

Early recollections of the mines, and a description of the great Tulare valley. By J.H. Carson ... Stockton, To accompany the steamer edition of the "San Joaquin republican", 1852

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

THIS is one of the rarest Pacific Coast items which we hav eprinted. Mr. R. E. Cowan, the chief authority on California bibliography, says of it “It is the first book printed in Stockton, and one of the really great books of early California. He gives an account of the discovery of gold, with characteristic sketches of the early miners,” etc. Very few copies of it are known to exist. In the Huntington sale, January 1923, it brought \$470, and it is from the copy owned by the Huntington Library that we have made ours.

Mr. Cowan also says: There is no first edition in pamphlet form, as the first edition was in the form of a supplement to the “Steamer Edition,” but this was not repeated on the title page.

The blue wrappers we insert are as near a match to the original as can be found at present

SECOND EDITION. LIFE IN CALIFORNIA

TOGETHER WITH A

Description of the Great Tulare Valley.

BY JAMES H. CARSON, ESQ.

THE DISCOVERER OF CARSON'S CREEK, AND ONE OF THE EARLY
PIONEERS OF THE WEST.

Stockton.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICE OF THE

“SAN JOAQUIN REPUBLICAN.”

1852.

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EARLY

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TO THE

HON. A. RANDALL.

OF MONTEREY, CAL.;

PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY AND BOTANY, WHO HAS SPARED NEITHER

ENERGY NOR EXPENSE IN THE HISTORICAL RESEARCHERS

OF CALIFORNIA,

THIS HUMBLE WORK

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY HIS

OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE MINES. EARLY DISCOVERIES OF GOLD, &C.

HAVING seen many communications in the various papers printed in California, on different subjects of interest to the people, I am prompted to furnish a few particulars connected with the history of the times and people in California, from 1846 to 1852.

The Military and Naval operations, the conquest and acquirement of California, are matters of history, and are now before the people.

To the “good old times” now past, when each day was big with the wonders and discoveries of rich diggings, I would like to principally confine my observations.

A party of Mormons, who were constructing a saw mill, (where Coloma now stands,) under MR. MARSHALL, it is well known, first discovered that gold was to be had here for the trouble of picking it up. After they had procured a small quantity of the dust, they hastened to that old knight of pioneers, Capt. Sutter, for consultation. What the shining scales were they could not properly decide, but they thought it was gold; it looked like it, felt like it, and the stuff had no suspicious “*smell!*” ’

San Francisco, which then consisted of twelve or thirteen houses scattered along the sand hills, was consulted, *and the metal pronounced to be virgin gold*. The effect that this decision had on our quiet citizens was electric. The population of California, at that day, consisted of hardy, brave, and quiet men, who had travelled over the trackless wilderness with their wives and little ones, their flocks and herds; and amidst dangers, toils, and sufferings had reached the Western confines of our continent and unfurled the broad banner of freedom, and beneath it were quietly cultivating our rich valleys, unconscious of the gold laden hills that surrounded them. The first reports of the immense quantities of gold found on every river, gulch, and ravine, was not believed by these good pioneers of 1846, and the continued arrival of pounds, *arrobas* and *fanegas* of the precious metal, soon quieted all doubts on the subject, and a general stampede took place in the different settlements. The many comic scenes that were enacted would fill a volume of humor. Men who ere then were content to labor years for a few hundred dollars, and many hard-working, 10 honest fellows who never had twenty dollars at one time in their lives, were now fully convinced that they had but to

procure a pick, pan and knife, go to the gold region, and their eternal fortunes were made. I was at that time, (1848,) a resident of the then flourishing city of Monterey. The months of April and May had carried off many of our inhabitants—not to their long homes, but to the gold mines. Many of the old fellows who had put the whole golden reports down as “dod drat” humbug, had one after another gone to the mines. Some had left privately to prevent the remainder from laughing at them, while others, bordering on insanity, raved around crying for pick-axe, shovel and pan, had started off at railway speed. The month of May, with all her flowers and balmy air had approached, and I an unbeliever still. One day I saw a form, bent and filthy, approaching me, and soon a cry of recognition was given between us. He was an old acquaintance and had been one of the first to visit the mines. Now he stood before me: his hair hung out of his hat—his chin with beard was black, and his buckskins reached to his knees; an old flannel shirt he wore, which many a bush had tore.

Yes, Billy, I can see you yet, just as you stood before me on that sunny tenth day of May looking so much like the devil with that great bag of the Tempter on your back! Then he told me that it was gold, and that he had made it in five weeks at Kelsy's and the dry diggings (where Placerville now is.) I could not believe it but told him the proof would be in his bag, which was soon opened, and out the metal tumbled; not in dust or scales, but in pieces ranging in size from that of a pea to hen's eggs; and, says he, “this is only what I picked out with a knife.” There was before me proof positive that I had held too long to the wrong side of the question. I looked on for a moment; a frenzy seized my soul; unbidden my legs performed some entirely new movements of polka steps—I took several—houses were too small for me to stay in; I was soon in the street in search of necessary outfits; piles of gold rose up before me at every step; castles of marble, dazzling the eye with their rich appliances; thousands of slaves, bowing to my beck and call; myriads of fair virgins contending with each other for my love, were among the fancies of my fevered imagination. The Rothschilds, Girard and Astors appeared to me but poor people; in short, I had a very violent attack of the Gold Fever.

One hour after I became thus affected, I was mounted on an old mule, armed with a wash-hand basin, fire shovel, a piece of square iron pointed at one end, a blanket, rifle, a few yards of jerked beef, and a bag of *penola*, and going at high-pressure mule speed for the “diggin's.” ’

