Along Montgomery Street copies sell like hot cakes at five dollars a copy. Men like the truth! Respect it! Copies are broadcast over the world. The edition is exhausted. A second one is called for. To this one Wierzbicki sees fit to add additional matter: a chapter on “the Natives of California”—and because he is a medic and feels he can give other physicians useful advice—a final chapter on “Medical Observations Upon the People and Country.”

The second edition contains seventy-six pages. The sale of the book continues unprecedented. The newspaper scribes write glowing accounts of it. The Alta says that Wierzbicki's book is all that “it professes to be, with a good deal of authorship thrown in. It reviews the present condition of the country, its inhabitants and future prospects xxx in a clear, concise and truthful manner. The author has for nearly three years resided in this ‘land o' cakes,’ and is consequently well capacitated to carry out the fruitful topic on which he engaged several months since; added to this Dr. Wierzbicki is a scholar who has acquired not only a professional name, but is a clever writer, a scientific gentleman and a keen observer...”

Extracts from his book appear in the columns of all leading California papers. The sale is unprecedented for a first literary venture. It brings to its publisher some 8- to \$10,000. Of course Wierzbicki profits very little by it. But the doctor is happy. He has told the truth about California. And truth, says the philosopher, shall make us free.

The chains have rusted and fallen away. The sand shroud has returned to cover his headstone; but the birds still sing on Lone Mountain—and in his book Felix Paul Wierzbicki, the Polish exile, and physician, defies the passing of Time.

GEORGE D. LYMAN.

*While writing this sketch of Dr. Wierzbicki, I happened upon the name of Mieczislaus Haiman, author of Poland and the American Revolutionary War,” and assistant editor of the Polish Union Daily, Chicago. To Mr. Haiman, I gratefully acknowledge assistance in rounding out my picture. Also, am I indebted to Mr. John Newbegin; to Mr. Charles Yale of Los Angeles; to*

*the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress; to Mr. George Barron of the De Young Memorial Museum; to Miss Elizabeth Lyman for photographing Wierzbicki's grave; to Miss Mabel Gillis, Miss Caroline Wenzel and Miss Eudora Garoutie of the State Library; and to Miss Martin of the Bancroft Library. But my greatest debt of gratitude goes to my capable secretary, Miss Katharine Cusick. G. D. L.*

CALIFORNIA AS IT IS AND AS IT MAY BE

## **PREFACE**

THE residence of several years in the country together with his familiarity with its whole extent, not excluding the Gold Regions in which he passed more than four months rambling over its mountains, and even crossing the Sierra Nevada to the verge of the great Western Desert, give the writer of these pages a degree of confidence in the belief that by presenting this work to the public, notwithstanding the numerous books that have already appeared upon the subject, he supplies the desideratum so much needed at this moment, and renders justice to California that of late suffered a little in her reputation by the indiscretion of some of her friends.

THE AUTHOR.

SAN FRANCISCO, SEPT. 30, 1849.

## **PREFACE**

TO THE SECOND EDITION

IT is Said that a good face is a good letter of introduction to a stranger. Acknowledging the truism that good appearances influence man's judgment at first-sight on many occasions, before he ascertains the real merits of an object, we feel somewhat constrained, should our reader be inclined to find fault with the *modest* attire of our work, to call his attention to the *material* difficulties and

cost in the way of printing books in California, and we have no doubt he will be willing to excuse any deficiency that may be found in the *physique* of the volume.

It is the fashion with many writers of the day to write books for the benefit of the printer rather than the reader, either because they have no time to make concise books, “books that are books,” or because they design to impose upon the simple by a *portly* appearance of a folio, stooping to be measured by the quantity of words rather than ideas. Circumstances and our own inclinations led us to a different course, and our aim was to be brief, but convey as much as it was material to the subject we happen to touch upon.—We might have held the reins of our fancy loose, and let her ramble over the “lakes, rivers and green sward,” but we remembered that we were writing for men of business, who wish to have the questions they propound answered in a direct and concise manner. We trust we have not missed our object, and the reader will find that most of those questions which he would put to a friend familiar with the country we treat upon, are answered in this volume in some shape or other.

In this Second Edition of our work, we thought fit to introduce some additional matter, at the end of the former volume, judging it capable of giving some useful hints to some, at least, of our readers.

THE AUTHOR. SAN FRANCISCO, *December* 30, 1849.

1

CALIFORNIA AS IT IS AND AS IT MAY BE

### **THE COUNTRY & ITS RESOURCES**

THE country lying between the *Sierra Nevada* and the Pacific Ocean, & bounded at the north, though somewhat indefinitely, by the Oregon Territory, and at the south by the Lower California, confined by the late treaty of the two neighboring Republics to the line three miles south of San Diego, is known as Upper California, & country now engrossing the attention of the civilized world with its future importance. There is no other instance known in history where a country just emerging so to say, from obscurity, immediately acquired such complicated and multifarious

relations, not only to the nation of whose territory it is only a small portion, but to the whole civilized world, as California 2

#### INCOMPARABLE CALIFORNIA

has. In view of these various relations, we propose here to consider the subject of Upper California.

Before California can answer all those expectations, the realization of which the world with good reason looks for, an increase of population must be secured for her. To effect which it will not be very difficult, if to its natural advantages, the government of the Union will add its efforts to promote by every legislative and administrative measure the influx of new settlers. But in all its proceedings, liberality should be its motto, and none of that miserly policy that is afraid of losing an acre from its lands or a dollar from its treasury.

California holds in its bosom resources that no other country can boast of comprised in so small a territory—its mineral wealth, its agricultural capacity, its geographical position, conspire to make it in time one of the most favored lands. And it will lie in the power of the government either to accelerate or retard the unfolding of its future importance. When considered in point of mineral productions, if allowed to be developed by capitalists, California is capable of becoming an important centre of the commerce of the Pacific. Here we find in the neighborhood of the Clear Lake, about a hundred and twenty-five miles north of Sonoma, Lead, Copper, Sulphur and Saltpetre; on the south side of San Francisco Bay, Silver-mines have been found in the vicinity of Pueblo de San Jose; Quick-silver mines which are pronounced to be richer than those of Spain, are already being worked to a great profit in the same region; Coal strata have been also found in the coast range of mountains near Santa Cruz, in the neighborhood of the Mission San Luis Obispo, and near San Diego. California Coal seems to be in the 3

#### AGRICULTURAL POSSIBILITIES

intermediate state between the anthracite and the bituminous; it is not as hard as the former nor so soft as the latter; it burns more easily than the first, and does not give out so smoky and unpleasant a flame as the second; it ignites easily and burns with a very pleasant flame without much smoke. Iron is scattered through the mountains of the country, and we have no doubt that a workable mine of it will before long be discovered. We mention not the gold washings that are being worked so



successfully at present, for as respects their duration and the development of the industry of the country, they scarcely deserve the attention of the economist be they ever so rich; as all other mines are more beneficent in their influence to the progress of a country than gold mines. These will become the means of advancing the prosperity of the country only when a regular system of mining by sinking shafts into the rocks shall commence, which it is to be hoped will be done ere long.

The labor expended in working these various mines would give a firm support to the agriculture of the country, which at this day is totally neglected. There is no country, probably, where the soil is so grateful to the hand that cultivates it. There is almost no plant, grain, or fruit that cannot be raised here. Rye grows wild on the skirts of the gold region towards the *Sierra Nevada*; oats cover completely the coast range of the mountains; wheat and corn grow luxuriantly on all the plains, notwithstanding it rains only in the winter season; potatoes, onions and every other kind of garden vegetables with very little care grow to a very large size and of excellent flavor. Some of these vegetables can be kept growing all the year round, such as onions, 4

#### CULTIVATION OF THE VINE

peas, and some others. Every description of fruit trees seem to be natural to the soil, for they attain here a great perfection. The apple, the peach, the pear, the apricot, the fig, the cherry, the plum, the grape, the pomegranate, the citron, the orange, the olive, the currant, the gooseberry and various other berries are found here either cultivated or in a wild state. The inhabitants of the country have not done much towards the culture of any fruit trees or shrubs; and that is the reason the quantity of any fruit is very limited, when compared with the wants of the population and the capacities of the soil. Knowledge and industry with very little exertion would increase the quantity not only to supply the wants of the country but even to a super-abundance. The pear and the olive seem to have been the favorite fruit with the priests of the Missions, as they have raised them in large quantities and of excellent quality. The California olive is among the largest known, and in flavor surpasses that of France; the varieties of the pear are numerous and delicious in quality. The grape vine grows throughout the country, from the extreme north down to San Diego. Excellent grape is produced at Sonoma, at the Mission of San Jose, and some other points. The best however, or where it was made the best use of is that of the Pueblo de los Angeles. The wine produced there by several vine

growers is of excellent quality; in the opinion of many judges in the matter, it is superior to any wine that Spain or Portugal can produce. Its color, its flavor, and its strength are *sui generis*; it wants only to be known to be sought after by *amateurs*; and there is no doubt but its culture and the exportation of it will extend rapidly with the increase of commerce on this coast. 5

#### SHEEP AS A SOURCE OF WEALTH

The most celebrated wine at present is that made by M. Vignes, a French gentleman who settled in the country some fifteen years ago and was the first to plant a vineyard in this region. There are two qualities of it, red and white; the latter is more inviting than the former by the very beauty of its color. The growing of the grape vine and of the olive may be made a very profitable branch of foreign commerce, if there were men to attend to the business; settlers from the south of Europe could develop this branch of industry to great advantage, and could not fail to make themselves opulent. There are in the country appropriate spots for the culture of rice and the sugar cane: the former could be easily raised on the overflowed lands of the San Joaquin and on the creeks of San Francisco Bay. Cotton even might be raised here, but we think one could employ his time more profitably in some other business, as cotton is so cheap elsewhere. Hemp grows wild in different parts of the country.

There is yet another branch of industry at which we have not heretofore so much as hinted, but which would prove for California one of the richest mines of which she could boast; we mean the raising of sheep. The climate of the country and much of its surface are admirably adapted for the purpose; in fact, as it proved a source of wealth to New South Wales, it would be equally so to California; a great similarity of climate of the two countries guarantees the result. In this way every portion of the country would be turned to advantage; the mountains now lying barren would be a grazing ground for the sheep; and the valleys now trodden exclusively by cattle and horses would be given up to the plough, and there would be no more live stock 6

#### CLIMATE AND HEALTH

raised than the actual wants of the country require. Merino rams could be easily procured from Oregon, Peru, or even New South Wales, to improve the native breed of the sheep. He who enters

upon this business the first will lay the foundation for a colossal fortune which he can realize in a few years.

The face of the country being broken up into mountains and having large valleys separating the two coast ranges of mountains into the sea coast range on the west, and the spurs of the Sierra Nevada on the east, offers an ample ground for the shepherd and agriculturist. The valleys south of San Francisco Bay lie almost parallel with the sea coast, gradually receding with it in a south-east direction. This gives an opportunity for the north-west winds, which prevail on the coast, to sweep over them, and thus temper the heat of the sun, renovate the air, and carry away over the snowy mountains any miasmata that might be suspended in the atmosphere, and which if left undisturbed might prove a prolific source of disease. This accounts for the extreme healthiness of the sea coast of California. The portion of the country that is less salubrious than the rest of it is confined between the Sacramento and the San Joaquin; fevers seem to be dominant there, yet even there people can get acclimated and enjoy good health for years. In point of climate San Francisco and San Diego present a striking contrast. The former being so much exposed to the north-west winds has a very disagreeable temperature; but it is nothing more than disagreeable, as fogs and winds have their periods there; it is however, far from being unhealthy; with ordinary care and prudence, one in a few months gets acclimated, and cannot but enjoy perfect health. Its 7

#### PROVISIONS FOR WHALERS

winter, notwithstanding the rains, is more agreeable than its summer, when fog and chilling winds prevail. This climate extends only the length of the bay; it improves as we recede farther south. On the contrary, in San Diego the climate is most delicious and equable; neither enervating by excessive heat, nor disagreeable on account of northern blasts. Rains are scanty, yet vegetation is luxuriant wherever the soil is good.

We may observe here in regard to the climate of California in general, that for the sake of health, summer dress should be entirely dispensed with; the nights throughout the coast are cold, and every new comer is more liable to suffer through neglect of this precaution than even the natives. Woolen

dress is never oppressive here, but always beneficial. Strangers, if they suffer, owe their illness to the oversight of this fact, together with the excesses that some of them commit.

The agriculture of a country should be made the basis of every branch of industry and trade; these latter should, so to say, feed the springs of the former. In California every facility is offered to the farmer. The working of the various mines will guarantee him a profitable sale of all his productions. The exterior commerce naturally following the working of mines, will equally contribute its share in favor of the agriculturist. The American whalers scattered throughout the Pacific Ocean to the number of nearly 700, will come to California for fresh provisions if they have the security that they will run no risk of losing their crews on their arrival there. It will be the duty of the Federal Government, as well as of the local authorities, to devise measures that will give this security to all shipping. The government squadron that will be constantly 8

#### THE RAILROAD PROPHESED

stationed in the Pacific, will also draw its provisions from California as soon as she shall be able to furnish them, since it will be less expensive to the Government, and more beneficial for the service; for much of the stores that are now shipped round Cape Horn at considerable expense, become unfit for use by the time they are wanted by the Navy.

Such are the unfailing sources from which the labor of the farmer will be liberally paid; but they are not the only ones. Every year will see them expand and always working for the advantage of the agriculturist. It is not necessary to be gifted with an extraordinary foresight to predict that as soon as the industry and enterprise of the Americans take a fair footing on this soil, the commerce of the country will grow daily; the trade with China, with the Islands of the Pacific, and with the whole western coast of America will be ere many years, in the hands of American citizens resident in California, which will be made a *depot* of the industry of the whole Union. To swell this commercial tide beating against the shores of California comes the railroad that must inevitably be built across the territory of the Union, and whose terminus must be on the Bay of San Francisco. It may take many years before this work will be accomplished, but we have no doubt of its being sooner or later entered upon. We have a particular right to express our faith in the accomplishment of the work, as we were the first, at least to our knowledge, who, five years ago, prophesied on a

public occasion, the union of New York with San Francisco by means of the iron bars laid across the continent. At that time it was more difficult to foresee than it is now, and probably those who then smiled at 9

#### A FARMER'S PARADISE

our enthusiastic visions of the future, will now agree with us that the time is not far removed when the Pacific shore railroad will pass into the facts of history. The accomplishment of this work will appear less difficult when we consider that one half of the proposed railroad is already built—we mean the distance from New York to Natchez. Now, combining all the results of the different branches of industry above spoken of, and which can and will be exercised in this territory whenever there shall be a sufficient number of inhabitants for the work, is it difficult to foresee the part California is to perform in the civilized world? And all this will ultimately turn to the especial benefit of the tiller of the soil. The country can sustain several millions of inhabitants with the greatest ease possible. The apparent drawback upon the agriculture of the country in the eyes of a farmer from the States is the comparative scarcity of timber and water; and he is more disagreeably impressed, if, arriving by land, he beholds, first of all, the extensive plains of the Sacramento.—Should he come from Oregon he feels home-sick, and is willing almost immediately to turn upon his heels for his well wooded home. But the Sacramento plains are not the best representatives of the country; they are good only for a scanty population; the want of an abundant supply of wood and water is only apparent at first sight, and particularly to those whose first idea of farming is to clear away the woods from the land they are to settle upon. The same time which the farmer in Oregon devotes to the clearing of land can be, if necessary, devoted to looking for and securing a lasting spring of water that may answer for all farming purposes—a thing very easily done, if one possesses a little 10

#### ABUNDANT WATER

knowledge and industry. We can say safely, that there is hardly a spot in California on which water can not be found if looked for; although frequently on the surface there may be no signs of it, yet the ground, notwithstanding this, is so percolated with it that it needs, comparatively speaking, but little labor to strike upon a lasting spring. We doubt not that those who have means would find it profitable to sink an artesian well, if the land requires it, which work would not be very expensive

here, because there is never an occasion to go very deep in search of water in California. By what we have said we do not mean to imply that the necessity for these wells will be felt throughout the country; far from it—there are not only numerous streams in the hills that never dry up, offering fine mill sites, but others that wash the plains can be turned to agricultural purposes with all ease. At one time, when California was under the direction of the Spanish priests, it was like a garden; but the Mexican misrule blasted it like the northern wind when it breathes upon a budding flower. Those who have not seen such things before, would be surprised at finding wheat and corn, the principal grains that are raised here, growing luxuriantly in plains where there are but scanty rains. We have seen excellent potatoes grow on a slope of a hill in the Bay of Monterey. This is undoubtedly owing to the moisture brought from the sea by winds, nightly dews, and to the fact that the sub-soil is always more or less moist. There is a remarkable advantage in the climate of California for the farmer; the seasons and their peculiarities are so well known that he can count almost with certainty upon the results of his rural labors.