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No roads marked the way to the traveller in California then: but, guided by the sun and well-known mountain peaks, we proceeded on our journey. No ferries were in operation for our passage across the deep and rapid streams. The site of the now beautiful and flourishing city of Stockton was then alone in its native greatness; no steamboat's whistle was heard to startle the affrighted elk, nor had the newsboys' call been heard, or solemn bell called forth the sons of prayer. But still there was a little mud. Heedless of all difficulties, on, on I sped, until Mormon Island, on the South Fork brought me up. Some forty or fifty men were at work with the cradle machines, and were averaging about eight ounces per day to the man. But a few moments passed before I was knee deep in water, with my wash-basin full of dirt, plunging it about endeavoring to separate the dirt from the gold. After washing some fifty pans of dirt, I found I had realized about four bits' worth of gold. Reader, do you know how an *hombre* feels when the gold fever heat has suddenly fallen to about zero? I do. Kelsey's and the old dry diggings had just been opened, and to them I next set out; a few hours' ride brought me to the Indian-trading camp of Captain Weber's famed company, where I saw sights of gold that revived the fever again. I saw Indians giving handfuls of gold for a cotton handkerchief or a shirt—and so great was the income of the Captain's trading houses that he was daily sending out mules packed with gold, to the settlements.—And no man in California was more deserving of this good fortune than Capt. Weber; he was one of the men of the Bear Flag. His time and fortunes had been given to the American cause, and he was ever seen in our ranks where danger threatened. Geology had not been deeply studied by our sons of the “forest wild,” and many were the conjectures formed as to *whar* the gold came from; they could find it in the river any where; and at last they came to the sage conclusion that it was washed down from some place where the earth was a bed of gold, and as it continued to tumble about, became worn into the thin scales as they found it. As I have intimated, to find the source whence the gold came was the great object, and many prospecting parties were sent out with this purpose in view. The Indians who were working

for Capts. Sutter and Weber gave them leading information, so that they were enabled to know the direction in which new discoveries were to be made.

A party accompanied Mr. Kelsey, and discovered the first dry diggings, which were named Kelsey's diggings, after their discoverer.—The next discovered was the old dry diggings, out of which so many 12 thousands of dollars have since been taken. Amongst the pioneers of these discoveries were Dr. Isabell, Daniel and Jno. Murphy, (who were connected with Capt. Weber's trading establishments,) Messrs. Murray and Phalen, of San Jos´e; Messrs. McKensy and Aram, of Monterey. The old dry diggings were situated at Hangtown, in El Dorado county. In June, July and August, 1848, it was the centre of attraction for gold diggers. The population then there, (exclusive of Indians,) consisted of about three hundred,—old pioneers, native Californians, deserters from the Army, Navy, and Colonel Stevenson's volunteers, were there mingled together, the happiest set of men on earth. Every one had plenty of dust. From three ounces to five pounds was the income per day to those who would work. The gulches and ravines were opened about two feet wide and one foot in depth along their centres, and the gold picked out from amongst the dirt with a knife. When they failed to realise two or three ounces per day by this method, the diggings were pronounced worked-out, and new ones were hunted up.

Clothing was not to be had for love or gold; and I have seen many an *hombre* with as much gold as he could carry, whose skin “peeped out through many a rent.”

The first scales for weighing gold were made by taking a piece of pine wood for the beam, pieces of sardine boxes for scales, and silver dollars for weights. Gold dust could be purchased in any quantity at four and five dollars per ounce in the diggings, and for six and eight dollars in the coast towns.

Sutter's Fort was the great mart for trade. Sutter's *Embarcadero*, where the city of Sacramento now is, was the landing-place for goods from San Francisco, from which place they were transported to the stores at the fort, and there exposed for sale.

Honesty (of which we now know so little) was the ruling passion amongst the miners of '48. Old debts were paid up; heavy bags of gold dust were carelessly left laying in their brush homes; mining tools, though scarce, were left in their places of work for days at a time, and not one theft or robbery was committed.

In August, the old diggings were pronounced as being “dug out,” and many prospecting parties had gone out. Part of Weber's trading establishments had secretly disappeared, and rumors were afloat that the place where all the gold “came from” had been discovered South, and a general rush of the miners commenced that day.

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Before bidding farewell to the Northern mines, and taking the reader South, I would remark that the South and North forks of the American river, Feather and Yuba rivers, Kelsey's and the old dry diggings, were all that had been worked at this date. The Middle and North fork were discovered by a few deserters in September, where, in the space of a few days, they realised from five to twenty thousand dollars each, and then left California by the first conveyance. Tools for mining purposes were scarce and high—a pick, pan and shovel ranging from \$50 to \$200; butchers' knives from \$10 to \$25, and cradle-washing machines from \$200 to \$800 each. Provisions were worth \$2 per lb., woollen shirts \$50 each, boots and shoes from \$25 to \$150 per pair.

The discovery of Sutter's Creek and Rio Seco was made in July, and the Moquelumne-river diggings, at which there was but little done, that season. Mr. Wood, with a prospecting party, discovered at the same time Wood's Creek, on the Stanislaus, out of which the few who were there then were realising two and three hundred dollars per day, with a pick and knife alone.

Carson, who had been directed by an Indian, discovered what has since been known as Carson's Creek, in which himself and a small party took out, in ten days, an average of 180 ounces each. Angel also discovered Angel's Creek, at which he wintered in 1848. Ever first with the discoveries were Capt. Weber's trading stores—John and Daniel Murphy, and Dr. Isabell being with them. With many traders, in those days, weighing gold for Indians and white people was a different matter;

honesty, generosity, and justice marked their every transaction with the Christian, but they had weights and prices for the Indians.—And if this should meet the eyes of any of them, they will please receive the thanks of the writer for teaching him the art of “throwing the lead” for the benefit of the Digger Indians.

The gold discoveries reached no farther south during 1848—with the exception of the Tuolumne, on which gold was only known to exist.—The rains commenced the last of October, which drove full two-thirds of the diggers down to the coast, where we will follow them directly. Those who remained in the mines during the winter of '48, made but little at mining, as the supplies for their subsistence were so high as to absorb all they made—but the traders amassed fortunes.

In 1846 and '47, the price of the finest horses was \$20; fat bullocks, \$6; wild mares, 75 cents each; flour and vegetables, “we didn't had any.” We lived on beef and beans—beef dried, fried, roasted, 14 boiled and broiled, morning, noon and night: as much as every man wanted, without money or price; with a change, at times, to elk, venison and bear steak. The emigrants of 1846 did not expect to find any luxuries in California, with the exception of a balmy atmosphere and a rich soil—and they well knew that industry would soon supply the rest. The discovery of gold raised the price of stock in proportion with everything else. Horses and mules in the mines were worth from two to four hundred dollars; cattle from one to two hundred dollars per head. I have seen men give two and three hundred dollars for mules and horses—ride them from one digging to another—take their saddles off, and set the animals loose, (never looking for them again,) remarking that “it was easier to dig out the price of another, than to hunt up the one astray.”

The morals of the miners of '48 should here be noticed. No person worked on Sunday *at digging* for gold—but that day was spent in *prospecting* in the neighborhood, by the more sedate portion of the miners; while others spent it in playing at poker, with lumps of gold for checks; others, collected in groups, might be seen under the shades of neighboring trees, singing songs, playing at “old sledge” and drinking whiskey—in all of which proceedings, harmony, fun and good will to each other were the prominent features. We had ministers of the gospel amongst us, but they never preached. Religion had been forgotten, even by its ministers, and instead of their pointing out the narrow way

which leads to eternal happiness, ‘‘on each returning Sabbath morn,’’ they might have been seen, with pick-axe and pan, travelling untrodden ways in search of ‘‘filthy lucre’’ and treasure that ‘‘fadeth away,’’ or drinking good health and prosperity with friends.