Although timber cannot be found on every spot that 11

#### FORESTS WILL SUPPLY TIMBER

is arable, yet we may safely assert that there is a sufficient quantity of it through the country to satisfy all the wants of the inhabitants that are yet to settle here. The coast range of mountains from Oregon down, is quite plentifully wooded; particularly near Bodega on the north and Santa Cruz on the south side of the Bay of San Francisco. There are already from six to eight saw-mills in the country, and there is yet room for more. In fact, in our opinion, if the American farmer gets rid of his *stereotyped* notions of farming, and using his intelligence, adapts himself to the climate and the state of the country, he will reap a golden harvest much more abundant than anywhere else; and even we would go farther and assert that he will do so with much less labor than in any of the States.

In connexion with the farming interest we cannot overlook the excellent state of natural roads throughout the country. A good road enables the farmer to dispose of his produce and greatly diminishes his rural labors. There are but a few, if any, countries that can boast of so good natural roads as California. From San Francisco down to San Diego, a carriage may pass along the valleys

almost upon a beaten track, although everything in relation to roads is at present completely neglected. In Spanish times they were in a better state, for the priests then used to make their journeys to San Diego in carriages all along the coast. A very little labor would make them even now all that roads need be.

Not less important to the farming interest, as to every interest in the country, is a railroad uniting the States on the east side of the Rocky Mountains with the Pacific shores. The advantages of such a National work are numerous, and if the people and the government 12

#### CALIFORNIA'S COMMERCIAL FUTURE

of the Union understand fully its importance, they will lose no time in undertaking it. The practicability of the work is not to be questioned; the country through which it *should* pass, and the energy and enterprise of the American citizens are sufficient guarantees for its feasibility. The immense advantages in a commercial point of view to be derived from such an enterprise are indisputable. The trade of China, of the islands of the Pacific and the whole Western coast of America, will be brought so much nearer the Union that it will not fail to pour immense wealth into her lap. She will become really a formidable commercial rival of Great Britain, and a common carrier to the whole of Europe. It will bind the whole Union with more indissoluble ties; the sectional interests of each State will be mingled and merged in the common interest made fast to the Pacific shore. To California individually, such a railroad will be of great consequence, as it will make it a centre of an extensive commerce, and will bring to her a sufficient population to develop all her internal resources. Once before we have indicated the route for such a railroad, and we will take this opportunity to enforce it upon the public still more, as farther reflection and information upon the subject enables us to do even with more reason than before. The projected railroad across the continent should start from the Mississippi near the mouth of the Ohio, or at such a point that the navigation will never be liable to be interrupted by ice; thence to the vicinity of the Arkansas; thence along the prairie ridge which separates the waters that flow into the Arkansas from those which flow into the Mississippi and Missouri, to 13

#### TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILWAY

the point where the road passes from Missouri to New Mexico, and by *San Miguel* to *Santa Fe*; thence up the valley of the *Rio del Norte* to the mouth of the Abaca creek; thence up the creek to the town of the same name, and thence through a pine forest of low sandy hills ninety miles in length to the *Rio de la Plata*, which is a tributary of the *San Juan*. The latter is a tributary of the *Colorado*. It should cross the *Colorado* to the northwest side and proceed along the trail from *Santa Fe* to California to a point between the *Mahahve* river and the *San Bernardino* mountain; thence through about ten miles of low hills to the great valley of the *San Joaquin*; thence down that magnificent and fertile valley, about five hundred miles on a level, to the tide water of the Bay of San Francisco. By this route the road will pass over a dead level of about eight hundred miles at the eastern end, and about five hundred miles at the western; it will have *no mountains to cross*, will be nearly free from snow in all parts, will afford, for New Mexico, an outlet to both Oceans, and terminate at the best part of the western coast of America. The point of the terminus of the railroad is by an accident, so to speak, already selected with a good deal of discernment; it is called the New York of the Pacific, situated at the upper part of the Bay of San Francisco, known here as Suisun Bay. An enterprising company, at the head of which is Col. Stevenson, have bought a tract of land at the mouth of the *San Joaquin*, where it mingles its waters with those of the Sacramento, and are already building a town. Its situation for the terminus of the railroad is very advantageous; it is level; has abundance of land to expand upon; it is in the neighborhood of grazing farms; its climate is 14

#### TRADE WITH MEXICO

healthy, as is the rest of the south bank of the San Joaquin; well-water can be found there within a few feet of the surface; the river is deep enough to admit large vessels dose to the shore, and its water here is fresh and sweet; ships can water here with the greatest facility. The vessels going up the Sacramento pass within sight of it. It is a spot very judiciously selected for a town, and we have no doubt it will grow, as the proprietors spare no efforts to make it acceptable to new settlers.

But the railroad should not stop here; it should branch away along the shore to the point where now the town of *Martinez* is being laid out,—a very pretty site facing the straits of Carquinez; thence it should strike the valley of San Jose—one of the richest spots In California and which would support a million of industrious inhabitants—and following along the coast terminate at San Diego.



The advantages of uniting the two opposite points of the country by means of a railroad, will not only help its speedy settlement—an important consideration in many respects—but will be equal to gaining a free port on the coast of Mexico for the exclusive benefit of American citizens. By the means of *Santa Fe* and *San Diego*, should the railroad be constructed as indicated above, the Union will have the command of the largest share of the Mexican trade.

So far as we know, and we have taken considerable pains to ascertain the fact, we may assert that there is no better route for a railroad from the States to California. No other passage through the *Sierra Nevada* can be found but the one we have indicated. There is none to be found between the heads of the Sacramento 15

#### NECESSARY HIGHWAYS

and San Joaquin rivers. We have rambled over that region, and the conformation of the country gives us confidence in saying that it is not at all favorable to such a passage; and besides, supposing that such a passage could be found, a single fact in relation to the subject will destroy all hopes of effecting the object; we mean that from the line where the auriferous region terminates, to the very ridge of the *Sierra Nevada*—the region of granite, occasional lime-stone, and masses of sandstone; snow lies for six months, accompanied with intense cold; the depressions of the mountains are filled up with it to such a degree that the tops of the highest trees only peep through it as if they were but so many insignificant bushes. In fine, the snow levels the tops of the mountains into a continuous plain, as it were, through which the melting sun alone, by degrees, can effect a passage towards the end of June or the beginning of July. This is the time when the Snowy Mountains can be traversed. The government a few weeks ago sent an expedition in search of such a passage through the Northern portion of the gold region about the head of the Sacramento river. We feel sure that the attempt will be fruitless.

It would be well, on the part of the government, to look for passages for military roads leading from the States to the Pacific, or to take advantage of those already discovered. There ought to be at least three such roads; one leading to Oregon, another to the north of California, striking at the head of the Bear Creek, and the third taking a southerly course to San Diego. These roads would offer great

facilities to the emigrants from the States, who never should take the same track in large companies, on account of the scantiness of grass. 16

#### MILITARY POSTS & ROADS

The military posts thus established would keep in check the roving tribes of Indians, offering security to the emigrants. There is already, considering the character of the country through which it passes, a very good road made by the renowned mountaineer, Greenwood, leading by the head of *Tuba* and striking at the *Bear Creek* valley, till it reaches Johnson's farm on the confines of the plains. This road may be made better and much shorter, if it should follow from the ridge at the head of Bear Creek valley, striking at the head of the north fork of the same creek, and following it along a little towards the Yuba side, then again turning towards the Bear Creek, and continuing so till the hills acquire a more confused outline, and finally striking Johnson's farm. By this route the journey would be shortened several days, and the difficult descent at the junction of the North Fork of the Bear Creek with the same creek would be avoided.

The military roads thus disposed would give a security to the settlements from horse thieving Indians, who now frequently make incursions upon them, carrying away herds of horses and mules, and sometimes even pick up an unwary traveller on his journey. The present disposition of the troops is of no real service to the country. They are stationed in comfortable and quiet quarters in towns where they are the least wanted, and the thieving Indians are allowed to make nightly excursions into the settlements, and to infest the roads. Under the Spanish government there were different military posts established in the country, and the troops in detachments were made constantly to traverse the country in different directions from post to post, thus keeping always on the road, they kept in check the 17

#### HORSE THIEVING INDIANS

predatory Indians, who, by the way, are neither very brave nor formidable in numbers. According to our notions, soldiers are not kept for the purpose of meddling with politics and living always in towns; they should perform the service that the country may need at their hands, although that service may lead them into camp life.

Since the occupation of the country by the American forces, the inhabitants complained bitterly of the frequent depredations of the horse thieving Indians, but the powers that be, listened with indifference to them, and offered no effective remedy for the evil, and it does not seem probable that the present military authorities will do any better for the country, judging from the disposition they have made of the forces. The inhabitants, if they can combine, will have to take the subject into their own hands, for it is even doubtful whether the highest authorities of the Union will deign to look into the wants of the *benighted ranchero* of California. However, we will not lay the faults of the past government at the door of the present one; we will hope still a while longer for the best at its hands.

It is of no small importance to those who wish to settle in California to know the state of landed property in the country; it will be but following their wishes if we offer a few pertinent remarks upon the subject, which we will do after a few preliminaries. A line drawn from the coast eastward that would pass at the southern edge of the Clear-lake valley; then another that would go north and south, intersecting the former, touching the western side of the auriferous region, and following it down to the frontier line south of San Diego, may be considered as enclosing the inhabited portions

18

#### INDIANS IN THE GOLD REGIONS

of the country. There is very little public land within the above described lines, as it is almost entirely occupied by proprietors or covered by titles.

The government, therefore, cannot expect to find much in the settled portion of the country that should come under its immediate control in the shape of public lands. The land on the north and east sides of the imaginary lines we drew, is either unoccupied or inhabited by rambling tribes of Indians. We may say that the whole auriferous region is occupied by Indians in its whole extent, and the oak is the frontier line of the Indian dominions; beyond that line the undisputed possessions of the pine and the bear commence. The wild Indians of California are probably the most inferior race of all the Aborigines of the continent; they lack energy and spirit; they live on roots, acorns, pine-nuts, insects, and occasionally on game, when they can catch it, or on horse or mule flesh

when they can steal it. North of the Bay of San Francisco, and between the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, some of the Indians live in the families of the settlers, or near their farms, working for their subsistence and an occasional blanket. These are called in Spanish, very properly, *Indios manzos* —(tame Indians.) The others live in the woods, rambling frequently from spot to spot and sustaining themselves in the way we have already mentioned.

On the south side of the Bay of San Francisco and the San Joaquin rivers, the Indians are more numerous, and particularly as we go further south they are more spirited and enterprising in thieving than those of the north; and those particularly on the southern frontier of California are brave and formidable. The 19

#### MISSION CONTROL OF THE INDIANS

*Indios manzos* are sufficiently numerous in the settlements here, and some thousands of them were living at the Missions. The wild Indians in this portion of the country occupy the mountains back of the settlements; amongst them are now found in large numbers, those who, after the Mexican government succeeded in ruining the Missions, fled into the mountains and resumed their former life. In these mountains are found numerous beautiful valleys, well watered and full of game of every description; the climate is said to be very benign. It would be very difficult to estimate accurately the number of Indians, both tame and wild, in the country; we therefore will not offer any supposition of our own on the subject.

The government at Washington will find itself somewhat embarrassed in selecting a course of conduct with these Indians; they have been accustomed to a different system of management than that of the United States. They cannot be removed, in justice and humanity, from the country, for there is no place to remove them to where they could subsist; it would be dooming them to destruction; and it would be more humane to butcher them outright than expose them to a slow but sure extinction. The system that the Spanish government pursued with them seems to suit, at least the Indians of the country, better than the American way. It acknowledged no rights in them to the soil, but it sends out missionaries to gather them into the folds of the church, and to make settlements of them under the directions of the priests. In our opinion, the only safe and humane

mode of bringing them within the pale of civilization, would be by establishing Protestant Missions, if you like,—but modeled somewhat 20

#### CALIFORNIA AGAINST SLAVERY

after the Spanish fashion,—in those mountains on the spots fit for agriculture and grazing, where they could be brought to an industrious and peaceable life by persuasion, which could be easily effected, as they are sufficiently docile, and in this manner their services might be secured for the country as heretofore; they are, when engaged with settlers, those who generally perform the labors of the field or about the house, without losing, however, their freedom. In these occupations they seem quite contented, if they have enough meat to eat, which of course never fails in California. There can be in California no other but free labor hereafter, as it has been heretofore. The new settlers, as well as the old ones, are extremely opposed to any other. It is in vain that the gentlemen from the Southern States of the Union, in their dreaming hours, try, or have tried, to introduce their black institutions through the *legal doors*, as they think, of Congress into the territory of California. Whether Congress may please, in its wisdom, to think that it has a right to introduce slavery into its new territories or not, it matters not for California; she cares very little what Congress may do in forgetfulness of its duty towards her, but she is resolved to resist any such measure; and whoever entertains the question for a moment, either in the legislative halls or before the public, shows his ignorance of the disposition and unanimous determination of the inhabitants of California. The slaveholder who would come here with his legalized chattels, would find his sojourn very uncomfortable, and would lose completely on his speculation. The inhabitants of this country feel already indignant at the intrigues of the Southern gentlemen who prevented, in 21

#### SENATOR BENTON'S WISDOM

the last Congress, the passage of necessary laws for California. We may state here once for all, that if Congress wishes to govern this country, it must be just and paternal in its care of it; if it passes any laws it must not pass them in ignorance of the state of things in California; it must not imagine that this country is only inhabited by semi-barbarous tribes that can be coerced into obedience. The inhabitants are very easily governed by justice, and there are no more loyal citizens in the whole Union than the California settlers; but they think they understand their rights, and would not be downtrodden by any legislative bodies. At this moment the larger portion of them are

Europeans and Americans, and the rest are Mexicans either born in California or in other States of that Republic. It is the interest of the Union to keep them in good humor, and consolidate the new territories by just and liberal laws.

Judging from the specimens of the laws proposed in Congress for the benefit of California, and which, thanks to the knowledge, wisdom and eloquence of Hon. T. H. Benton, Senator from Missouri, failed to go into effect, we fear that that honorable body is in danger of running on shoals in its legislative measures relating to this country, and particularly in laws affecting landed property. The gentlemen in Congress apply their American ideas of the value of landed property to a country that has been, so to say, born and raised under Spanish system of laws, and is totally different from any of the States in its domestic and civil arrangements. It would be impossible by any legislative act to change suddenly the character of former civil institutions of the country without committing outrageous injustice to its inhabitants, and even running the risk of raising 22

#### LEGAL ASPECT OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

their opposition. California, as well as New Mexico, comes into the Union as a full-grown man, whose habits are already formed, connects himself by ties of matrimony with another family; his new relations, if they be wise, do not wish him to be like themselves in every particular, but gradually by gentle influences, try to assimilate him to themselves, in which, in the long run, they will succeed. This is precisely the position of the government of the Union in regard to these newly acquired territories. To assimilate them by degrees without doing violence or injustice to their habits and possessions, should be the rule of a wise legislation. They are not to be punished for what, in the eyes of American legislators, appears to be defective in the Spanish or Mexican laws; if so, it would be doing violence to justice, to the laws of nations, and to the very late treaty by which the American government bound itself to respect their rights of property precisely as the Mexican government would have done or did do. The plain meaning of this is that the government of the United States is bound to recognize and legalize after its fashion to suit its system of laws, the present possessions of the Californians as it finds them, and has no right to go behind the fact of actual possession and scrutinize and invalidate them. The Mexican government has left them so, as we find them, and if it had continued its sway in these countries, there is no possible doubt but

it would not have disturbed them. These people who were brought up to tend their cattle on a large surface of land, as their grazing farms are, without any knowledge of any other mode of getting a living, if cut down to the American idea of a farm, of a hundred and eighty acres, or supposing even

23

#### LANDED POSSESSIONS IN CALIFORNIA

a section of 640 acres, would be reduced to beggary, nay, worse, to servitude. Would such a step be creditable to an enlightened, Christian nation like the United States? Tending cattle is their only occupation and only knowledge; it will take some time before they be trained to a different mode of life. The Spanish and Mexican law does not know a fee-simple title,—in the meaning of the U. S. laws it is a grant on perpetual lease, on some conditions. To suit its own practice, the American government should recognize the titles as it finds them in the country by giving the proprietors a fee- simple title, after its own fashion, on the top of the former one by which the land was held.

The Spanish and Mexican governments were liberal in giving facilities to acquire land, particularly in California. It was a common practice of the Mexican government that when a foreigner married a native he was recognized as a citizen, and by applying, could obtain a grant of land for a grazing farm of from a league to four leagues, or sometimes even more. As a general rule, the largest grazing farm that could have been granted under Mexican government, consisted of eleven leagues; there are, however, individuals that possess as many as thirty and forty leagues of land. Such large possessions are open to suspicion in regard to their being legal possessions, and into such the American government may inquire with more justice, as they are larger than even the necessities of California farmer's life could require. But small proprietors cannot have more than is absolutely necessary to their maintenance.

The landed possessions in California may be arranged into three categories, which sprang very naturally from the system of the colonization of the country. There 24

#### BEGINNING OF THE MISSION ERA

are Mission lands, *Pueblo* lands and *ranchos*, as they are called here, but in better Spanish they would be called *haciendas*, and in plain English, grazing farm lands of private individuals.

The settlement of California was owing to the will of a pious Countess in Mexico, who left an immense fortune to christianize the heathen inhabitants of this country. About the year of 1670, an expedition, led by a missionary priest, and escorted by a company of soldiers and settlers, landed on the shores of [Lower] California. The first attempts at colonizing the country were not successful, but by perseverance in repeated efforts the Spaniards at last succeeded in getting a foot-hold in this land. They gathered Indians about them, christianized them after their fashion, and made them *manzos*; soon, with their labor, Mission buildings were erected, farms put in order, cattle raised, and the Indians were instructed in various handicrafts. Finally, in course of time, through the whole length of the land, Missions were planted, and flourished; the priests grew fat and rich, and the Indians became tame and industrious, and were well taken care of. The country smiled with abundance and the people were happy. Soon, settlers came into the country and planted themselves, very naturally, near the Missions, on which, at first, they depended for their worldly goods; but by degrees they sprung into *Pueblos*, viz. towns. These towns had lands allotted to them by leagues, which were to be used in common by all the inhabitants for their cattle; or if any of them wished to till a piece of land, by an application to the *alcalde*, if there were no objections by the inhabitants, he received a permit from the judge so to do, and as long as he or his heirs occupied it, nobody

#### LAND ACQUIREMENT

had a right to disturb them. In this way it followed that the inhabitants of towns acquired small portions of land for their houses and tillage, while the rest of the town land was used in common for grazing. Under this arrangement of town property there was always enough land for all new settlers that might come to inhabit these *Pueblos*. This manner of disposing of town land, sanctioned by Mexican law, served as a precedent to the town authorities of San Francisco, Pueblo de San Jose, Santa Cruz and Monterey, when they, in 1847, disposed of a portion of the land belonging to those respective towns, giving perpetual leases to their possessors. This measure was particularly favorable to foreigners recently arrived in the country, as thus they were enabled to buy the rights of the natives who were not disposed to put much value upon so small parcels of land, and thereby the American interest was much promoted.



The land of the *ranchos* was always either a royal grant of Spain or of the supreme government of Mexico, or latterly of the Governor of California; all these grants practically had the same effect; the possessor of the tract of land thus granted was always in the full enjoyment of his rights and privileges, and no authority could disturb him in his possessions. As the country was frequently disturbed by revolutions, when it was not uncommon for one of the contending parties to burn up or carry away or destroy the archives of a town or even of the country, the land proprietors were not molested in their possessions, although they could not show their property enregistered in the records. Besides the officers of the Mexican government being proverbially negligent of their duties, may not have 26

#### SECULARIZATION OF THE MISSIONS

paid sufficient attention to proper order in these matters. Under such circumstances it would not be surprising if some proprietors should find their property unregistered in the archives of the country. Whatever land is left that has not been disposed of in one of the ways aforesaid, is public land at the disposal of the government.

Such being the disposition of landed property in California, the American government, if it be just and does not wish to create a general disaffection among the people towards itself, must recognize the actual possessors in their possessions by a summary act of legislation recognizing the rights they claim, and to prevent all future difficulties, giving them the fee-simple title to their possessions. The *ranchos* must be acknowledged to be the property of private individuals; the towns must have their rights to their town lands, and the Missions, if they yet have any Indians, ought to retain their tracts of land; or if these exist no longer, the church and public education have the next and best right to them. The lands of the Missions were always considered as Indian lands, or lands devoted for the benefit of the Indians living at the Missions; the priest was but a steward of the Mission. When the riches of the Missions excited the envy of some high persons in office, they set themselves to work to secularize them—and they succeeded under the Mexican government. The Missions were secularized and circumscribed, and received laymen for their administrators, who superintended and administered them so well that the riches of the Missions fled, their buildings were ruined, their

Indians scattered, and at present scarcely their shadow is left; yet they do exist just to remind the world of 27

#### LAND SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE FOSTERED

their former opulence. With the exception of two or three, on all of them there are yet some Indians and a priest left shorn of their former glory.

In view of the state of landed property of the country, there are three methods by the means of which California may receive an increase to its population without any violence to justice or law being committed. Supposing that the American government has recognized all titles to lands as it found them, then those who have no means of buying land from private individuals should receive liberal donations from the government, or settle in one of the towns where yet town lands exist, and taking advantage of the Mexican law by petitioning the *alcalde*, the settler could get land for his house and tillage, and being more industrious than the natives, he could even grow rich soon and enjoy his possessions as if they were his in fee simple. Those who have means could find tracts of land to buy, either enough only for themselves, or larger than they actually need, to be divided into farms of sufficient size and induce new settlers, by offering them liberal terms, to settle around them; by this arrangement both parties would be gainers.

In our view of the subject, we think the interest of the whole country would induce the government to use all means at its disposal to favor a prompt settlement of California, since the sooner it will be densely settled the sooner its vast resources will be developed, and the sooner the whole Union will reap advantages resulting from such a development.

28

#### THE GOLD REGION

IT is now nearly two years since the discovery of the gold mines in the country, and yet it is for the first time, we can say, that we are able to give a correct account of them, an account that can be relied upon. Heretofore we have heard nothing but Arabian Nights stories about the gold region, drawn, if possible, with more vivid colors than even the Asiatic fancy could conjure up. The whole

civilized world became electrified with these surprising stories and set in motion, and every day brings strangers to our shore from the most distant regions of the earth. So far so good; but it may not be so, much longer, when crowds from Europe will begin to pour upon these shores. We feel it our duty, in view of bad consequences that all exaggerations 29

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE GOLD AREA

do produce, to contribute our share towards rectifying the impressions that went abroad upon the subject of the mines of this country. Even our government at home had not received an official account from its subordinates here, that represent the truth in its simple garb. In a word, there has been no thorough investigations of the subject; but people on all sides, simple citizens as well as government officers, were content to seize upon a few remarkable cases, that were made more so by passing through many lips, and represent them abroad as of common occurrence. Hence much disappointment followed to hundreds who came here to shovel in, as they thought, the precious dust and be off for their respective homes in the twinkling of an eye.

It is not to be understood that we are going to decry the mines; no, far from it; we mean to divest them of the mantle which heated fancy casts about them; and represent the simple truth without any poetic or- ornaments.

On the outset we wish it to be understood that we speak advisedly; we have surveyed, so to speak, the length and breadth of the mines by personal inspection and observation, at a great expense of our time, money and labor, and besides we claim the right to presume somewhat upon the authority of science.

The region which here is known as the gold mines, is closed on the east by the *Sierra Nevada*, or Snowy Mountains, running nearly north and south. Two large streams descend from the Sierra Nevada, one at the north called the Sacramento river, the other on the south known as San Joaquin. These two streams run, as if purposely to the apex of the triangle they enclose, 30

#### EXTENT OF THE GOLD REGIONS

there to meet and make a common and united irruption upon the waters of San Francisco Bay. In this triangle thus formed by these two rivers with the Snowy Mountains are numerous streams; but

they all are tributaries either of one or the other of these two rivers; the largest of them are at the north and empty themselves into the Sacramento. The surface of the country, looking westward from the ridge of the Snowy Mountains, which are more than seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, is broken up into ridges, giving direction to the streams that separate, some west by north, others west by south, and gradually growing smaller, they get confused into hills, till they finally soften into the plains enclosed by the two above mentioned rivers. The plains, generally speaking, are covered with luxuriant grass skirted along the rivers with the oak.

As these hills rise, vegetation becomes scantier. The range of mountains in which gold is found is distinguished by a uniformity of its vegetable kingdom, which is neither meagre nor very abundant. The oak predominates here, only now and then relieved by several varieties of the pine family. As the gold disappears, the reign of the pine and the granite extends. The depositories of gold look universally more smiling to the beholder than their barren neighbors; the former always have the figure described by the line of beauty, viz.: the curved line, be they ever so precipitous as they frequently are; a distinction never to be lost sight of. The extent of these auriferous hills is greater than the public know or imagine, but not in the direction it is supposed. They extend beyond the Sacramento and even San Joaquin, northwest of the former and southwest 31

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE GOLD

of the latter, bending round to the sea coast. Nay, the same formation, with more or less difference, runs along the whole Pacific shore, till it is lost in the southern portion of the Chilean republic, but gold has not been, nor probably will be found anywhere in equal abundance, as in Upper California. This abundance is much, however, exaggerated by the heated imagination of the public. It is not in the nature of placer gold to be durable long. A very few years when there will be many arms at work, will exhaust it; its origin will be the guarantee of this fact. The breadth of this auriferous region limits itself within the lines running north and south from forty to sixty miles from the ridge of the Sierra Nevada; and on the west, as the hills begin to soften into the plains.

At some remote period in the history of the globe, the same internal convulsions that heaved up the Sierra Nevada, have also upheaved the auriferous hills, which at first presented a naked surface to the atmospheric changes, by the influences of which, the quartz constantly breaking up, left free the

precious metal on its surface. In the progress of time, the same atmospheric influences caused to accumulate on these hills soil which grew deeper with every decay of vegetation till it grew strong enough to support the majestic oak. The freed particles of gold thus became covered by the soil and mixed up with it, and the process of the separation of the metal from the stone was arrested. How gold was injected into the veins of quartz is more than we can say, but the fact that it was so in a liquid state, is beyond question, as we see it adapt itself to the sides of the stone in all imaginable forms, from the finest filament to the largest lump ever found, with a most 32

#### MORE ABOUT GOLD

varied indented surface, filling up, completely, the crack of the stone, always tending to a rounded tear-like appearance, as is the case with all melting substances. When freed, external friction of course modifies its appearance more or less; hence we find it in rivers particularly, in fine flakes, but when it is in larger bulk, it puts on plate-like appearance as if it were hammered out by the hands of an artisan—as really it is by the frequently enormous weight of stones under which it is deposited. Water, that universal carrier, washing the sides of the hills, brought the gold from their surface into the ravines and rivers, to which its own weight facilitated the process.

According to the strength of the current of water, the weight of the particles of gold, and the obstacles in the way, it is deposited in one or another spot, the lighter particles of course floating away the farthest from their original bed. As this process of gold deposition has taken place in some remote period of the earth's existence, hence we find all these deposits, generally speaking, covered with greater or smaller depth of soil, sand, gravel and stones. Strictly speaking, gold does not belong to the rivers—it was washed into them from the hills; hence it is useless to look for gold at the head of these streams, when the neighboring hills are not of the auriferous nature; and we find this fact corroborated by our personal examination of the heads of the streams of the gold region. The same rule holds good, for the same reasons, in regard to the lower portion of a gold carrying stream, except that it is limited by the fact that light particles of gold may be deposited a considerable distance below their original source.

The mode of deposit being made clear, it will be 33

#### RESULTS DIMINISH AS NUMBERS INCREASE

equally clear that it is not on every spot in this very auriferous region that we must look for gold, which fact experience proves to be true; or at least it is not on every spot that we can find enough of it to make it an object to bestow our labor on it. Hence it equally follows, the limitation of the quantity of gold to be expected from the mines as a general aggregate, however rich they may prove. The first comers had the best chances to hit upon rich deposits; but as diggers multiply, the chances of falling upon virgin deposits grow smaller, and they will have to be content with what the others, through imperfection of their labor, have left; consequently the work becomes more heavy and less profitable, although it may be yet sufficiently compensatory if the expenses of living be not excessive. This is precisely already the case, the labor is much harder this year than it was last. At present there are not so many of those happy hits as formerly, although we yet hear now and then of a lucky haul, which however, when it reaches the ears of the public, becomes extremely distorted, and particularly so when companies that have dammed some spots of some of the rivers wish to dispose advantageously of their shares; these easily find ready letter-writers who communicate the lucky event to the public through the press. The accounts of successful digging in gold that went abroad never have been accompanied with statements of hardships attending the process; yet we are free to confess that there is no harder labor than that of gold digging and washing; this species of labor requires the strongest sinews enured to fatigue. Peculiar localities, together with general discomfort attending upon the life in the mines, may make gold digging particularly irksome. 34

#### COMPANIES TO SUPPLANT MINERS

Yet all this can be borne, and one's labor may some times be crowned with a brilliant success. We have made the above statement with the view of laying the subject before those who may yet be novices in the matter, that they may understand their own case; we are far from discouraging the new aspirants after the favors of the dame fortune; we tell them, take your chance, it may be a very good one, but such and such circumstances are attending this courtship. Those from distant parts who on mere sound of the discovery of gold in California, rush head-long, sometimes leaving very good business and comfortable living, cannot but rue the day, if they put their sole dependence upon their success in the mines. If they would come here with an intention of following some patient calling, they could not but grow rich with time. We have already plenty of miners; a larger

number of them only diminishes the profits of all. However, come they must, for they are bent on it, be the consequences what they may.

When this gold mania ceases to rage, individuals will abandon the mines; and then there will be a good opportunity for companies with heavy capital to step in; there will be enough of profitable work for them; and it is then that the country will enter on a career of real progress, and not till then. Such companies, with superior mechanical facilities to do much labor, in a short space, will be enabled to go over the whole mineral field, although already dug over by individuals, and reap yet a rich reward of their efforts. And when there will be no more gold washing to be done, then a new era in the mining of the country will commence—we mean a regular system of mining by sinking shafts into 35

#### A PLAN TO FACILITATE MINING

the very bowels of the rocks will be entered upon. Spots for this system of mining are to be found in the auriferous region. (Since our return from the mountains our statement already is farther corroborated, as we learn that Col. Fremont, who just arrived from Stockton, has also found a regular vein of gold in the rock on the river Mariposa, which he proposes to work in the regular mining fashion, as it is a very promising one we understand.)

If we had a voice in the Legislative Halls of the Union, with the knowledge of the whole country in general, and the mineral region in particular, we have—seeking to gratify no men nor set of men—we would say, divide the whole *elevated* portion of the land enclosed by the Sacramento and San Joaquin into a set of lots to be sold to mining companies at a very moderate price. The low lands or the plains of the same region should be divided into a separate set of lots, to be sold to those only who wish to establish themselves as farmers. To avoid all difficulty and confusion in giving boundaries to these lots, we would adopt the following plan: In the mining district proper, the elevated portion of the land, every lot should have for its centre the whole extent of one of the streams that fall either into the Sacramento or San Joaquin; the lateral boundaries of these lots would be the ridges on both the north and south side, that turn the minor streams and ravines into the principal ones selected as centres of the lots. These lots, unless they are as large as this division would make them, would not be worth the having; the land is worthless for any other purpose,

except mining; and if this even should fail, then the only means left for the unfortunate buyers to save 36

#### DISTRIBUTION OF FARMING LANDS

themselves, would be to turn their attention to the making of turpentine, for which they would find an extensive field. The other set of lots, comprising the low lands, should have for their bases the banks of the streams that run through the plains. There should be but two lots between two neighboring streams, so that they would have the same line for their common boundary while their respective bases, would rest on their respective streams. The reason for such a division is, that the central portion of the plain lying between two streams, generally is destitute of timber and water; is exposed to the constant burning sun and scorching wind, and consequently offering no spot for a farm house. For the same reason this portion of the country admits only of a spare population, whose principal occupation must be raising of livestock, as there is plenty of grazing ground; each farmer, however, must have a bank of a river to put his residence upon. In view of these circumstances these lots should be made sufficiently large to enable the farmer to devote his attention particularly to the raising of the livestock. By this arrangement the whole country will be benefitted; for the raising of livestock will be daily less attended to in the country south of San Francisco Bay, as the land there admits of smaller subdivisions for agricultural purposes. And it is there that farmers will crowd, as its climate and fertility of the soil are favorable to the maintenance of a dense population.