Now let us look at the coast cities and the settlements during '47 and '48. The first emigration to California from the United States took place in 1846. Many persons perished in the mountains, or were compelled to subsist on the flesh of their dead companions. These men—injured to toil, knowing no fear: with hearts that had grown big with the love of freedom—soon hoisted a Flag of Independence, determined to build up a Republic on the Pacific. The war with Mexico brought to our shores the broad stripes and bright stars of America. The *Bear Flag* was hoisted, and beneath it, under Col. Fremont and other brave officers, were soon enrolled those sons of the forest who followed their leaders against the enemy through the hard winter of '46. Their hardships and sufferings through that campaign were unequalled by any during the war with Mexico. At 15 Los Angeles, in the spring of '47, they were disbanded, without pay for services or remuneration for supplies furnished by them—and, like our fathers of the Revolution, they returned to their homes, naked and destitute.

But little progress was made in agriculture pursuits during '47—. In the spring of 1848, considerable crops were sown, of wheat in particular. San Francisco, Monterey and San Jos e were fast improving under the head of industry, and many comfortable buildings were erected. Sonoma and Santa Cruz were also becoming settled. The discovery of the gold mines put an entire stop to these improvements.—The towns were deserted, ranches with their crops ungathered were left to the mercy of thousands of cattle and horses, with which the valleys and hills were then covered. The ravens croaked from the housetops, and grass grew around the doors of the rancherias.

The gold discoveries were made known to the Department at Washington by Col. Mason; his reports were taken up by that greatest of all levers, the Press. Its thousand tongues proclaimed it to the world, and a mania seized the civilized of every land. A revolution in affairs took place, which naught but gold could have effected, and every man set his face towards the land of Ophir. Oregon furnished the first emigrants, Chili and Sonora next, and the balance of creation soon

followed. At the close of 1848 our population numbered about ten thousand. We promised to follow the miners to the towns on the coast, where about two-thirds had gone to winter. San Francisco, Monterey and Los Angeles had received the greater portion of this heterogeneous mass; men ragged and filthy in the extreme, with thousands of dollars in their pockets, filled the houses and streets, drinking and gambling away their piles. No supplies or accommodations could be obtained.—In San Francisco, in particular, every house and tent was nightly crowded with these beings, who were in many cases packed away in rooms like shad. I applied at a public house in San Francisco, in October, for food and lodgings; I got beef broiled, hard bread, and a cup of awful coffee, for which I paid the moderate sum of five dollars. By furnishing my own blankets and paying a dollar, I got permission to sleep on a bowling alley, after the rolling had ceased, which was near two o'clock in the morning. Gambling seemed to be the ruling passion—there was no value set on money, as it would not procure the comforts of life, or amusement or pleasure to the holders; millions of dollars were recklessly squandered at the gaming tables and drinking shops.—As soon as a miner became *flat 16 broke*, he wended his way to the mines again, to replenish his pile, and then have another *bust*. Some few, as soon as they procured eight or ten thousand dollars, availed themselves of the first opportunity, and left for more quiet lands. I have seen men with from thirty to fifty thousand dollars' worth of dust, shipping as sailors before the mast for ports in the Pacific, from which they could reach the United States.

The first exploring parties for the discovery of gold to the South of where the discovery of '48 rested, was in the month of March, 1849. The Mission Indians of San Miguel had brought into Monterey large specimens of gold, and reported it to have come from King's River and vicinity. Mr. William R. Gardner, who had been in California for some fifteen years, and was acquainted with some of these Indians, determined to fit out a trading expedition for that region; the writer of this was importuned to accompany him, but owing to the indefensive manner in which he persisted in going, the offers were declined. Gardner left Monterey the 1st of March with five or six ox wagons, with Indian drivers and four Spaniards as companions; he passed through the Coast Range at the pass of San Miguel, crossed the lake slough near the Tulare Lake, and then passed up the north side of King's River to the foot of the Sierra Nevada; here he was met by Indians in large numbers

from the mountains, who displayed large quantities of gold; they refused to trade with him unless he came to their settlements; they having every mark, apparently, of friendship for him, he travelled two days into the mountains, where the Indians attacked him, killing himself and all his party with the exception of a Sonoranian who was accompanying them. This man brought back nothing of Mr. Gardner's property, with the exception of his papers, amongst which was the journal of the expedition. In his last entries, he says: ‘‘We have travelled about twenty miles to-day, the number of Indians around us have increased every hour for the last three days, and now number over a thousand—most of them have gold which is generally coarse, and to my enquiries of them where they obtained it, they pointed to the Eastward. There is a great stir among the Indians, and their squaws and children have left. I have now the greatest fears for my safety.’ ’ The Indians who murdered Gardner and party, were the Chowchillas, Chowochicimnies and Kaweeahs—the most thieving, treacherous and blood-thirsty tribes of the Tulares.

The next exploring party consisted of Messrs. Loveland, Curtis, Swain, Harris and some four others. This party reached the mountains on the 20th of March, some fifteen miles south of the Merced 17 river, and made the first discovery of gold in the neighborhood of what is now known as Burn's Diggings; but before they had made any progress, the Indians attacked them in large numbers, drove them out, and dangerously wounded two of their party.

The next party of exploration was more formidable than the two first mentioned. This party consisted of ninety-two men, under the guidance of Carson & Robinson, of Monterey; they were composed of dragoons and discharged teamsters from the command of Major Graham, which had arrived from Mexico, and a number of disbanded volunteers of Col. Stevenson's regiment, well armed and equipped. This party struck into the Sierra Nevada where the Mariposa enters the plains, and explored the adjacent country, finding gold in many places; they thence proceeded to the Merced and Tuolumne and found gold on these streams and tributaries as far as they went. The reports of these expeditions soon peopled those regions. Col. Fremont and his party were about the first who dug gold in the Mariposa region on what is known as Fremont's Creek.

Not being pleased with the discoveries South I started back with a small party to the scenes of my former good fortunes; but when I arrived, 1st May, 1849, a change had come over the scene since I had left it; Stockton, that I had last seen graced only by Joe Buzzel's log house with a tule roof, was now a vast linen city. The tall masts of barques, brigs, and schooners were seen high pointed in the blue vault above—while the merry ‘yo ho!’ of the sailor could be heard, as box, bale, and barrel were landed on the banks of the slough. A rush and whirl of noisy human beings were continually before the eye. The magic wand of gold had been shaken over a desolate place, and on it a vast city had arisen at the bidding.