By the above disposition of the mineral region, we conceive the country will be greatly benefitted. The mineral region being under the sole control of mining companies will exclude all private adventurers; thus first benefitting the commerce by checking the now unavoidable 37

#### INDUSTRY WILL SUCCEED MINING

desertion of the crews of its shipping, which at this very moment amounts to more than sixty thousand tons, of the finest ships in the world lying in the harbor, and nearly all of them unable to proceed on an outward voyage for want of hands on board—and secondly, preventing an influx of all sorts of adventurers into the country, whose presence is more of a nuisance than benefit to any country. Then a farming population, cured of the gold mania, will seek to enrich itself by more sure



means, the product of the soil, and will crowd to the Pacific shores. The arts will take a start—every species of industry will be called into existence; the surplus capital of the commerce will be devoted to the development of internal resources of the country; nay, even capital from abroad may find an employment here; the commerce of the country will be put on a firm footing and will grow daily and steadily. Even the government itself, thus rid of this bother of California gold, will find more leisure to do its duty to this newly acquired territory. In fine, the country will grow steadily in a permanent population, in strength of order and law; and the business of life will unavoidably fall into its natural and proper channels.

We flatter ourselves we have said enough upon the subject in hand to clear up a little, the vision of the public that suffered itself to be blinded by the brilliancy of the California gold.

As we have above referred to Mr. T. N. Benton's speech, delivered in the Senate of the United States, January 15, 1849, on the subject of land titles and sale of gold mines in New Mexico and California, we give a place here to his substitute for the bill then before 38

SENATOR BENTON'S BILL

the Senate, supposing it may be interesting to those who have not seen it. It is fortunate for California to have such a defender of her rights as the gifted Senator from Missouri. This is the substitute that defeated the bill in question:

“To recommit the bill to the Committee on Public Lands, with instruction to inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill for ascertaining the public and unappropriated lands in the territory of California, and for surveying and selling the same, and for granting donations to actual settlers, and permits to work the gold mines; and for that purpose to provide—

“FIRST. For the appointment of a recorder of land titles, who shall have the custody of all the public archives in relation to the disposition of the public lands, and shall record all the grants and all claims that shall be discovered, made known to him, and shall make two abstracts of the same, one to be sent to the General Land Office in Washington city, the other to be delivered to the Surveyor General of California, that he may lay down the grants and claims on a map to be retained

in his office, and of which map a copy to be transmitted to the General Land Office, and another to be filed with the recorder of land titles in California.

“SECOND. To provide for the ascertainment of invalid grants or possessions, by authorizing a *scire facias* to be issued from the United States District Court against the party in possession to come in and hear the objections to his claim and to show cause why the grant should not be annulled, or the possession vacated in every case in which the recorder of land titles, upon consultation with the district attorney, or by orders from the General Land Office, shall be so instructed, shall be of opinion that the same is not valid under the treaty with Mexico, the law of nations, and the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States—the decisions of the district court to be final, if against the United States, in all cases where the land in question shall be worth less than five thousand dollars. But no *pueblo* or rancheria Indians to be disturbed in their possessions, without special orders from the General Government.

“THIRD. To provide for the appointment of a surveyor general, and for the establishment of three land offices.

“FOURTH. To provide for donations of land to actual settlers, heads of families, widows, and single men over eighteen years of age, and an allowance of land for children under eighteen years of age, and for the wife in her own right, according to the provisions of the bill proposing donations to the settlers in Oregon, which passed the Senate January 3, 1843.

## 39

### TITLES TO LAND & MINES

“FIFTH. To provide for preserving order in working gold mines, by appointing an agent to grant permits for working small lots, and settling summarily, and on the spot, all questions of boundary or interference among the diggers. The said permits to continue in force while the lot is worked, by the person receiving it, and to be limited to —— feet square.

It is not necessary for us to offer here any comments upon this substitute for the bill above alluded to, as we have already in anticipation expressed our opinion in relation to the measures to be adopted by the Government of the Union respecting land titles and gold mines in California.

40

### ADVICE TO THE MINER

ON arriving in California, the gold hunters, if we may be pardoned the expression, first touch the shore at San Francisco. There they look for information how and what are the means to get the precious pelf in large quantities, that they may not stay in the country too long; if they happen to have a letter to some one in the place, or if they meet an old friend, they put a thousand questions to him faster than he is able to answer them, evidently hurried by anxiety to lose no time and opportunity. Then they will tell him about their plans, how they are going to proceed in the business, what excellent machinery they bring from New York or some other place, to work with, and so forth. The Americans, and particularly those that call themselves, or are called, Yankees *par excellence*, have the reputation of putting many questions to people they happen to fall in with; but on this occasion, they are more, even than Yankees, in pouring upon the stranger they meet, their interrogatories. Now, we propose here 41

#### NOT ALL MINERS SUCCESSFUL

to benefit both parties, the *annoying* and *annoyed*—we use the expression not to disguise the truth in obscure words, as it is really the plain fact—and anticipate all such questions by suitable information, upon which they can put at least some reliance, as we are neither a merchant, a trader, nor speculator in land or mines.

Neither San Francisco, the city of Sacramento nor Stockton are the places where reliable information is to be expected by one who proposes to go to the mines, as these places may be compared to the famous Dionysius' ear, where the gentlest whisper is re-echoed a thousand times. Interest and ignorance frequently conspire in circulating extraordinary stories of success, on very slender foundation, for some never have been in the mines at all, and have not the slightest idea of them, crediting everything they hear; others have *their* posts established on some particular spot,

where, of course, the mines *must be very rich*. The trading portion of the inhabitants of these places see gold brought in in large quantities, but they never trouble themselves with how much labor it is got out, who has failed and who has succeeded; in fine, they hear only of constant success. The fact is, that while there are many who succeed, there are others who scarcely pay their expenses. This should not be withheld from the knowledge of a new comer, since in case of failure in his mining expectations, he will be somewhat prepared for such an event, and will be able to make the best of it.

The new comer, on preparing himself to start for the mines, first should know what he wants for his expedition. Many start lumbered with baggage, imagining that they cannot and must not forego the indispensable comforts of life. All baggage is a burden and heavy 42

#### A MINER'S OUTFIT

expense to the miner; the cost and sometimes the difficulty of transportation forbid any such commodities; and besides, it will always impede his free movement, if he should want to go from place to place. He should have absolutely nothing more than what he can carry on a beast, if he be able to have one; or if not, what he can shoulder himself. The less one brings to the mines, the better prospects of success he may have, and the more he is loaded with goods, the more probably he will lose. This is the secret why all hard working men who are inured to hard labor and strangers to enervating comforts, such as sailors and mechanics, generally do very well. The miner needs good, stout and warm clothing, just enough in quantity for a change for the sake of cleanliness—a pair of stout boots or shoes, or both, two good blankets to sleep comfortable, warm and dry; his mining tools consisting of pickaxe, spade, crowbar, a tin pan to wash gold in, a good sheath knife, iron spoon, and a trowel. The pick-axe and crowbar should be of a convenient size for handling, and well steeled on the ends. A washing machine is used when there are two or more working in partnership. All the machines that have been brought here from the States are absolutely useless; they have proved profitable only to the venders there. The simple machine which here is in common use consists of three light boards three feet long and about ten inches high, put together in the shape of a cradle with two rockers underneath; the bottom board is made a little narrower; the sides on the upper edge from the middle backwards, are bevelled off two or three inches, and the same is done

forwards so that the board, when looked upon from the side, presents an irregular hexagon; at the head part of the machine, on 43

#### THE ROCKER DESCRIBED

the upper edges of the boards, rests a box of boards, called a sieve or riddle, from three to five inches high, with a tin or sheet-iron perforated bottom; it is fixed, sometimes, in a manner to be taken out when necessary, sometimes on hinges to be thrown backwards when it is necessary to throw away the washed stones. The head part of the machine is well boarded; at the opposite extremity a board is likewise placed, the upper half of which is cut out in the shape of a crescent, leaving about three or four inches at the bottom of it; this opening serves for a passage of dirt, stones and water that are thrown in at the head into the sieve. It has also one or two bars or cleets across the bottom board at the distance of a foot each, and about three inches high. The perforations of the sieve or riddle are sometimes triangular, whose base and sides are about an inch, sometimes they are circular, of the diameter of about three-quarters of an inch. Under the riddle, in the interior of the machine, a board inclined diagonally and backwards is fixed, leaving however a sufficient space at the lower edge of it for the passage of the stones, dirt and water; it is called by the miners an apron or screen; the object of it is to throw back the water that it may cover the whole bottom equally and run an even current. In the bottom board, about the centre of it, there is a hole an inch in diameter, made back and close to the first and second cleet, if there be but two of them, which is well stopped and opened only when it becomes necessary to take out the residue, dirt and gold, to separate the latter from the former by washing it in a tin pan, which should be of the size of milk pans used in the States. The tin pans are to be got at San Francisco at from three to four dollars, or 44

#### MINING PARTNERSHIPS

in the mines at the trading posts for the double amount. The machines can be got at these posts by paying from two to four ounces; but it is so easily made that any one himself can make it and save the money. If put together by means of screws rather than nails, it could be taken apart and conveniently carried about when necessary. The machine requires also a piece of strong wood of from two to three feet long, to be firmly fixed to both sides across the box to be used as a handle for rocking. To work these machines, in some places, as on the banks of rivers, two persons only

are required; while in dry diggings where water and gold dirt are not so conveniently situated, it requires three or four persons to do the same work; one to work the machine, another to dip and throw water on it, a third to carry dirt, and the fourth to dig it; or two to dig and carry, and two to wash dirt. However, according to circumstances these partnerships are formed, it can only be said that there is no occasion for more than four persons in a company, and frequently three or two do better than four. For protection and occasional service that one may require from another, it is always better to be in partnership with a suitable person or persons: in messing, for instance, it is better to have several in a mess for the sake of occupying the same tent, and having less cooking to do, as in such cases this is done by turns. The small machines have thus far been the best machines in use, and under the circumstances of pressing necessities of miners, in which they had their origin, nothing better or more convenient could have been got up; but they cannot be said to be the result of a scientific investigation and extensive experience. Recently, a very great improvement 45

#### THE "JACKSON-BURKE ROCKER"

has been introduced into the method of washing placer gold. This improvement is the "Burke Rocker," as improved by Jackson, and which is now generally used in Virginia for washing gold in similar deposits to those of California; it is there no longer an experiment as it has been used in those mines for thirty years past, after an examination of all the processes for washing gold both in Europe and America. This rocker has been found to be perfectly applicable to the soil here, as two of them have been in a successful operation on Mormon Island for some time past under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Jackson himself. It is destined to effect great changes in the process of washing gold in this country, and particularly when the miner that now works independently and alone will find his labor very hard and not paying him sufficiently, since this machine being worked with mercury, saves the most minute particles of gold that escape the eye, and thus gives in aggregate a greater result than can be sometimes obtained by washing large pieces alone. It requires five persons only to work one of these rockers their great excellence can be summed up in a very few words: by the use of one about four times the quantity of earth may be washed by each man daily, and probably from two-fifths to three-fifths more gold is obtained from any given quantity washed. They will be doubtless ere long used with great success in going over the field already washed by the present imperfect method; as the bars and banks of rivers and

the earth in “dry diggings,” for certain it is that the amount of fine gold dust inevitably lost by the smaller machines is greater than all that is saved ordinarily.

This machine is a simple trough about nine feet 46

#### MINERS' PROVISIONS

long with a bottom made of cast iron plates perforated throughout, the size of the holes increasing gradually as they descend towards the lower end; beneath these plates there are drawers in which mercury is put; the dirt, as the machine keeps rocking slowly, is carried along the plates by the water thrown from above by a pump and washed down, gold together with finer particles of dirt descend into the drawers to be amalgamated with mercury. The produce of such a washing is then put into a retort to separate the gold from the mercury. In the process of separation of the former from the latter, about two per cent. only of mercury is lost. These two kinds of machines are the only ones which we can recommend from our own observation; they are well adapted for these mines at least, and they can be easily procured here. Numerous inventions for this purpose were brought from the States, and none of them answered the sanguine expectations of their owners; they are not worth here even the cost of the materials they are made of.

The provisions used by the miners consist of mess pork, bacon, hams, jerked beef, flour, sugar, tea, coffee, chocolate, beans, rice and dried apples, fresh beef and mutton whenever they can get it, which is sometimes the case, and deer meat when they can kill it. As much as one can, for the sake of his health, he should abstain from using much salted provisions in the mines, and to counteract their bad effect on the system, it is advisable to use vegetable acids, like lemon juice, which in the mines is sold bottled up; citric acid, which is more easy to carry, or even tartaric acid, dried apples, and other dried fruit serve the same purpose. In using these acids it is better to use them with water alone 47

#### SAN FRANCISCO PRICES

without sugar; just making it acid enough to suit the individual taste. Dried apples made into apple sauce with sugar are agreeable to take, and are calculated to keep the bowels open, an important consideration for the miner. If one should be attacked with diarrhoea or dysentery of course he should abstain from them. One of the articles equally important as others we have not

yet mentioned; we mean saleratus. In making camp bread is necessary to use it to make the bread lighter. The prices at which provisions can be bought at present in San Francisco are the following:

Mess Pork, per bbl. \$28.00

Bacon, per lb. 28

Hams, do. 35

Sausages, do. 40 Flour, per bbl. 12.00

Sugar, per lb. 15

Tea, do. 1.00

Coffee, do. 12 1/2

Chocolate, do. 40

Beans, per bu. 1.50

Rice, per lb. 10

Dried Apples, do. 25

Jerked Beef, do. 25

Lemon Juice, per bottle, 1.00

Saleratus, per lb. 1.00

Vinegar, per gal. 1.00



As the miner proceeds on his route and farther from San Francisco, he will find, as a general rule, that traders expect to make each a hundred per cent. profit upon the original price they paid. In this way it happens that in the remotest points of the mines he will 48

#### HIGH COSTS OF TRANSPORT

have to pay three or even four hundred per cent. upon San Francisco prices. One of the chief reasons for this is the high charges for transportation of goods. However, competition has already effected some changes in these matters, and ere long may effect more. Notwithstanding these high prices, it may be sometimes more convenient for the miner to buy his provisions at the nearest point where he intends to work, or is working, than to carry them along with him all the way; here we cannot give him any advice as to what would be the best course; he must determine himself according to the circumstances he may be in, and the means he may command.

The last, although not of the least important articles for a miner, are arms. One need not be armed cap-a-pie in the mines, but a good rifle may be frequently useful to keep the evil minded at a respectable distance; or when in the woods, or far away in the mountains, an Indian may be in his way, or the grizzly bear, and then a fire-arm may be sometimes necessary. Colt's pistols are very convenient weapons. It is hardly necessary to say that he needs a few cooking utensils, with which he should be provided. A small hatchet may be equally necessary. In conclusion, we would say to the miner in one word, take no more with you than you absolutely need, that you may move lightly; as it may be sometimes necessary for you to go on foot. Thus equipped in all the necessaries, the miner will start on board of a launch, where he has to pay from 14 to 16 dollars passage money, and if he have much baggage, from 2 to 3 dollars per hundred weight freight, bound to the city of Sacramento, or to Stockton, according to his fancy. He is to provide himself with 49

#### NORTHERN & SOUTHERN MINES

provisions for the trip, which may last from three to seven or eight days. Taking the Mokelamy river as dividing the gold region into the northern and southern portion, the miner is to start accordingly—for the Sacramento city when he wishes to go northward, or for Stockton on the San Joaquin, if he go southward. It may be expected from us that we should give particular advice to the miner where it is best for him to go to dig. Now, it is impossible so to do conscientiously; the

whole extent of the mining district is crowded with people, consequently for the very crowd, those spots that were good for a few, now are not so when there are many, as the subdivisions of the produce must be greater, and less must fall to the share of each. We may say in general terms, that farther south from the Tuolomy to the San Joaquin, the diggers were not so numerous as elsewhere, consequently there is yet a better chance there than on other points. West of the Sacramento, some two hundred miles from the city of Sacramento, about the Trinity river, there are yet virgin ravines and streams, as very few have ventured so far.

On the Feather river and the Yuba, there were very good diggings; crowds of people, whites and Indians, have worked there for these two seasons; however, by going farther up these rivers some untouched spots may be found. We will remark here once for all, that the higher you go up the rivers the greater difficulties you will meet in getting over the ground, as they are more inaccessible; at the same time mules and horses are needed to carry you and your provisions, and you may also lack grass for your animals. But to know how far one may go up the rivers of the gold region, he must exercise his judgment, and he may depend on this fact, 50

#### THE BEAR CREEK REGION

that there is no gold at the heads of these rivers, as we have examined them, and they all spring in the Sierra Nevada; as soon as you see the oak and red soil disappear from the hills surrounding them, you need not go beyond this line farther than from five to ten miles to convince yourself there is no gold there.

The Bear Creek was not very rich in the precious metal, and now may be less so as it has been worked. On these rivers people generally were making an ounce per day, some much more; but how long it may continue so we are not able to say. These rivers being accessible for a considerable distance to waggons, diggers crowded there, as provisions were cheaper there than anywhere else. These rivers have their forks, or in other words, tributaries of more or less importance. Below the mouth of these forks it is well to look for deposits of gold in the main streams. The Bear Creek has a tributary called the North Fork, in extent probably from forty to fifty miles. The Yuba has two forks on the north bank of some importance. The distance from the Bear Creek to the Yuba in some places hardly can be more than ten miles. The general course of the Bear Creek is west by north

nearly; it meets the Feather river about ten miles below the Yuba, which likewise mingles its waters with the latter. The Feather river, which heads far at the north, taking almost a parallel course with the Sacramento, runs on in a south-westerly direction, and having thus accumulated its waters is lost in the last mentioned majestic stream some distance below.

From the city of Sacramento, the miner has two routes before him, from which to select—he may start for the upper tributaries of the Sacramento, viz.: for 51

#### MORMON ISLAND DIGGINGS

the town of Vernon, at the mouth of the Feather river, then up to the mouth of the Bear Creek, and farther up to the mouth of the Yuba, or to any of these points, direct from the city of Sacramento. Another route is for the American river, which has three tributaries, known as the North Fork, Middle Fork and South Fork. Waggon go up to the North Fork for seventy miles. The Middle Fork is inaccessible to waggons—it empties itself into the North Fork about ten or twelve miles above the South Fork, and the latter joins the former at the distance of about thirty miles from Sacramento City. At this junction there is on the South Fork an island called Natoma, or more commonly Mormon Island, from the fact that a company of Mormons were the first to dig here. The diggings have proved very good; one could average an ounce per day. There is a company of miners who dammed or rather turned the current of the river for a short space, and now are reaping abundant fruits of their labor; they are getting out from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per week, working with mercury in the Virginia rocker. It is a trading post, where many traders are established; a stage from Sacramento City stops here on its way to Sutter's Mill. Going to the Middle Fork one must pass the South Fork at the point where is now quite a settlement, known as Sutter's Mill or Columa, a corruption, probably, of *Columba*. The distance from Sacramento City to this town is 45 miles of tolerably good waggon road. There is no lack of traders; there is a saw-mill and a post-office. From this point the miner has to start with pack-animals if he wish to go up any of the rivers. The points known on the Middle Fork where a good many miners have been engaged are the Spanish Bar, higher up Ford's 52

#### RICHNESS OF THE SOUTH FORK

or Middle Bar, farther up the Big Bar, and still farther up Rector's Bar; the first 15 miles distant from Columa, and the last about thirty miles. The hills bordering on all the streams in the gold region are difficult of descent generally speaking, and they are so at these points also. In our opinion, the South Fork, is or was one of the richest portions of the gold region, its dry diggings proved very profitable to almost all the miners that have been engaged in them. Every river has its dry diggings, as it means washing in the ravines neighboring upon rivers, and which have small streams that are sufficient to afford water for washing gold. The dry diggings on the right bank of the South Fork, known as Kelsey's Diggings, and on the left as the Old Dry Diggings were very rich. Last winter a good many Oregon people built log houses in both of those diggings, and passed the winter digging, when the weather permitted; the fruits of their labor were abundant, and most of them have left their places with bags full of the precious pelf.—Although they have done their work pretty thoroughly, yet there may be some places found that may pay. The South Fork has a tributary known as Weber's Creek, on which a good deal of gold has been dug out; it has a small settlement of log houses in the neighborhood of the settlement just spoken of, on the left bank of the Fork. The distance from these trading posts to Sutter's Mill is about twelve miles. There is a direct waggon road from Sacramento City to these diggings.

To go from Sacramento City to the Mokelamy, the miner has to pass the Consumnes at Dailor's farm, about eighteen miles from the above place, and then farther south, the Dry Creek, from which the first trading post at the Mokelamy diggings may be about 53

#### THE SOUTHERN DIGGINGS

30 miles distant. The Mokelamy diggings are distant from Sacramento City about from 50 to 60 miles—a waggon road leads to them. The Consumnes has not been dug much, but the Dry Creek had a very good reputation among the miners. The banks and dry diggings of the Mokelamy have been rich in gold, and may be so still; some diggers passed last winter there, and were not sorry for so doing. This summer there have been many digging, but their labors have been disturbed by hostile Indians. We think there may be yet rich diggings there.

Supposing our miner to have arrived at Stockton and he proposes to go to the Mokelamy, he would have to cross the Calaveras at the distance of about 15 miles, and strike the Mokelamy diggings 70

miles distant from the above mentioned town. If he should like to go south, he would find diggings on the Stanislaus, about 40 miles distant from Stockton; then he might pass on to those of the Tuolamy, 20 miles distant from the latter, and farther on he would meet at the distance of 30 miles with those of the stream *La Merced*, then at the distance of about 20 miles he would come to the stream *Mariposa*. In a direct line from Stockton to the Mariposa it may be from 80 to 90 miles. Throughout the gold region waggon tracks and trails are well worn out at present; at convenient distances on the roads, there are trading posts established where can be had water and pasture for animals, and where one can stop. At Sacramento City or Stockton teamsters are to be found who know all those routes, and take up miners' baggage to any place they like, if it be accessible to waggons. It would be impossible to describe the routes particularly, considering that they 54

#### HORSES IN THE MINES

go mostly through an uninhabited country; the only sure way to learn the direction of the place one intends going to, is to enquire at the place he starts from. We can do here no more than give general directions on the subject. In the southern portion of the mining district, Indians are somewhat numerous, and it is well to be on one's guard, as they, if they do no other harm, are apt to steal your horses. There is a difficulty in keeping horses throughout the mining district, on account of the trouble of taking care of them, or of the danger of losing them, and which difficulty increases as the season advances, for then grass grows scanty. In the neighborhood of nearly all the diggings there are men who make it their business to take charge of miners' animals, at the rate of from twenty to thirty dollars per month. Whatever may be the trouble of keeping a horse in the mines, yet it is a great convenience, as one is enabled to move about freely whenever he wants. The prices of horses and mules in the city of Sacramento and Stockton and throughout the mines, are fluctuating; they are according to season, demand and supply of the animals. In the commencement of the spring, when miners were starting for the hills, horses were selling at from two to three hundred dollars apiece; towards the fall, good horses could be got for one hundred and fifty, and mules from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars; however, next season we believe the animals will be cheaper than the last, as there has been a large number of them introduced by the immigrants from the States and from Mexico. The rate of transportation by waggons varies, of course, according to distances; but it ranges from twelve to twenty, and sometimes even thirty dollars per hundred weight. 55

#### HOW THE NOVICE SHOULD ACT

The season and quantity of teamsters regulate these matters somewhat. In hiring a man to drive a team, one must pay him from two to three hundred dollars per month, as every one expects that in whatever business he engages, his chances to make money should be as good as those of the miner, and that is the principal reason why wages of all kinds are so high in this country; but they are beginning to come down a little. Sometimes it is necessary to pay a man for his day's work an ounce *per diem*.

Now, we will suppose an inexperienced miner is arrived at the place of his selection in the mining district; we will suppose him also to have started for the mines in company with one who has had already some experience in the handling of the pick-axe, shovel and pan; for he must have a week or so of apprenticeship in order to be *au fail* with the practical part of the business.

On arriving at any spot containing gold deposits, the first step to be taken is to examine the general appearance of the country. The hills should be covered with brick-red soil—this should be a prevailing feature in them, although there may be now and then an exception to some portions of them; slate rock should be found, of whatever description, if not on the surface, at least on digging a few feet; but a general rule, when there is any below the surface, some of it will be seen above it in one direction or another. Likewise quartz should be found scattered about on the ground; quartz is a milk-white opaque stone, of considerable hardness; on these occasions it is generally veined with red streaks of more or less intensity of color. The presence of these three signs jointly is sufficient to authorize one to look 56

#### DIRECTIONS FOR PROSPECTING

for gold by digging in some convenient spot, but any of them singly is of no validity in this respect. And if by digging and washing the dirt one finds as a residue black scaly sand—which is magnetic iron, and which, if one were not able to distinguish by the eye, could prove it by the magnet—he can safely expect to find some gold there on some spot or other. The absence of this sand as a residue after washing, is a positive proof that it is vain to look for gold in that region. In digging for gold, besides studying the above mentioned signs, it is necessary to observe and study the currents of water, be it in ravines or dry diggings or along the banks of rivers. Water is perpetually changing

its current, consequently before striking a spot with a pickaxe, it is well to consider whether the spot be an ancient bed of the river or brook, or not; whether there be any obstacle in the way of the current that would cause a deposit of gold to take place either before or behind it, for it is only in such places that we can expect to meet with success. Examine also the rock over which, at some season, water passes, and then by breaking it up you may discover a deposit of gold called, by miners, a pocket; such deposits are frequently found on ledges of slate rock in rivers or small streams. On opening a hole in search of gold, the top dirt is thrown away, and each successive layer of earth is examined to ascertain in which portion of it the gold is found, and thus the careful miner proceeds till he comes to the *rocky* bottom; he never should be satisfied with his work till he does come to a rock, which he should nicely scrape, sweep and collect, then wash the dirt and decide accordingly; if the rock be slate rock, he should split it and break it up, and then wash it, as it is in the 57

#### APPRAISING A PROSPECT

cracks and pockets of this rock that gold is frequently found in considerable pieces. A layer of clay, like a rock, equally serves as a barrier to gold; it arrests it on its surface. This work, particularly, should be done carefully when the miner is, as it is called technically, *prospecting*, when he looks for places where he would work, as in so doing he at once gets familiar with the character of the earth in that region, and will know in what portion of it he should look for gold. It is considered by the miners at present, that if from a pan-full of dirt they are able to get a quantity of gold equal in value to fifty cents, they are satisfied with the result, and consider that they can make a little more than an ounce per day with a pan only. However, as the mines will be getting daily more and more worked out, they will have to be content with much less. But as yet, if they got only twelve and a half cents of gold from a pan of dirt, they do not think it is worth the trouble of getting it.

As a general rule, it is a practice among the miners to leave each digger a sufficient space for a hole, upon which nobody has a right to encroach; from four to ten feet they allow among themselves to be sufficient for each, according as they may be more or less numerous and as digging may be more or less rich. A tool left in the hole in which a miner is working is a sign that it is not abandoned yet, and that nobody has a right to intrude there, and this regulation, which is adopted by silent consent

of all, is generally complied with. It is very seldom that any disputes about one's rights occur; and if they do, they are easily settled among themselves. In fact, as a general rule, miners heretofore have been law-abiding people; some excesses 58

#### DRY MINING METHODS

now and then may occur, but seldom of much importance, and if any of them should commit murder or theft, justice is no where so prompt and efficacious as among them. At different points of the mining district there have been persons executed for murder and robbery, by the stringent code of Judge Lynch, but under the superintendence of juries and judges selected for the occasion. At present, by order of the Governor of California, a sort of jurisdiction has been established at different mining points by elections held for the purpose; but as the mining population is constantly fluctuating, such arrangements cannot be permanent, of course.

The time for mining in dry diggings commences about the end of March and lasts till July, at which time water gets very scarce, and consequently digging becomes unprofitable, or even impossible. Some dig on the banks of rivers even in the spring when there is much water, but it is not a very profitable operation. The time when the rivers begin to fall by degrees is the month of June, and they continue falling till the next spring, when the melting snow again replenishes them. In August the snow from the mountains where they head, disappearing, they do not receive any new supplies, while the scorching sun keeps wasting them all the time, and in winter where it snows but does not rain they continue rather low; thus in winter time they are at their lowest ebb.—From the middle of September till the end of November is the best season for mining on the banks of rivers, as it is then that the lowest bars are uncovered, and even sometimes one may work in the very bed of the river itself. This is the time at which in many places, the current of a 59

#### MINERS' HEALTH

river may be turned aside with great facility. In so doing, miners should not rush blindly into the work without examining attending circumstances; dams have been made where there was not gold enough to pay one man's day's work. It is first necessary to see whether the hills in the neighborhood warrant the supposition that there must be gold in the river in that particular spot; then it is important to see where the current of the river would be most likely to make such a



deposit; this being investigated properly, there will be a better chance for the company of miners to reap a plentiful harvest, should they determine upon the work.

The month of July, August and part of September are sickly in the mines, and particularly on the Feather river and the Yuba. The sickness is owing to the extreme heat and carelessness on the part of the miners; some of them work in the hottest hours of the day, and sometimes not protecting sufficiently their head and body from the scorching rays. Fevers, diarrhea and dysentery are the complaints commonly met with—occasionally scurvy shows itself; it is more apt to happen in winter time. But, however, whenever it occurs, it is owing entirely to the carelessness of the patient; a sufficient attention to the use of vegetable acids, as we have already mentioned, would prevent such occurrences.

To guard one's self against diarrhea or dysentery, in consequence of cold, one should sleep under sufficient covering, and if not under a tent, he should wrap his head into a silk handkerchief on going to bed; in this way he will do much to prevent it, and particularly if he be of regular habits. But should one be 60

#### USEFUL REMEDIES

taken with it, a very simple remedy, at the command of every miner, if resorted to without delay, may cut it short at once; if it be slight, let him take a cupfull of lye, which he can make from the ashes of his own fire by throwing a handfull of them into a tea cup of warm water, let it settle and then take it; this is to be repeated two or three times during the day; at the same time he should be careful to be warmly clothed. If this remedy should not check the disease the same day, then next morning he may take a tea cupfull of rice and burn it as coffee is burnt, after which it must be boiled with no more water than is necessary to make it very soft and of the consistency of a pudding. This rice, thus prepared, is to be divided into three doses and taken morning, noon and night. At the same time, an hour after taking the rice, a good tea-cup full of oak bark tea, without any sugar, is to be taken twice a day. We can assure our reader that this simple treatment in our hands never failed in either of the above complaints. And to avoid constipation after this complaint, which is apt to follow, and which may equally become uncomfortable, a *small* quantity of dry

fruit, such as prunes or dried apples, taken along with some farinaceous substance, may restore the bowels to their natural condition.

With these precautions, and with ordinary prudence, one is not in danger of being afflicted with any of those complaints very seriously. It is frequently necessary to work in water; for that purpose, high legged waterproof boots are useful; or if one works bare-foot he should avoid to feel much cold in them, and on concluding his work, he should dry them and put on shoes or boots. Some miners spend the winter in the mines, 61

#### WINTER IN THE MINES

and there is no doubt they are in the end better paid for their labor than the rest who work in the usual season, for they work more at their leisure, in a spot they have marked before for a rich one, and their work is carried on with abundance of water, and at a time when there are no people to crowd them. Oregon men have done so last winter at the old dry diggings on the South Fork, and they have not regretted it. But there are inconveniences that but few will bear with. He who proposes to spend the winter in the mines should start in the end of September, and while waggon roads keep good, provide himself with a log house and sufficient provisions to last him till the middle of April next, as he must expect to be unable to move from his spot all that time, as roads are impassable for beast or man. That whole region almost becomes a mire—the soil is so loose and saturated with water. At this season he should particularly guard himself against scurvey; he should daily make use of some acid in some shape or other, such as dried fruit, lemon juice or citric acid; tea made of fir leaves is very beneficial and far preferable, for health's sake, to common tea. He should use pork rather as a lard necessary in his cooking than as a meat, and depend more on good dried beef, as commonly made in the country, which may be rendered very palatable by soaking it first and then pounding before cooking it. Towards the middle of November winter begins to set in, and while it snows in the mountains it rains in the settlements; the rains are less frequent, and commence later as we go farther south; they seem, however, to be sufficient for the necessities of the country as a general rule.