The winter of 1848 and spring of 1849 had brought to our shores an addition of some fifty thousand to our population. Sacramento city, like Stockton, had sprung up Minerva-like, full grown; Sutter's Fort was nearly deserted, or at least no trade was carried on within its walls; Sacramento and Stockton had then become, and ever will remain the great *d'epots* for the mining regions.

We continued on to the old diggings from Stockton. When we reached the top of the mountains overlooking Carson's and Angel's Creeks, we had to stand and gaze on the scene before us—the hillsides were dotted with tents, and the creeks filled with human beings to such a degree that it seemed as if a day's work of the mass would not leave a stone unturned in them. We did not stop, but proceeded on to Wood's Creek, in hopes there to find more room to exercise our digging propensities. But here it was worse—on the long flat we found a vast canvas city, under the name of Jamestown, which, similar to a bed of mushrooms, had sprung up in a night. A hundred flags were flying from restaurants, taverns, rum mills and gaming houses. The gambling tables had their crowds continually, and the whole presented a scene similar to that of San Francisco during the past winter. I have there seen Spaniards betting an *arroba* of gold at a time, and win or lose it as coolly as if it had been a bag of clay. Gold dust had risen in value from what it was in 1848—as high as ten dollars per ounce was given for gold dust at the monte banks. Wood's Creek was filled up with miners, and I here for the first time after the discovery of gold, learned what a *miner's claim* was. In 1848 the miners had no division of the ground into claims—they worked where it was richest, and many times four or five could be seen at work in a circle of six feet in diameter; but here they

were now measuring the ground off with tape measures, under the direction of the Alcades, so as to prevent disputes arising from the division.

In the great emigration that had taken place, the city and state of New York had the majority against the balance of the states; and although the greater part of them were gentlemen and good-hearted fellows, yet there were some of the smallest specimens of the human family amongst them that I ever saw in California. I have seen some of these arrive in the diggings, and in their settlements quarrel about the amount of four cents' difference. A man who would quarrel in the gold mines of California, in 1849, about such an amount, must surely have had a soul so small that ten thousand of them would not make a shadow.

Mormon Gulch, Soldiers' Gulch, Sullivan's Diggings, and the Rich Gulch of the Moquelumne, had been rich discoveries, made during the fall and winter, and were now centres of attraction. Curtis' Creek, and the rich diggings of the flats around Jamestown, soon followed.—In October, '48, a small party of us were encamped on the flat near where Sonora now stands. Nightly a California lion greeted us with his long howl, on the hill now occupied by the town; he seemed to be conscious that the white man was approaching, and that his old playgrounds were soon to be occupied by a tented city.

The northern mines had also received a heterogeneous mass to their population, and towns were springing up through the mineral 19 districts. Coloma, like the rest, had grown up in a day, but more substantial than her sisters—most of the buildings being framed. The timber for these buildings was sawed on the ground, being taken at the saw mill at five hundred dollars per thousand feet.

Each day now added thousands to our population, all of whom came intent on making fortunes in a few days, and then leaving the country; many came on speculating expeditions; property of every description ran up to rates that set the world to wondering. In San Francisco, in particular, lots and buildings changed hands at rates unknown before in the annuals of trade.

But to return to the diggings. This swarm of human beings “laid cold” the bright calculations of the old diggers of 1848. They had found gold at every step, and looked on the supply as inexhaustible—that for years to come but few would be here, and that our rich harvest would continue as it then was. Men who would work could get from one to five hundred dollars per day; and in confidence of this good fortune continuing, these heavy earnings were foolishly spent in drinking and gaming, purchasing fine horses, and dressing in the gaudy Indian style. Honesty was the ruling passion of '48. If an *hombre* got broke, he asked the first one he met to loan him such amount as he wanted, until he could “dig her out.” The loans were always made, and always paid according to promise. The writer, on one occasion, was accosted by name at the old dry diggings, by a rough looking case (with whom I had no acquaintance) for the loan of some dust until a specified time. His rough hands and muscular arms proclaimed him a working man, which was all the security required. Without asking his name, the amount (fifty ounces) was handed to him. On the day appointed, it was duly returned, with an additional pound, and a pound of brandy for “old acquaintance sake,” as he remarked—telling the lender, at the same time, that he considered him “a d_____d fine feller.” It would not be very safe to lend out dust under like circumstances at the present date.

But this honesty, so universal in '48, was not to be found in the crowds that daily thickened around us in '49. Hordes of pick-pockets, robbers, thieves and swindlers were mixed with men who had come with honest intentions. These rascals had lived all their lives by the “sleight of hand,” and it was evident that they had not come to California with gold rings on their white, soft hands, for the purpose of wielding the pick and pan in obtaining their wishes. Murders, thefts and heavy robberies soon became the order of the day. A panic seized 20 that portion of the diggers who had never before been out of sight of “marm's chimbley,” and who went cringing about in fear, though most of them presented the appearance of travelling armories; yet it was evident they wouldn't shoot. But men were to be found who had ridden the “Elephant” of this world all their lives, and well knew the course we had to pursue under the change of affairs. Whipping on the bare back, cutting off ears and hanging, soon became matters of as frequent occurrence as those of robbery, theft and murder.

The years 1850 and 1851, have passed. The world have stood amazed, and looked in wonder at the rapid strides to greatness that we have made. California has been admitted as a State—a civil government established. Cities and inland towns innumerable have sprung from chaos. The depths of the mountains have been made glad by the sound of busy life; the places desolate and lonely three years ago, are now graced by large and flourishing towns; a hundred steamers plough our waters, which had lain for ages unrippled by the hand of man; the plough-boy's merry whistle is heard as he turns up the rich soil, where, as if it were but yesterday, the elk and deer had their playgrounds. In San Francisco, a city of four years' growth now spreads her bright wings o'er many hills, and laves her bosom far in the depths of the land-locked bay: several times in that short period have we seen her fair proportions laid in smoking ruins, and each time successively rebuilt, more bright, more great; and she now stands the proud emporium of the Western Seas. Vessels of every civilized nation of earth crowd her docks; and the bells of departing steamers scarcely cease to be heard. Yet great as she is, her greatness is but just begun to what she is destined to become. Sacramento and Stockton, the great inland towns for trade and commerce, came into existence almost in a day. They, too, suffered from the scathing hand of flood and flame, but rose again ere the smoke of their destruction had died away.