Before we take leave of the miner, we will give him 62

#### A WORD OF CAUTION

one more piece of advice that is none the less important for being last. On his return from the mines, should he be so fortunate as to have a large amount of gold to send over to the States by drafts, he should enquire if the man who sells him the draft has the power of attorney from the man he draws upon, which should be exhibited to him, thus satisfied, he can with greater security trust his money.

63

## TOWNS OF CALIFORNIA

BEFORE the occupation of the country by the Americans, its population was considered to amount to from thirty to forty thousand inhabitants, natives of the Spanish race, Indians and foreigners included; but since that time its growth appears to be magic, and particularly since the discovery of the gold mines; every corner of the world seems to contribute its share of inhabitants; every tongue almost is spoken in the streets of San Francisco. But this new population does not spread through the country to benefit it; it crowds only to the mines or the port of San Francisco. It consists chiefly of speculators and diggers, and some mechanics; of farmers we do not hear as yet. The town has led the van in growth; there is nothing similar on records; one may say without exaggeration that it has been inaugurated in one moment by some superhuman power, 64

### SAN FRANCISCO'S RAPID GROWTH

or sprung like one of those ambulating towns do spring the day before a fair. In fact, it looks very much like one of those cities Only built for a day. Its houses built of planks and cotton sheetings cannot last but a day; however, whatever they lack in quality they make up in quantity. Four months ago the town hardly counted fifty houses, and now it must have upwards of five hundred, and these are daily increasing; even a theatre is spoken of as being built. From eight to ten thousand inhabitants may be afloat in the streets of San Francisco, and hundreds arrive daily; many live in shanties, many in tents, and many the best way they can. The magic power of gold marks every spot here; vessels from different parts of the world press into the harbor, and make already a large floating city in front of the *terra firma*; goods of all descriptions are scattered on the shore in open streets that are too narrow for men, animals and carts that pass up and down. The freaks of fortune are equally as remarkable in this place as everything else connected with it; some men who two years ago had not a cent in their pocket, count by thousands now; property that a year ago could

have been bought for five or six thousand dollars, now pays a rent of thirty thousand dollars per annum; mechanics who formerly were glad to get a job at two dollars a day, now get from six to twelve; in fact, mechanics, and particularly carpenters, are the most independent aristocracy of the place. Strange as it may appear, yet in the midst of abundance of every kind, women are very scarce; the domestic circle does not exist here as yet; domestic pleasures are wanting, and household duties are unfulfilled.

We touch here upon a subject which, if we allowed 65

#### LACK OF WOMEN DEPLORED

ourselves to speak feelingly as a bachelor, we might be even eloquent, but in the position we find ourselves as a writer, we are bound to speak philosophically only, viz.: look upon the question before us with that cold eye of indifference or reserve which becomes an impartial judgment. We will, therefore, say nothing of ourselves—we will speak of the situation of others; we will try to advocate the cause of poor and forlorn bachelors, and persuade some respectable heads of families that have daughters to settle in life, to come to California and build up the society, which, without woman, is like an edifice built on sand. Woman, to society, is like a cement to the building of stone; the society here has no such a cement; its elements float to and fro on the excited, turbulent, hurried life of California immigrants, or rather gold hunters, of all colors and shapes, without any affinity; such an aggregate or mass of human bodies have no souls; they are but a grand automaton, whose springs Mammon alone makes vibrate. Such is the society of San Francisco. But bring woman here, and at once the process of crystallization, if we may be permitted the expression, will set in in the society, by the natural affinities of the human heart. There are here many worthy men who have had the good luck to make a respectable competency, who would like to be married and settled in life, as honest and sensible men should do; but for want of the fair ones, they think only of getting away from here as soon as possible. Now, the country by this state of society, loses much in many respects, beside losing many valuable inhabitants; and those who stay behind intend to do the same when their turn comes. This would not be so if some pleasant families from the States, rich in nothing else but 66

#### GOOD HEALTH & AZURE SKIES

in intelligent, home educated daughters, they could well provide for all their members here with much more ease, as yet, than in any portion of the Union. These families must be easy in their circumstances, so that they may be able to buy farming lands where they could settle, and by the natural growth of landed property they would, in a few years, find themselves wealthy. This country is particularly fitted for that class of people who once knew what affluence was, and who by a sudden turn of the wheel of fortune, found their means reduced to mediocrity. Life in California, although it must have its inconveniences belonging to a thinly inhabited country, yet it cannot be compared to anything like life in new settlements in the Western States or Oregon. If people only were willing to take it easy, they would, ninety-nine out of a hundred, even like it. The population here is much more ready to take at once, or very soon, a more agreeable and polished form than could be expected in any other new country. There is something in the climate—we of course except San Francisco and the Valley of the Sacramento, which predisposes one to contentment. The sunny skies for so long a portion of the year have an exhilarating influence upon the mind, and so much so that we have known cases of Americans who were in the habit of carrying care-worn visages in their own country, acquire here smiling and contented countenances, smoothed by placidity. Indeed, we would recommend, as a medicine, to all vinegar-faced, care-corroded gentry, that are well to do in the world, to come and settle in the rich valleys of California, where good health and azure skies can be enjoyed; where winter does not touch you with its freezing hand.

67

#### NATIVE CALIFORNIANS

The people of the country, of the Spanish race, possess a good deal of natural simplicity, but without that boorishness and grossness which characterize the lower order of some of the European nations; they are ignorant for want of opportunities of learning, but nature has not refused them capacities for acquiring knowledge;—they are obliging in their disposition and hospitable; the latter virtue, however, already begins to undergo some changes since the arrival of so many foreigners; yet among themselves, or those upon whom they look favorably, they preserve their good old custom. Their women are healthy, robust, good looking and hard working as a general rule; kindness is a universal feature among them; and if one had to choose between them and ordinary

women of some civilized portions of the world, we do not hesitate to say that the Californian women would receive the preference, although in point of information they are deficient.

Their men are somewhat disposed to idleness, but this may be owing partly to the facility with which they were in the habit of getting a living, and which now will have to undergo some modification. As a nation, they are lively, and cannot be said to be vicious; in fine, they have sufficient good qualities to make up for their deficiencies. Such as these good people are, they do not offer much temptation to foreigners who have seen higher forms of civilization to become commingled with them, but they have some good elements among them, and if respectable families from the States and Europe would come out here, the different races would soon be mixed up, and make before many years one of the most pleasant societies. By such an immigration the country would gain vastly; because then so many

#### A BACHELOR'S DILEMMA

young men that have come here would form here their family ties, and would bind their interests with the interests and welfare of the country. But, as it is, California unavoidably must receive a check in its progress, as it will be only inhabited by passersby, so to speak, who will have no permanent interest in the country.

The greatest privations that a bachelor is in this country exposed to, consist in not being able to furnish himself with clean linen when he desires, as domestic service is so difficult to be kept up here for want of working women. To induce some of the few women that are here to condescend to wash their linen for them, they have to court them besides paying six dollars a dozen.

We know an instance of an inveterate bachelor who married a spinster because she refused to wash his clothes for him, but he was determined she should do it at any price, as he was a great lover of cleanliness; in this dilemma he resolved to pay her all he was worth, rather than forego his habit of cleanliness. He is in the habit of saying, "he who goes without a clean shirt on, keeps his conscience open to suspicion"—too severe a judgment upon us the inhabitants of this town.

When this uneven slope of the hill on which the town is situated shall be built up with fine and solid houses, what now looks dreary and desolate will then look very picturesque and smiling; so will it be with the society here; when elements that are now daily accumulating get through their fermentation and become settled, they also will present a smooth and transparent surface to the moral eye of the beholder, but as yet, one needs a little philosophy to bear him through the present that he may lean on the future.

69

#### REGARDING THE "HOUNDS"

In the moral aspect of the town, save some occurrences, there has been a good deal to wonder at—that in such a medley of races and tongues nothing very serious has happened to jeopardize its existence or to injure its prosperity, under existing circumstances, is very remarkable; its order and quiet has been only once disturbed for a few days by a set of men, chiefly from New York, who called themselves, very significantly, the “Hounds.” For a while they went parading the streets publicly, by day light, and breaking glass-ware in grog shops by night; when they commenced to commit outrages upon property, took the lives of some foreigners and violated the honor of some women, the citizens rose like one man, armed themselves and arrested them nearly all and put them in duress on board a man-of-war, to wait for their trial, after which they were *disposed of according to their merits*. Since that time order and quiet have prevailed, and more active measures have been taken to prevent another necessity to chase after any other pack of “hounds.”

The state of society in California has not yet arrived to that point of organized life where its most important movements can be stated, or represented in numbers for the especial satisfaction of the political economist. We will not therefore attempt anything of the kind, but we may however state in numbers a few facts in regard to the shipping in this port.

From the first of January, 1849, to the 30th of September of the same year, 509 vessels arrived in the harbor.

The sum total of passengers in the same space of time, 18,972.

In the month of August, ending on the 29th, the number 70

#### VESSELS IN THE HARBOR

of women arrived by sea 87, among whom 6 were married—42 American. On the 30th of August there were 61,585 tons of shipping in the harbor of San Francisco, exclusive of river craft, which amounts to about 60 vessels plying up the rivers Sacramento and San Joaquin.

In one day, on the 29th of August, there arrived in San Francisco by merchant vessels, 654 male and 27 female passengers.

On the 24th of September 11,000 tons of shipping came into the harbor.

On the 30th of September there were 94,344 tons of shipping in the harbor.

The directions for entering the port of San Francisco that have been heretofore followed, being found incorrect, we give room to the correction of them, with which Capt. E. A. KING politely furnished us, together with regulations of the port:

71

#### SAN FRANCISCO HARBOR

#### DIRECTIONS FOR ENTERING THE HARBOR OF SAN FRANCISCO.

In making the northern entrance, called Sausalito, keep the Fort and the island of Yerba Buena in one; in coming from the south and making the southern entrance, keep the island of Alcatrazes or Bird Island, touching the Fort. After the Fort bear south per compass, steer due east, (true) to avoid the flats which are making out from Belona's beach. No danger can be apprehended from Blossom Rock. In running into this harbor after passing the Fort, and having it bearing (true) south, good anchorage can be obtained from five and a half fathoms to three fathoms. At present there are no buoys, but in the latter part of next month there will be buoys on Blossom Rock, Anita Rock, on the shoals on the N. N. W. part of the harbor, and on the bank making out from Belona's beach. High water at Yerba Buena or San Francisco full and change 10 hours 34 minutes. Rise of spring tides 9



feet, neap tides 3 feet. Latitude of the Fort 37 deg. 48 min. 30 sec. N.; Longitude 122 deg. 27 min. 24 sec. W. Variation 15 deg. 36 min. E.

EDW. A. KING, *Harbor Master*.

SEPTEMBER 27, 1849.

72

#### HARBOR & PORT REGULATIONS

#### REGULATIONS FOR THE HARBOR AND PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO.

ART. 1st. On the arrival of Merchant vessels at the port of San Francisco, a proper berth will be pointed out to the masters thereof, by the Harbor Master, when he boards them; and no master of a Merchant vessel shall shift his berth without permission from the Harbor Master, unless in case of extreme emergency, when he must report his having done so as early as possible at the office of the Harbor Master.

ART. 2d. Should it be the intention of a master of a vessel to discharge or receive on board any considerable quantity of merchandise, a berth will be pointed out to him as close to the landing places as the safety of the vessel and other circumstances will permit.

ART. 3d. After a proper berth has been pointed out, the master will then moor his vessel with two bower anchors across the tide, with thirty-five fathoms chain cable, with buoys attached in summer months, and fifty fathoms from the hawser hole in winter. December, January, February and March to be considered the winter months.

ART. 4th. If any vessel properly moored in the harbor shall have her anchors or cables over-laid by any 73

#### HARBOR REGULATIONS

other vessel in anchoring or mooring, the master or person having the care or direction of such last mentioned vessel, shall immediately, or as soon as may be after application made to him by the party aggrieved, cause the said anchor or cable so overlaying to be taken up and cleared.

ART. 5th. When any Merchant vessel may be lying in a berth convenient for discharging, and she shall have completed her unloading or lading, such vessel shall, at the request of the Harbor Master, remove to a place designated, should her berth be required by any other vessel which may desire to load or discharge.

ART. 6th. Merchant vessels arriving with powder on board, must on arrival, report the same to the Harbor Master, in order that a secure berth may be pointed out.

ART. 7th. No ballast will be allowed to be thrown overboard. Any ballast which may be wanted to discharge, by application to the Harbor Master, a place of discharge will be designated, and any vessel requiring ballast, instructions will be furnished on application.

ART. 8th. All difficulties arising between ships relative to the foregoing rules, shall be settled before the Harbor Master.

ART. 9th. Disobedience to the orders of the Harbor Master, in the discharge of his duty will subject the offender to a fine of fifty dollars, to go towards the Hospital Fund, of the town of San Francisco.

ART. 10th. After mooring, ships must rig in jib and flying jib-booms.

ART. 11th. Forty-eight hours notice to be given at the Custom House before clearing.

ART. 12th. No fire arms to be discharged in the Harbor under penalty of Article 9th.

APPROVED:—

THOS. AP C. JONES, *Comdr. U. S. N.*

EDW. A. KING, *Harbor Master.*

74

MONTEREY & SANTA CRUZ

Next to the port of San Francisco, in maritime importance, we must put the Bay of Monterey, with its two ancient towns of Monterey and Santa Cruz lying on the opposite shores of the bay. At present the mining operations being confined to the north of the Bay of San Francisco, the whole commerce is concentrated in that port; but ere long they will go farther south, and then the town of Monterey will be likewise benefitted by the trade with the mines, as its facility of communicating by land with all the points south of San Francisco promises it.

Monterey was, and is, as yet, the capital of the country, contains about two thousand inhabitants, principally natives and old established families of foreigners, who have not neglected to improve opportunities of making themselves rich. The soil in the neighborhood is good—the climate a hundred per cent. better than that of San Francisco. The situation of the town is very picturesque.

On the north side of the Bay lie the Mission and town of Santa Cruz, with a rich soil abounding in water and timber, as in its neighborhood, in the mountains, there are six saw-mills in operation. Building timber is easily and cheaply obtained here; land for building lots can be also procured at moderate prices. It is an excellent spot for mechanics to settle upon, as the sea offers them facilities for sending the produce of their hands into any portion of the country, while at the same time living is cheap, for everything in the way of provisions can be produced in the town.

Pueblo de San Jose is another old settlement, and has more than a thousand inhabitants within its jurisdiction, and is growing rapidly. By its position, in a 75

#### PUEBLO DE SAN JOSE

magnificent valley, seventy miles in length at the bottom of the Bay of San Francisco, approachable by water to vessels as large as brigs, being a thoroughfare between the north and south of the country, possessing a rich soil, a mild and salubrious climate, beautiful landscape, and every facility for cheap and comfortable living, it cannot but grow rapidly; and we have no doubt that in a few years, when California shall be a little more settled and organized, it will become the seat of the State Government, being a more central and accessible point from all parts of the country than Monterey.

The town of South San Francisco [the settlement about Mission Dolores], about three miles south of the city of San Francisco, possesses the same advantages of the harbor as the latter, for all classes of vessels, with the superiority of being more sheltered from the prevailing winds and of having an abundant supply of water, not only for the use of its inhabitants, but for the shipping. The same depth of water extends along the shore from one town to the other. The country is picturesque, the site of the town is more regular than that of San Francisco; it commands a quarry of stone suitable for buildings, and it lies on the road from San Francisco to Pueblo de San Jose. Had the original settlers of San Francisco exercised their judgment before settling on that windy spot, they would have put their houses on the site of South San Francisco.— We have no doubt but it will soon have its share In the commerce of the Bay.

Benicia is a town situated on the north side of the strait of Carquinez, with great depth of water; ships can discharge there close to the shore without the aid 76

BENICIA MARTINEZ & SACRAMENTO

of wharves. It met with the approbation of naval and military officers as a good spot for a naval and military depot; and we understand that it has been recommended by the same to the government for the erection of government buildings, upon its site. It has a ferry boat which plies across the strait, and thus keeps the two portions of the country in constant communication, benefitting the public while it remunerates the efforts of the enterprising owners of the town.

Martinez is a projected town on the opposite side to Benicia, and of which we have already spoken above.

Suisun is a town just springing up into existence on the north side of the bay of Suisun and right bank of the Sacramento; it is very advantageously situated for both commercial and agricultural purposes. It is eighty-five miles distant from San Francisco and fifty from Benicia; it has a rich soil and is well wooded; it possesses good water in abundance, and building stone is found in the neighborhood. The depth of water is sufficient to admit barks to lie close to the Shore. Its

importance soon will be felt when the beautiful neighborhood of the Clear Lake shall be settled by enterprising farmers and miners. Its climate is mild and healthy.

Sacramento City, once the exclusive property of the well known and remembered by every stranger who appreciates hospitality, Capt. J. A. SUTTER, is situated on the east bank of the Sacramento river; vessels of seven hundred tons are lying close to the shore in the Stream. To show its growth and importance we need only state that on the first of May last it contained about fifteen houses and tents, the whole business with the mines being done at the Fort, which is about two miles distant from the city, and on the first of August 77

BOSTON & SPRINGFIELD

it had more than a hundred houses and numerous tents, & probably comprising about five thousand souls.

The town of Boston is situated in the fork made by the Sacramento and the American rivers in their junction, and its site extends along the shores of both of them. Its situation is a little elevated and free from inundation; the land is rich and well wooded; the same class of vessels that comes up to Sacramento City, can lie here with equal ease, being but a mile above the latter; the road that crosses the American river and leads to the Feather river, the Bear Creek and the Yuba goes through the town. It is laid out on the old site of an Indian *Rancheria*, a portion of which they still occupy.

The town of Washington is very beautifully situated on the same bank with Sacramento City, from which it is only nine miles distant up the river. The spot is well selected for an inland town where agriculture and trade with the mines must flourish; it is well provided with timber and a brook runs through it. The river craft and a steamboat run up to it.

Springfield is a town in project, close to the town of Vernon.— Vernon is at the junction of the Feather river with the Sacramento. It is in the vicinity of many “diggings,” with which it carries on a lively trade. At any season of the year there is four feet of water in the river, but for eight months the depth of water is eight feet.— River craft and a steamboat are constantly plying up to this place. Its vicinity is a rich and well wooded agricultural country.

The town of Sutter, situated two miles below, and on the same bank with Sacramento City, possesses the same advantages of the river and soil as the latter. It has already several houses put up.

**78**

#### **NEW YORK OF THE PACIFIC & STOCKTON**

New York of the Pacific, at the mouth of the San Joaquin, has been already spoken of above.

Stockton is a spot happily selected for an inland town of great importance, and already its present augurs well for the future.— Situated high up on the San Joaquin, accessible to river craft at all seasons of the year, cut through in different directions by four channels, communicating with the river, and admitting close to the shore vessels of the class of barks and brigs, of which thirteen are moored there at this very moment, surrounded by rich soil and extensive wood land, contiguous to numerous rich “diggings,” Stockton offers great advantages to a new settler, and many have already availed themselves of them. Its proprietor, Mr. Chas. M. Weber, by his liberal provisions for the public wants of the town, cannot fail to accelerate its prosperity.

The town of San Joaquin, situated on the river of the same name, at the highest point to which river steamers can come up at all seasons of the year, in the neighborhood of the rich mines of the Merced and Mariposa, to which a good waggon road can be easily made, offers superior advantages to settlers; its situation is picturesque, as it is on a rising ground; it is abundantly supplied with good water and grass all the year through, and its climate is salubrious. Its geographical position to the surrounding mining district guarantees it the command as a trading post, to at least one third of the gold region.

**79**

#### **THE NATIVES OF CALIFORNIA**

WE were once on the point of stopping short in our present lucubrations, thinking of following our own inclination, which leads us to prefer short speeches and concise books, to prolix and wandering harangues and folio volumes, in which thoughts are diluted after homoeopathic fashion, although

fully aware that by so doing we may lose somewhat of the good will of those “literary gluttons” whose appetites could not be satisfied short of a ponderous volume of printer's ink spread over hundreds of pages. On a further reflection, however, we find that we will not depart, materially, from our views in this respect, by devoting a chapter on the social complexion of the country, which, if it be not useful, at least may interest the curious.

Although frequently man is capable of moulding circumstances to himself, yet it is more frequent that he 80

#### VIRTUES & VICES OF CALIFORNIANS

is moulded by them. Thus it happens, that although the Spanish Americans are the descendants of the once polished and chivalrous Spaniards, yet, when cradled and raised in their colonies, they have received the inevitable imprint of the new country where all elements must be more or less in a rude condition, without, however, entirely losing the character of their forefathers. The Mexicans are one remove from the Spaniards, and the Californians of the Spanish race are as much from the Mexicans; with this advantage that, as a people, their vices are not so glaring, rude though they be. The life on horseback in an open field, characterizes and fashions their habits. The mildness of the climate and richness of pasture-land favor their indolence—the first by not obliging them to look for a very secure shelter against inclement weather, the latter by sustaining a larger livestock than their absolute wants require; thus freed from the most urgent cares, they give themselves up easily to the enticing “do-little-system,” which finds a still farther encouragement in the catholic ignorance and priestly looseness of morals. Of course we must except some very honorable instances of enlightenment and virtue as well among the laymen as priests. They hold their creed by tradition alone, as they have no means to know it in any of the living ways, examination and conviction, and it is remarkable that their virtues are far above their knowledge. There is a good deal of philosophy of adaptation in the mode of life of a Californian. His dress, for instance, is admirably adapted to the labors on horseback and with a lasso in his hand; it must set easy on him in every sudden movement which he must make when in full pursuit of a sturdy bullock. On such an occasion, particularly, he 81

#### HORSES & RIDERS

and his horse make one. The animal understands the intentions of his rider, and obeys him in all his evolutions instantaneously, to the great surprise and admiration of those who have not seen anything of the kind before. As bold and graceful riders, they have but few their equals; their courage and recklessness on horseback is seen probably to the greatest advantage when, on their excursions to the plains of the San Joaquin in the month of May, they are making prizes of those noble wild animals, under whose hoofs the earth seems to groan, and with whose disdainful snorting the air is filled.

To describe a Californian without describing in part, at least, his horse, would be to leave the picture incomplete. The Californian horse, without having very marked traits of beauty or peculiarity, is a gracefully formed animal of moderate size, or much smaller than the generality of horses in the States, without, however, being entitled to the name of pony. He can endure a good deal of fatigue, and keeps in a good condition, living on much less than horses of many other countries do. Generally he is trained to gallop for miles, and to obey the Spanish bit to the least touch of the rein, which bit is in universal use here. The California saddle is no less a philosophical adaptation to the wants of the rider than many other peculiarities of these people. The materials entering into the construction and trimming of a California saddle, are as few and as simple as possible, yet offering a greater security and comfort to the rider and ease to the horse, than any of those contrivances known in the civilized world as saddles. The saddle-tree is made of light wood—willow principally—in the shape of old Spanish saddles, miserable 82

#### THE MEXICAN SADDLE

imitations of which are manufactured in great quantities in the States, bound in a stout hide of a bullock, which makes it as strong as even iron could make it, and when properly finished by a good artisan, it is very graceful in appearance, and does not hurt the back of the animal. All the iron it contains are two girt rings and a buckle. The girt is broad, and made of horse hair, attached by a ring to the two leather straps which embrace the saddle tree in front and back with an equal strength, both converging to the centre of the sides of the saddle where they meet in an iron ring, to which the belt is attached as mentioned before; this arrangement causes the pressure to be exerted on the back of the animal equally, as the belt falls in the centre of the abdomen, leaving the animal's



ribs free, and admitting of the degree of compression that may be necessary for the security of the rider without prejudice to the horse. The wooden stirrups, covered with leather in front to protect the feet, are suspended by a strong double leather strap and buckled. Two square pieces of leather cut in a manner to let out the projecting portion of the saddle, cover and hang on both sides of the saddle; while the under leather is plain, the upper is printed very elaborately, and sometimes is worked in silk of various colors, and laid out with the fur of an otter. On the pommel hangs folded in a ring a hair rope, which serves only to hitch the animal, but if the rider be on his field duty, then he suspends the coil of a hide rope from fifty to sixty feet long, which serves him in lassoing the cattle and horses. There is a piece of leather in the shape of a semi-circle attached to the back of the saddle-tree, to serve for an additional seat when the polite horseman offers his front seat to a

#### CALIFORNIANS & THEIR HORSES

damsel of his choice, or suspends his portemanteau when travelling. This attractive picture of two riders on one horse is seen frequently on Sunday morning when the couple go to church. The woman sits side-wise, with her feet hanging on the right withers of the horse, contrary to the practice of other nations and with a better reason. The man sits behind, stretching the left arm over the fair one's shoulder to the rein with which he manages the horse, and with his right arm supports the fair burden, and as a mark of great gallantry, he lends her his hat and wraps his own head in a silk handkerchief in a style which only a Californian knows how to do, and in which he appears quite to advantage. The women, however, frequently ride alone, as they are capable of managing their horses. The advantages of the California saddle are numerous, besides that it keeps the garments of the rider clean, and while travelling offers him a ready bed; the leather together with what is called, in Spanish *las armas de pello*, which are two hairy goat skins, trimmed and ornamented, suspended on both sides of the pommel, and when necessary, spread round the waist of the rider to serve him as protection from cold or mud, make together a very dry and comfortable bed, of which a wearied traveller cannot but enjoy. These saddles, when finished in the best style, cost over a hundred dollars. In our opinion, there is no saddle for service and elegance that a gentleman can make use of, superior to a California saddle-tree, made by a good artisan and trimmed after the Mexican fashion. For the field labor, the plain California saddle answers very well; its pommel is equal to holding up the stoutest bullock.

The dress of a Californian is quite picturesque, and 84

#### CALIFORNIAN COSTUMES

particularly so when on horseback; it seems to be, however, in his way when on foot. His undress, which is so arranged as to perform the functions of under and outer garments, consists of a colored cotton shirt, large white trousers of the same stuff, gathered at the ankle by a long stocking; his pantaloons are of broadcloth, if he be in easy circumstances, or of blue Cotton; they are cut large, sewed only at the inner seam, the outward seam, with the exception of a small part on the hip, is entirely left open; downwards they are partly laced by a silk braid, from there to the very bottom edge, they contain large pendant silver buttons, with which they button as much of the pantaloons as it may suit their fancy; a red Chinese sash, with fringes supports the pantaloons at the waist. Shoes of domestic fabric, made of deer skin, variously ornamented with white thread or bits of white, red or black deer skin, with peaked and turned up toes, constitute an important part of the picturesque dress of the natives. A large piece of tanned deer skin, cut in a peculiar manner, wrapping the leg and descending to the ankle, is fastened at the knee by means of long, many colored silk garters, the tassels of which are left flying; this sort of leggings are called *botas*. A hat, with a large brim and a high somewhat tapering top, covered with black oil silk, scarcely touching the crown of the head, underpinned by a wide black ribbon, crowns the dress and the man. —Sometimes he may put on a colored silk cravat, a vest and a broadcloth jacket, according to his means or fancy; the presence or absence of any of these garments makes very little difference to him, for he is above the fears of censure of fashion. A *serape* or a *manga* is always accompanying its owner, be it thrown gracefully over 85

#### ARTICLES OF DRESS

the shoulder or slipped over the head, or fastened to the saddle. The *serape* and the *manga* serve as a species of a cloak or a blanket; the former is made of twisted woolen thread of many colors, arranged in a certain plan or fancy of the artisan who makes them, about four feet broad and about eight or nine long, with an opening in the middle to admit the head in putting it on; The *manga* is made of broadcloth, is shorter and broader than the *serape*, is capable of a great variety of ornaments, as a gold galloon around the edges, velvet, and galloon and fringes arranged in a circular form, just to cover that portion of it which covers the shoulders, descending over them. It is lined

throughout with some fancy calico. It is quite a striking and fantastic cloak when handsomely trimmed and wrapping gracefully the wearer. It may cost sometimes as high as five hundred dollars. The full dress of a Californian, got up in the best style and taste, with his horse and saddle, and silver mounted spurs and bridle, often cost towards fifteen hundred dollars. Thus fitted out on a prancing horse, a delight of his, the youthful Californian fails not in being an attractive object to his fair countrywomen. The spurs of a Californian are the gift of antiquity, probably from the times when Don Quixote or his compeers were living, they are so large and heavy; however, much can be said in praise of them.

The Californian women, although equally as fond of dress as their countrymen are, yet are dressed modestly, as a general rule; the simpler of them are content with a nicely washed linen or cotton white shirt, buttoned at the throat, or cut out to display a portion of a fine bust; a red flannel petticoat, over which is 86

#### THE "REBOSO" & ITS USES

worn a calico one, and light shoes, with or without stockings, complete their dress. Some of them wear their hair nicely combed down and flowing, crowned on the top of the head with a wreath-like twist of a black or colored silk handkerchief, to keep the hair firm; or sometimes they part the hair into two traces, letting them hang over the shoulders, and cover their heads with a silk handkerchief, arranged in a very cunning manner, reminding one somewhat of a liberty Cap, and is far from unbecoming. Sometimes they arrange their hair after the European fashions. The wealthier, and those who have mixed a little more with the foreign world, are dressed in the manner of the European Women, with some slight peculiarities of their own. The *reboso*, which is peculiarly a Mexican dress, is in universal use here with all women. It is remarkable how that piece of cotton-cloth finely wove, should supply the place of the warmest cloak to the Californian women; for in the coldest weather here, (which, by the bye, is not so cold as it may be elsewhere,) they know no warmer garment with which to cover their head, and shoulders. The *reboso* is an inseparable companion of a Californian woman. When it is made of silk, it is very pretty and expensive; it is about two feet broad and five or six long, with a fringed border at the ends.

The domestic duties, in all their multiplicity, devolve themselves in California much more upon women than men; the former, within the precincts of their houses, perform all the laborious duties of housewives, while the latter occupy themselves with field labors, with this advantage in their favor, that while the wife is all the time busy with taking care of her household, the husband only that small portion of time required for 87

#### MANNERS & CUSTOMS

getting up and marking his cattle, ploughing, &c., which leaves him many a day to spend in riding about or gambling, or in any other way it may suit his fancy.—The Californian women in every respect may be considered more industrious, and more important to the household than a man.

The social relations of these good people are very simple, yet they are often marked with that which we may call the politeness of heart, which would reflect credit upon the most cultivated state of society; the sexes here are on very familiar terms, yet without grossness even among the least educated. On some public occasions, however, the monastic notions so peculiar to the generality of catholics elsewhere, mark the relative behavior of a female towards a male. The woman here must pretend to shun the company of a man, at least before the eye of the public. But here, as elsewhere, when this passes the bounds of real modesty, the sensible portion of even simple men, look upon it as a piece of silly stratagem. The will of a father here over his children, particularly his daughters, stands yet in that antique grandeur in which it stood once the world over, when the Jesuits wielded the cat-o'-ninetails over Christian nations, with this difference, however, that the father's ambition is not very aspiring, and the daughter's passions being not reared in a hothouse of artificial life, they never come to a serious clash. Putting the excesses of such authority out of question, it is beautiful to see among these people, the deference paid by the children to their parents and their elders.