The rich mineral and agricultural resources of our glorious young State, are but just being developed; our rich soil, once pronounced barren and unfit for agricultural purposes is now yielding to the farmer its hundred fold, and our march is swift, onward and upward. Yet, amidst our present prosperity, there is a dark cloud that dampens the spirit of our enterprise—it is the indebtedness of our State, county and city corporations.

Our civil government has been in existence but two years; our State is in debt over *two and a quarter millions of dollars*; our different counties from ten to sixty thousand dollars; the corporations of the 21 cities from five thousand to a million dollars each. We have freely paid the enormous tax and licenses imposed upon us, and our indebtedness is daily increasing at a destructive rate. With the exception of San Francisco and Sacramento, we have not a jail or court house in the State; not one stone has been laid upon another by the State in the construction of a

State House, state prison, or any other building for our government. Our laws are almost an enigma, and have failed to protect as they should, the people.

The tax-payer very naturally inquires what has become of these vast sums? to what purposes have they been applied? whose pockets do they now fill? Our debts have been contracted by the representatives whom we have elected to office, and it makes no difference to what purpose the money has been applied, we stand pledged as an honorable people to pay it. *California will never repudiate*. Give us but five or six years to pay these debts, and it will be done without our feeling its burthen. Let our legislators lay aside all speculative schemes for one day, at least, and take the welfare of the people into consideration, and act in behalf of California's interests, so far as to fund the State debt, at an interest that can be paid; let them give the counties and corporations the same power, and the cloud that now sets upon our prospects will be cleared away.

Our only export since the discovery of the gold mines of California has been money. Everything we consume, from the bread we eat to the handle of the miner's pick, has been imported at ruinous rates. Under these circumstances we cannot but be poor. The taxation for the support of our profligate government has been paid by the few; this has caused a dissatisfaction in one portion of the State, and a division of the *Western gem* is asked for. Gentlemen, you who have taken up your permanent residence in the land of gold, keep cool for a while, and you will have no cause for discontent. Let the Land Commissioners decide at the earliest day on the right to land claims which now have our agricultural resources bound down, and but a few months will intervene before the rich lands now lying idle will be in the hands of the agriculturist.

We have around us the sound of the mechanic's hammer and plane. Go to our valleys and at every step you will see the hand of the farmer scattering the bright seeds on our virgin soil, and the calm smile that plays across his honest, sun-burnt face, assures you that his heart tells him of the return of an hundred fold. Two years more and California will cease to be a market for foreign products; we will have enough for our home consumption, and to spare. On the success or failure of our agricultural pursuits, depends the future wealth or poverty of California.

A word to the miners of the present day, and I am done. It is to you, *diggers*, I speak—you who are enduring the hardships and privations of the mountains, and working hard to honestly gain a fortune. Many of you, no doubt, are not making much more than what supports you comfortably, but a majority of you are getting more money per day for your labor than you could per week at any place in the civilized world; and you are happy, independent, and *your own masters*. A great many are yet realizing large fortunes in a short time. Don't any of you despair; there are yet just as rich diggings as ever have been discovered, and as large “chunks” beneath the earth yet as have ever been taken therefrom. It is true you have to work harder now to get it than formerly, yet it is to be had; thousands of square miles are yet lying untouched by the pick, beneath which millions of hidden treasure lies concealed. Never give it up, nor think that the days of making fortunes in the gold mines have passed; Thousands will be making fortunes in the mines of California a hundred years hence. The mineral lands, as far as explored, are nearly four hundred miles in length, and from fifty to one hundred and fifty in width. This is a vast field for you to operate in; and if some of you have had bad luck for a time, do not despair, but let your watch-word be “work, wait and hope.’ ’ If you have worked hard without realizing your desires, try again,—try a new place—work, wait and hope, and your wishes will yet be gratified. In comparing the prospects of the miner of 1848 with those of 1852, the latter has a decided advantage over the former. It is true, in the old times we daily took out hundreds and thousands of dollars with a pick and knife; we made *piles* easy, and we spent them *tambien*, for we expected it was to continue so forever. We had no means of enjoyment, not even a tent to cover us, and the provisions on which we subsisted were but sufficient to support life, and for which we paid high prices. You of 1852 have to work hard and dig deep—you have every advantage of machinery and improvement to aid you, and your gains in many instances are nearly as large as in the olden time. Every comfort and luxury of life are at your command, and at prices that are reasonable; you are not *taxed* as you were then, yet you pay a heavy tax from your hard earnings. The tax here mentioned needs an explanation, to those who have never studied what it is. Since the day money first became an article 23 of commerce, a swarm of Shylocks have been seen following the laboring man, and feeding and fattening on the sweat that labor wrings from the brow of the hardy sons of toil. California has been a grand field for the operations of the pickers of human bones. To those—the buyers of gold dust and the traders, who

generally priced their goods so that their gains were regulated by the market value of gold dust—the laboring class have been paying a tax before unknown in the history of the world. In 1848, when gold dust was worth but six dollars per ounce in coin in the mines, the miners paid to these plunderers two-thirds of their hard earnings. Shylocks in the coast towns gave eight dollars per ounce, thus taking from the miner five-ninths of his earnings, without giving him an equivalent. In '49, the average price of gold dust was about \$14 per ounce, and about two-ninths of the miners' hard earnings went to line the pockets of the eaters of human flesh. I make these calculations from the fact that the lowest assay of California gold at the United States mint has been over \$18 per ounce; the difference between this, its lowest real value, and the prices the miners have received for it, is the silent tax which they have been paying. In '50 and '51, gold was worth \$16 per ounce, leaving for the speculator one-ninth as his share. At present you only pay a tax of one-eighteenth of your earnings to the lordly speculator. In '48, if we made \$500 per day, its value to the miner was but \$200; if you make \$600 at present, it is worth to you \$566.66, your silent tax being only \$33.33, instead of \$400.

If you refused to sell or spend your dust, and wished to send it to the mint, or any part of the States, you had, and have yet, to pay from five to ten per cent. for that privilege. This silent tax has been paid into the pockets of speculators to the amount of full forty millions of dollars since the commencement of gold mining in California. This may be said to be caused by the neglect of the general government to furnish us with a mint, whereat the miner could have had the full value of his labor awarded him. But this state of affairs is about to terminate. In a few months we fondly hope to have a branch of the Mint of the United States in full operation here, that will close many a shop whose sign is “*Se compra oro.*” Getting the full value of your dust is not the only advantage the miner will derive from the establishment of a mint. A certificate of Mint draft will cost you nothing, and you can forward it to any part of the world; you can send by this method from one hundred to a million of dollars to any point you desire, without having the feeling satisfaction of first paying from five to ten 24 per cent. for the privilege. Therefore, *diggers*, rejoice; for there are better and brighter days just ahead of you. “Work, wait and hope.”

A few words relative to miners' claims, and the best means to be adopted for their equalization and adjustment, may not be out of place in this connection.

During the years '48, '49 and '50, the miners managed their claims in the different diggings quietly, and all went on smoothly. Different diggings, it is true, in many cases had different rules and different amounts of ground to work on—but this scarcely ever caused any serious trouble. If disputes arose in regard to the ownership or boundary of a claim, it was left to the decision of a few of the miners at work nearest to them, and thus matters were quietly settled without cost to the parties. During 1851, many bloody affrays occurred in regard to disputed claims; the courts were frequently applied to, and in some cases their decisions only made the difficulty worse. There can be no power to legislate for the government or apportionment of the public domain, except the Congress of the United States. President Fillmore, in his message to Congress, very properly recommended that the mineral lands of California remain *as they are*—a field in which the laboring man of every clime has a right to work without price or rent. The miners are thus left (and very properly, too,) to legislate for themselves and make such rules for the government of their claims as unto themselves seemed proper.

It appears from the many disputes and law suits regarding claims in the mines, (especially in quartz veins, which must prove a source of profit for many years to come,) that the miners should make a uniform and established rule throughout the whole mineral region, setting forth what number of feet shall constitute a claim for each miner. For this purpose let delegates be chosen from each district—placer diggings, and for the different quartz veins. Let these delegates be *practical miners*—working men—not useless idlers or hangers on about the mines, who can be influenced by a few dollars. Let a day be fixed for these representatives to meet in convention in some one of the most central mining towns: not at any of the cities away from the mines, where their deliberations could be influenced or disturbed by designing speculators or gas-blowers. Let such a convention make rules for the government of mining operations, and make a uniform size to miners' claims in the different kinds of diggings, and let these be binding on all engaged in mining. In case of dispute or disagreement, let the disputants refer their case to a Board of Arbitration, 25 composed of miners;

let the decisions of these Boards be governed by evidence, and by the rules and regulations laid down by the proposed convention. When these suggestions are adopted, the rifle and the knife, and, more than all, the *courts*, will be no more called into requisition for the settlement of disputes. I am one who holds that the courts of California, or of any other State in the Union, have no more right to portion out or make bounds to the claims of miners in the mineral lands of the United States, than they have to portion out the flower gardens for the Emperor of China.

ANECDOTES AND SKETCHES ILLUSTRATIVE OF CALIFORNIA, AND MINERS' LIFE.

A FEW sketches from life in the Diggings, in 1848 and 1849, may here prove interesting. The fortunes being daily made by labor in the mines induced men of every profession and calling to take the pick-axe and pan; mingled together in the search of gold were to be seen Ex-Governors, members of Congress, lawyers, doctors, mechanics of every grade, merchants, men delicate, and men inured to trial, and representatives of every people on earth. Amongst such a community, the observer of human nature had a wide field for study. The lust for, and struggle to obtain the wealth of this world, often shows up human nature in all its deformities. In some, its acquirement brings out the good part of our nature, and men who were looked upon while poor, as savages to their fellow men, prove under the influence of wealth, pure philanthropists and brothers to the human family; but such cases are of rare occurrence. The effect of sudden wealth on mankind has, perhaps, never been so deeply marked as in California. I have here seen men leaving the settlements in 1848, poor and nearly naked, for the mines; these men were then the comrades of poor, but honest persons, who like themselves, had labored long in the Eastern States without gaining a competence; after reaching the mines fortune followed them, one success after another had placed them, in the course of a few months in possession of hundreds of thousands of dollars. This wealth, suddenly acquired, made them what the world are pleased to call gentlemen, in which situation they looked on all companions in disdain because they were poor, and often passed them with a cool nod of recognition. This was noticed but in very few cases amongst the old settlers, on whom the effect of wealth had not the power to change their natures.

A GRATEFUL SON.

I worked at Carson's Creek, near a party of men from Oregon. Some were men of family—others had left sweethearts behind; and one of them, a young man, appeared to have no other design than to make happy his aged parents. I learned that his parents were aged, helpless, and depended entirely on the exertions of their son for subsistence. He had struggled hard to make them comfortable; but low wages, and high prices for all he purchased, had kept him from making much progress, and he had now reached California over the mountains with bright hope to illumine his path. When he reached the diggings, *hope* and *doubt* could be seen struggling within his soul. But a short time elapsed before his muscular arms were swinging the pick, (success must attend a cause like his,) and soon his heart was made glad by finding several large pieces; his countenance beamed with delight—he had struck what miners term a rich “pocket,” and as one chunk after another rolled out, his feelings would give way in half-maniac expressions; such as “that's mam's,” “that's dad's,” “that's for dad's winter coat,” &c., as he worked without cessation. Those who knew him said that he had made no other calculation than for the comfort of his aged parents, if success attended his exertions. In a few days he had taken out nearly five thousand dollars, and then bid us farewell for awhile; in his adieu to his companions, a tear could be seen starting in his eyes, while his soul seemed to burst out in one loud laugh, when he told them that he would go back and make his parents rich and happy and then return again and work for himself; and with him went the blessings of all around. Few men with a heart like his have ever come to California without finding a rich “pocket.”

GOLD AND LOVE.

Amongst the same party was a lovesick swain, whose marriage had been prevented because he could not raise one hundred dollars in money—a sum that his desired father-in-law required him to have before he could get *his gal*! Most of the party knew these stipulations, and the frequent enquiry of Jake—“Have you raised the hundred yet” could be heard from some of the party every few moments. Two or three days passed without Jake making any satisfactory answer, when one

evening he took the proceeds of his labor to a store and had it weighed, and found that he was the possessor of nearly five hundred dollars. This was four times as much as he thought he had, and it pleased him to such a degree that he came pitching into camp like a 27 young Buffalo, slapping his hands on his thighs and imitating the crowing of a cock, exclaimed—‘Wal, boys, Jake's a married man now, by gosh.’ ’ This raised a roar of laughter throughout the camp. As soon as quiet was restored Jake informed us ‘that he had 'bout five times as much as the old man *ever ax'd for the gal*, and he thought he would start back for Oregon to-morrow.’ ’ This he was persuaded from doing before he had got enough to start house-keeping with. Three weeks after, Jake's ‘pile’ ’ had risen to over six thousand dollars, and great ideas of vast speculations filled his mind;—he had purchased some fine horses, threw away his buckskin suit, and was dressed in what he termed ‘fine store truck.’ ’ One evening while we were around the camp fire, cooking slap-jacks, frying pork, and preparing, in different ways, a miner's supper, Jake made his appearance amongst us. He, at this time, appeared quite sedate, apparently in deep and determined thought; but he was soon aroused by the enquiry of—‘Jake when are you going back to Oregon to marry your gal?’ ’ ‘Wa'll’ ’ said he, ‘I don't know as I'll go back to Oregon; and as to the gal, she's good enough, but you all know her old dad is purty darn'd poor, and I think I can do better somewhar else;’ ’—and I don't think Jake ever went back to claim his bride.