The intercourse of these people among themselves, (be they more or less educated,) is carried on with a 88

#### AN UNEXPECTED REBUFF

remarkable ease and grace, and with entire absence of assumption of superiority on the part of some, and acknowledgment of inferiority on the part of others; they feel equal and can afford to

be polite and obliging without supposing that by so doing they should suffer in their dignity as freemen. We are free to say, that in all our intercourse with these people, we were treated with more or less attention, yet never rudely, except it be by one of those who on the score of their race claim a higher distinction. We remember particularly one instance of the kind that occurred to us when travelling in the region where this class of people are more numerous; stopping at a house and enquiring of the young man that came out of it, whether we could get some water to drink, we were answered in an *exquisitely civilized tone* of voice, "there is plenty water in the pond." However, by a little management, we did succeed in getting some water without going to the pond ourself. As we had to make a short stop, though much against our will, at the house, we found that the whole household was of a piece and its mistress particularly so. It would puzzle the greatest philosopher to account for the moral phenomenon of these people. Judging them by their manners, it would be somewhat difficult to identify their nationality, although it was clear they were not of the Spanish race; where they grew, that they could withstand the softening influences of civilization, and the light of Christianity, we never could satisfactorily determine in our own mind, and we leave the reader to solve it for himself. When a stranger arrives before the house of a Californian, he will surely hear an invitation to dismount and come in; and if he should find the inmates at a meal they

89

#### LIFE OF A RANCHERO

would politely offer him a seat among themselves, and should he tarry longer, they will provide for him the best bed the house can command; and for all this civility he has next morning only to return his grateful thanks. It is not however the way in the house to which we have just alluded, and at which we had the bad luck to stop. There, things even for which we paid dearly, were offered with a degree of rudeness or ill-humor, that had it not been with us a case of absolute necessity, we should have declined to receive them.

The ties of blood-relationship are very much respected by the Californians, even to a greater degree than anywhere else; it seems that the remotest family connexion gives them a peculiar title to the friendly offices of each other. The spiritual connexion is not less respected, and the title of a god-father, gives the child almost the rights of his own children to his care and affection. Sometimes

a rich man finds it expensive to extend this title, as the whole family of the child may claim more from the *compadre* than he is willing to admit.

The life of a California *ranchero* or farmer is monotonous, as he lives alone with his family in the midst of widely extending fields or hills grazing his cattle; sometimes for twenty or even more miles there is no other house. It looks still more monotonous and uninviting to a foreigner bred in cities, when he sees the dingy mud walls of the farm house, surrounded by the carcasses of the cattle killed, hides extended in the process of curing and horns and white bones scattered about. But this picture is relieved frequently by the fair ones of the family sitting in front of the house, squatted on a mat or a hide in a Turkish fashion, plying 90

#### SOCIAL LIFE IN THE TOWNS

their needle or otherwise occupied. Their houses are made of mud bricks or *adobes*, sometimes white-washed, sometimes not. Generally a large corridor is made in front, which may be considered their reception room; undoubtedly in fair weather the most pleasant portion of the building. The house frequently contains but a few windows, (or rather openings in the walls, as glass windows are rare luxuries,) and sometimes none, the door performing the double function. The mud bricks are made of mud with cut-straw, put in a square form and dried in the sun. Their houses know no fire places; these are entirely a foreign innovation; they keep but one fire, by which they cook. Their mode of life may be better compared with a camp life than with the life of comforts that civilized nations lead. Still, however, they seem to thrive very well on it, and are content.

Their towns are a little in advance of their *ranchos*. There they find more attractions for life, more means of amusing themselves, however dull they may appear to foreigners. Monterey is the place that gave *ton* to the rest of the country; Santa Barbara, Pueblo de Los Angeles and San Diego only followed in its wake. In towns they have their balls, races, gambling, and church going, and church festivities—frequently all these on the same day. The people of this country are light hearted, disposed to amuse themselves and be happy; they have their own dances and their own music, which although it be rude, yet is not disagreeable to more cultivated ears. The waltz is a very great favorite dance with them, and they execute it frequently with a peculiar grace; they know other dances that are familiar elsewhere; but they also have their own *jarabe*, son 91

#### CALIFORNIANS A COMELY PEOPLE

and *jota*; the latter is a very graceful mixture of figures with the common waltz. When those, whose higher pretensions are universally acknowledged, give a ball, they invite their particular friends, and the generality of the citizens have the privilege to look on through the doors and windows, and they seem to enjoy as much as those inside, and none of them can tire out the other; the outsiders are not the first to go home.

The arts and sciences among these good people, of course, are only known by heresay, so to speak. Every thing of the kind is yet in a very primitive state, and yet they actually appear to know more than this condition would warrant; which must be owing in a measure to the intercourse they more or less have with foreigners, and their own good parts. The only art that is somewhat advanced among them, is that of saddle making.

Partly owing to the climate, and partly to the mixture of the Indian race with the European, the Californians are of a dark complexion, and have dark eyes and black or dark hair; and particularly so in the Pueblo de Los Angeles and its vicinity; yet there are many whose blood seems to be of pure Castilian origin, and these have a very clear skin, although they may have black or dark hair. Blue eyes are very rare among them. As a general rule, they are a comely people; and with a little more soaping and combing they could be made quite spruce looking; their men particularly have the peculiarly Spanish prejudice against soap and cold water. Their women, however, are not so much open to the above charge, they seem to be aware, as well as the women of more cultivated nations, that soap and water play an important part in the art of pleasing. 92

#### CHUBBY CHILDREN

Universally they are plump and very well formed; and as they advance in years, particularly their women, they are apt to grow very fleshy. Probably there are no people that claim to be civilized, that know so little how to take care of their health, as these people do, and yet they may be said to enjoy better health than those who are more favored by knowledge. The most unequivocal signs, in our opinion, of this fact, one can see as he travels through the country, in the chubby children that meet him everywhere, and the beautiful white teeth of the adults who do not know even the use of tooth powders or tooth brushes, and who seldom, if ever, think of rinsing their mouth with water.

The only tooth-powder they know, is their corn cake, called *tortilla*, and their tooth-brush is dried beef, *carne seca*, which require good masticators. Their food is generally strong, substantial in its character, and in quantity, a looker-on might presume it even excessive. They know no epidemics here, and have no particular diseases; if they die, they fall a victim of a disease that might carry off any man under any climate. The fever, in its different modifications, may be considered as the most common destroyer of their life.

93

### **MEDICAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE PEOPLE & COUNTRY**

IT will not be out of place in connexion with what preceded, to offer on this occasion a few medical observations which have occupied our attention for some years past, and which are particularly illustrated on the people and the climate of this country; and we do so more willingly as we do not feel disposed to burden a medical library with a separate volume, and as the subject itself concerns more the patient than the physician, being of more vital importance to the former than the latter.

Reasons peculiar to ourself, and which it is not important to mention here, led us to observe the effects of the habitual use of tea and coffee upon the system, as well as the abuse of mercury. In our observations we embrace different nations of Europe and America, but California furnishes us the most conclusive and satisfactory 94

#### **EFFECT OF TEA & COFFEE**

data in this respect. The effects of tea and coffee, as a habitual beverage, and the abuse of mercury as medicine, both show themselves, each in their peculiar way, upon the human teeth, viewed either with regard to individuals or nations. It is but an accident that the results of the abuse of mercury should show themselves in the same nations where we see the effects of a habitual use of tea or coffee, but the fact that they do so, is undeniable, so far at least as certain classes of civilized nations are concerned. An observing physician need not be told what are the signs of the detrimental effects of mercury upon the teeth, knowing as he does that that mineral has a peculiar and direct tendency to attack the osseous tissue in a very unmistakable manner, it is not therefore necessary to mention them here. But about the pernicious effects of tea and coffee when in habitual



use there is a difference of opinion even among very respectable authorities. Those authorities who admit the baneful effects of those drugs upon the system do not refer to the teeth as being the organs in which these effects can be particularly noticed. This might have entirely escaped their notice, or they might have included them under the general head of “effects upon the system.” If we particularize here, it is only on this occasion in connexion with these people, upon whom we have, so to say, performed *experimentum crucis* in our observations. The effects or results of tea or coffee when habitually used, are not direct nor immediate upon the teeth, but as concomitant and unavoidable consequences of a protracted derangement of digestive organs, bringing in its train vitiated secretions of the mouth which tinge the enamel, encrust the body of the teeth and 95

#### DELETERIOUS RESULTS

thereby frequently push aside the gums, and finally may have their roots exposed, or even hasten their decay.

The way that these results are brought about by tea or coffee is the following. Tea is a drug acting in a manner peculiar to itself upon the nervous system, as we see it in the fact that it is capable of keeping one awake or sleepless, (taking into account, of course, its quantity, strength, and the degree of susceptibility of the person affected,) it removes the lassitude when taken after fatigue, it enlivens one at all times, or it may serve as an antidote to the usual consequences the morning next after a fit of hard drinking, and so forth. It cannot be denied that to a perfect digestion it is necessary, nay, it is even indispensable to have an easy mind, to be morally quiet, or in other words, to have the nervous system undisturbed by whatever causes, moral or physical. The drug in question is one of the physical causes when taken internally acting upon the nervous system and whose effects last for hours.—Hence, whether it be taken together with a meal or soon after, or in course of a day, it always disturbs the digestive process, and if the practice of indulging in it be persisted in, the consequences will be a permanent derangement of digestion in a greater or less degree, bringing in its train a host of symptoms of which all medical men are aware, and which it is not necessary to mention here, save one, as that came particularly under our notice; we mean the general waste of the body, the loss of that roundness of form which is essential to the beauty not

only of man but of all animals; the waste and absorption of mammary glands in particular. These observations we have verified 96

#### INFLUENCE OF COFFEE

time and again by comparing large masses of those who indulge in the habit with the large masses of those who do not, as higher orders of European society with the lower ones; then nations with nations, as the Anglo-Saxon Americans with the Hispano-Americans. Of course we are perfectly aware that individual instances which might be brought forward as argument against our position do exist, but they are merely exceptions depending upon some peculiar circumstances exterior to the system or some idiosyncrasy of the individual, and cannot invalidate the general rule.

In California among the native population, where there are no different classes in society, where habits are the same with all, a slight deviation from those habits can be easily traced in its consequences; and it is precisely the case that the effects we have above indicated, are clearly perceived upon those who having little more intercourse with foreigners than their neighbors, have adopted the habits of the latter in that particular—and this is not only true in regard to the general emaciation, but to the uncleanliness of the teeth also. Where the artificial means to keep the teeth clean are resorted to, the effects in question cannot be so easily decided upon; but in the case of the Californians, it is not so difficult, as they do not know yet the means that art provides for the purpose.

Coffee equally exerts an influence upon the nervous system as tea, with a slight difference, however, to stop to discuss which it is not our purpose here, it suffices to say, that the former is more assailing in its effects upon the system than the latter, which is more insidious and permanent; the symptoms of uneasiness in the head which coffee is apt to produce in many 97

#### DYSPEPSIA ENSUES

constitutions, soon draws the patient's attention to it as well as that of the physician; but tea undermines gradually the whole fabric of the body till it even may puzzle the most skillful practitioner to say where the cause of mischief began to operate first. The most inveterate dyspeptics have been or are the greatest lovers of tea. England and the States can furnish abundance of such examples, where the disease, if we may be pardoned the expression, luxuriates with its

twin sister consumption. In no country are there so many instances of what Dr. Phillips would call dyspeptic consumption as in those countries where tea and coffee is made an indispensable article of diet among the rich and poor.

We are aware that many, as an argument against our position on the subject in question, would use the trite saying of the witty Frenchman when his physician pronounced coffee a poison. But we would say, in refutation of it, that it is not necessary to be possessed of much knowledge or acuteness of observation to pronounce upon the effects that follow directly and immediately upon an application of violent causes; an imbecile even can trace the link that there exists, as a cause and effect, between the feeling of pain he receives and the stick that may inflict it upon him; any one can, who takes a sufficient dose of arsenic to produce poisonous effects upon himself, ascribe them, as a chain of consequences following it, without being a physician, to the dose he took. But it will not be so, if, for instance, ignorant entirely of electro-magnetic power, he approaches the door of the cabinet of a natural philosopher, who mischievously charged his electric machine and connected it with the door-knob, touching which he gets knocked down. Being ignorant of the arrangement

98  
CHOCOLATE A SUBSTITUTE

of the interior of the apartment, what could he say on this occasion—how could he trace the link between the cause and the effect? It happens precisely so in those cases where the cause is slowly and distantly followed by its effects, and which so frequently come under the observation of the physician, and upon which ignorance presumes to decide positively. It requires knowledge, a habit of reflection and correct observation to trace, slow but steadily, acting causes to their effects, that, although may be coming gradually and by stealth, so to speak, yet act surely. On such occasions, even the fittest, the best of observers may miss a link in the chain of causes, and be deceived in his conclusions. It is not a mass of men that precisely on such occasions are infallible; and because this or that has been practiced or indulged in by certain people or nations for ages, cannot be adduced as an argument to prove that it is not pernicious.

Those that mix spirits with their tea or coffee, are the only ones who make a rational use of the beverage; as the spirits act as an antidote to either of the drugs, modifying, somewhat, their effects. We would not be, however, understood as advocating the use of spirits; far from it. They are all

good in their places as medicines only. As a substitute for tea or coffee, chocolate may be used advantageously; it is not a drug; it possesses no remedial powers, in the proper sense of the word; it is only alimentative, nourishing by its natural oil and substance. And as an aliment, an excessive quantity must be guarded against, as it is the case with any other article of food. If it disagrees with people generally, as it does with some persons, the cause is within them, their digestive powers being weak, its oily particles 99

#### THE ABUSE OF MERCURY

prove too much for their stomachs. The remedy for such cases may be to take less of it, or take it alone without any other substantial food. The best way of preparing and using it is unquestionably the Spanish way, as it is thus made more palatable and less greasy. As for the effects of the abuse of mercury upon the teeth of the natives of California, we can say we have not seen any, as they have not been exposed to them, there being heretofore a lack of physicians in the country. This deficiency, however, has been abundantly supplied.

California has never seen so great a mortality as within the last year, among the strangers who arrived recently; and some would lay the blame to the climate. We, however, would deny it *in toto*, and assert it is the fault of the patient and his physician in most cases. The diseases that may be said to be incident to the climate, are tractable, and we had the good fortune to lose not a single case as yet, be it diarrhorrhea, dysentery, fever and ague, or what may be called California fever—a confused type of all fevers. But we have treated our patients a little differently from the routine practice, from the injunctions of books and professors. If there be a climate unfavorable to the mercurial practice, it is that of California; nights being generally cold and damp throughout the country. Under such circumstances, carelessness on the part of the patient or the physician, may cost the former his life. We have been, therefore, induced at once to expunge mercury from the list of our remedies; and we did it willingly, as we do not believe in its *peculiar* and *exclusive* powers over the biliary secretions; we are able to command the same results with other means, which 100

#### OPIATES EXCLUDED

are familiar to medical men. In fact, we made a vow not to use it at all internally, in this climate at least, as we do not imagine a case that cannot yield to other means, if it yields at all. We might

bring other reasons in favor of our position, but we deem it unnecessary on this occasion, as our object is only to warn other practitioners. In diarrhoea and dysentery not only that we do not use mercury in any form, but we also exclude opiates, as they mask only the disease and often confound the symptoms, while the disease silently progresses, exhausting the patient's strength till death overtakes him. We have seen *too many* such cases recently, to believe our treatment wrong, and particularly when the most inveterate cases, when there was sufficient strength left, have yielded in a few days in our hands. Whatever may bring on cold, causes diarrhoea or dysentery in this climate, particularly in persons recently arrived; of course there are other causes that may induce diarrhoea or dysentery as bad food, and so forth; cold, however, is most frequent here. In view of these facts, we treat the disease accordingly. and find no difficulty in managing it.

In fever and ague, we are not fond of using much sulphate of quinine, except merely to interrupt the periodicity of the disease, for which great doses are not required; this done, we cleanse the bowels thoroughly, then pay attention to the diet, which should be nourishing but light. A strict attention on the part of the patient to this rule for two or three weeks, improves him rapidly, and guards against a relapse. Under such a course of treatment as we have here briefly indicated, and which an experienced physician can easily comprehend, our patients recover without much delay. And 101 CALIFORNIA CLIMATE MOST HEALTHY

it is our inmost conviction that the diseases of the country are not at all formidable, if properly managed; and that the climate is not the cause of the mortality that lately has been committing such a havock in the ranks of the strangers. In our opinion, the climate of California is one of the most healthy, as a general rule, if people understand how to adapt themselves to it. The crowded and comfortless state in which so many people are forced to live, together with the causes already mentioned above, contribute much more to sickness than the supposed direct influences of climate. There is always a class of people who find fault with any climate, because it is the most convenient cloak for their follies, or an excuse for their ignorance in the art of preserving health.

We have thought proper to add this medical observation to our pages, as we have found that many strangers, after the residence of but a few weeks or months, have already conceived erroneous opinions upon the subject, and which in the end might prove injurious to themselves as well as to

the country; our residence here of several years has enabled us to form a more correct judgment in this respect, and which may be at least of sufficient weight to counteract theirs.

END.

102

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