THE SAILOR DIGGERS.

We had many sailor *diggers* amongst us, who had left their ships in distress in the Bay of San Francisco. Jack is generally happy and jovial anywhere, but in the gold mines he was particularly so. One or two days' work in the mines would give him the means of a good *spree*; and if they had clothes to wear, all they cared for was their *grub* and *rum*, which they freely indulged in, and all their earnings generally went to the shops; yet their jollity and proverbial good heartedness never deserted them. If a man was unfortunate enough to be taken sick in the mines, he received but little attention; but with the sailors it was different. If one of them was taken sick his comrades paid him every attention until he recovered or died.

THE DANDY IN THE MINES.

In the tide of emigration which set into the mines in the latter part of 1848 and during '49, were to be found every species of the human family; and amongst the other animals, a full sized live *dandy* could be seen once in a while, with a very delicate pick, a wash pan made to order in the States, and a fine Bowie knife, perambulating through the diggings in search of ‘‘ah very rich hole, whah a gentleman 28 could procure an agreeable shade to work under.’ ’ Of such cases as these, the old diggers generally made play-actors, and gave them the whole diggings for a stage on which to perform. The dandy has always been known to go dressed in the finest and most fashionable apparel—kid gloves that covered lily white hands, small walking stick, hair usually long, and soaped down until his head shines like a junk bottle, feet encased in patent leather boots, speaking a sweet little language of his own, which is faintly tinged in places with the English tongue, was never known to have done an hour's work in his life, and the oldest inhabitants never knew one of them to have a ‘‘dem cent.’ ’ Such a thing as that, of course, was never made for a digger in the gold mines, although the old 'uns used to make them try it hard. One of this species came into a ravine on the Stanislaus in which some thirty men were at work; it was the month of June, '49, and the heat of the sun was quite oppressive in the mountains, and most of us were lying in our camps, but were aroused by the arrival of five finely-dressed strangers; four of them were professional men, who, after having struggled hard for years in the Eastern States for a fortune without success, had come to California with the intention of laboring in the mines; they were good-hearted fellows and gentlemen in the true sense of the word; such as these, the old miners always instructed, aided and encouraged by every means, in their worthy undertakings. The fifth one was a dandy, who, with his soft talk and foolish questions, soon attracted the miners' attention, and his former companions (the first four mentioned) seemed to wish to get rid of him. For the love of fun, we agreed to take him off their hands, and instruct him in the fine art of handling the pick and spade. He was first informed that he must get an axe, cut brush and build him a camp, then to take off his fine shirt and a beautiful hat which was of that pattern known as a *plug*; and a flannel shirt and straw hat offered him in exchange. To this arrangement he could not submit, but informed us that he would not undergo such ‘‘ah dem transmogrification—that he was—ah—gentleman—had been raised as such, and he hoped we had common understanding sufficient to appreciate his feelings; that he had stopped amongst us because he knew we were ‘dem foin fellows,’ and all he desired at present was

to be given a rich hole, very easy to dig.' ' Such a place was shown him as was known to consist of the hardest earth in the gulch, and where no gold had ever been found. He set to work with his little pick, which he used about as handy as a ring-tail monkey would. After working by spells for some two hours, he had thrown out about a bushel of dirt without seeing any gold. Disheartened, 29 he threw down his tools, and came up to where some dozen of us were enjoying the rich sight of a "dandy's" first attempt at gold digging. He was in a perfect rage—swore that the gold mines were a "dem'd humbug—that Gov. Mason had written positive falsehoods, for the purpose of enticing young men from their elegant homes to people this desolate region, and he deserved to be rode on a rail for his treachery.' ' After he had blown off a long stream of fancy indignation gas, we advised him to cool down and go to work again, and he would have better success; to this he entered a *demurrer*, stating that he was a gentleman unused to such slavery; that it was impossible for him to subsist on such unpalatable food as we furnished him with; and being somewhat short of funds, he requested us to furnish him with dust sufficient to take him back to San Francisco, where he could get into business immediately. To this request, soft and gentle as it was, we told him that it was rather inconvenient for us to comply, but advised him to *hire* some men to work for him—that he could get good hands for \$20 per day, who, he might rest assured, would get out each three ounces, thus giving him a fine profit. This seemed to please him well, and he set the next day as that on which his future fortunes were to commence. Early next morning he was to be seen making exertions to hire men to work for him, but without any apparent success, as he soon came back and informed us that the "dem'd scoundrels had had the impertinence to grossly insult him when he asked them to hiaw out.' ' At the bottom of the gulch, off from the rest, an old mountaineer had erected his brush house; and old trappers generally have about the same regard for a dandy that he has for a skunk; and old M_____ was one of the oldest stamp, and was about as pleasant a companion to mankind as a grizzly bear would prove to be. To M.'s camp our dandy friend was directed, as being a place where he would be sure to get one good man at least. After viewing his toilet for a moment, off he started; the whole population of the hollow was on tiptoe to know the result of his expedition. Some felt confident that old M. would make him smell the muzzle of his rifle—others that he would work for the dandy in a way that would be quite satisfactory to a man of *feeling*. But a short time elapsed before a loud yell from the vicinity of old M.'s camp informed

us that the beauty “‘vat wanted to hire gold diggers’” was in a tight place. What passed at M.'s camp between the two, we never learned; but the yells drew nearer, until at length the dandy and old M. were seen coming at railroad speed: M. had a brush from the side of his shanty, with which he gave the dandy a loving rap at every jump; and as far as we could see them over the 30 hills, the same persuasive power of locomotion was being applied. Old M. returned in a short time, swearing that “‘that ar 'tarnal varmint never come to his lodge without being sent thar, and if he knew the man, he would have a lock of his ‘har’ to remember him by.’ ” We never saw our dandy digger again, and no doubt he never stopped before San Francisco brought him up.

“POOR QUALITY.’ ’

The next useless class in the diggings, after the Dandy, is what is known in the Middle and Southern States, as “‘Poor Quality.’ ’

These were generally pitied, not despised. They were young men, sons of planters, who had once been wealthy, and had raised their sons up in idleness—taught, them, in short, that it was low and despicable to labor—that labor was to be performed by slaves only, and was a dishonorable undertaking for a gentleman. But reverses of fortune often overtake us, and those once possessing immense wealth have seen it dwindling away without their possessing the power to prevent it. Slave after slave has been sold till all were gone, the old homestead divided among creditors, and the once wealthy planter sees around him a large family of sons and daughters who are dependent on relatives or friends for a continuation of their gentility. The sons of such as these, I have here designated as “‘Poor Quality.’ ’ Such young men as these, I have seen come into the mines where gold lay before them, and where they seemed determined to retrieve their fortunes by their own exertions. Unused to labor, or to endure any of the hardships of life, their tender constitutions were but illy calculated to stand the hardships attendant on the life of a miner in the Sierra Nevada. They generally possessed those high, noble principles so proverbial in the Middle and Southern States—brave, generous and good-hearted to a fault—they soon gained the good will of the old miners, who aided them in every way they could; but in their endeavors to dig for gold, their weak frames in a short time would sink beneath the toil; a few hours per day would be as much as they could

work; and in many cases sickness would soon prostrate them. I have seen them laboring for a few moments, and then sit panting for breath for a long time before they could resume their work. If those who are now bringing their sons up in idleness and teaching them to despise labor, could but have seen these sights, and have heard the pitiful expressions of regret that often escaped from those noble youths, on their ignorance of labor and bodily weakness, to gain their desires, 31 would change their policy without a further lecture on the subject. If these lines are ever read by men who are bringing up their sons in idleness, because the wealth of this world is at present heaped around them, I would pray of them to cease so despicable and destructive a policy towards their children. Teach them to work; raise them up to honest labor; for you cannot foresee the hour that want may make your sons curse you for your neglect.

A MINER'S BURIAL.

The only religious service I ever saw undertaken in the mines in 1848, was at a miner's funeral on the South Fork. Amongst the miners was one known as ‘the Parson.’ Those who were acquainted with him asserted that the Parson had ‘onst’ been a ‘powerful preacher’ in the Eastern States; but digging for gold had greatly tarnished his Gospel habiliments; in short, he had become carnal, and would take a big drink with any of his friends he met. A miner had died who was much liked, and we determined to give him as respectable a funeral as circumstances would permit. The Parson was requested to officiate as minister on the occasion, which he readily assented to, and soon made his appearance at the camp of the deceased—where a goodly number were collected, amongst whom tin cups passed swiftly around, and many a drink went down to the repose of the soul departed. The Parson never missed a ‘round,’ and by the time we got the corpse to the grave, he had become somewhat ‘muddled.’ The grave had been dug in a flat some hundreds of yards from the camps. After the body had been placed in the grave, the miners gathered around it, and the Parson read a long chapter from the Bible, after which he said it was necessary to sing a Psalm. No hymn book could be procured—and no one had ever committed a hymn to memory, with the exception of the Parson, who soon started one to the tune of ‘Old Hundred.’ He got through the first verse, and the first line of the second and there *stuck*. After several ineffectual and comical attempts to ‘start her’ again, he coolly informed us that the Lord had obliterated from his memory

the balance of that solemn Psalm, but we would go to prayer. At the order for prayer some remained standing—numbers knelt around the grave—and one *old case* sat down, remarking, at the time, that he ‘‘knew when the Old Parson had his steam a little up he was h—l on a prayer; and he was going to take it easy.’ ’ The Parson had been praying some ten minutes when some of those kneeling around the grave commenced examining the dirt that had been thrown up and found it to be (as they expressed it) ‘‘Lousy with gold.’ ’ This discovery necessarily created an excitement in the assembly. The Parson had become ‘‘warmed up’ ’ and his supplications for the soul of the departed could be heard ‘‘Echoing through mountain, hill, and dell,’ ’ when he suddenly stopped—opened one eye—and looked down to see what was disturbing his hearers, and very coolly enquired, ‘‘Boys what's that?’ ’ and continued, ‘‘Gold! by G—d!—and the richest kind o' diggins!—the very dirt we have been looking for!’ ’ The truth flashed across his mind—then he raised his hand and with a comic expression of countenance, informed us that the ‘‘congregation are dismissed,’ ’ and it was highly necessary that *that* dirt should be well tried before we proceeded any farther, and away he ‘‘scud’ ’ for his pick and pan.

Suffice it to say, that poor George B_____, was not buried there, but taken from his *rich hole*, and a grave made for him ‘‘high up the mountain's side.’ ’

PROGRESSION.

Life in California at the present day marks well the change that a permanent community has over a floating one. The change in affairs with us, has been so great within the last twelve months that those who were acquainted with California as she *was*, would scarcely know her as she *is*. Where we used to build a canvas city in a day, we have lately taken a whole week, and put them up of wood, stone and brick. The miner who a few months ago had to pack his kit along almost imperceptible paths, can now find in their place wide, well-beaten roads on which he can be hurried along in splendid coaches, at a rate such as is here required to keep up with the times. Where a short time ago it took from two to ten days to make a voyage in a launch up the rivers, to Sacramento and Stockton, it is now done in as many hours by fine, comfortable steamers, and the fare and freight charges are also a shade less by these conveyances. From \$30 to \$50 had formerly to be paid for

a passage, with the pleasure of fighting mosquitoes for a week in an open boat, and the moderate sum of \$400 per ton for freight. Our steamers are now carrying passengers for \$5, and freight at \$5 to \$10 per ton. The smoke of swift steamers rises like majestic monuments of commerce, as they ply to and from the Bay and inland towns, bearing full loads of freight and crowds of passengers. There is nothing more emblematic of the progressive spirit of the age, than the rapid succession of improvements in steamboat building in California, The boat of to-day is superseded by a better one of to-morrow; thus 33 boats that were “the pride of the slough” six months ago, now look as old and primitive as Noah's Ark. Should you doubt this, just step aboard one of those floating palaces, the American Eagle, Sophie, Kate Kearney or H. T. Clay, that “bile” but never “bust,”—take a view of their ponderous dimensions and comfortable accommodations—their cabins furnished in the highest taste of luxury; then cast a retrospective glance on the little steamer “Sitka,” (the first steamer that ever ploughed the waters of California,) the “San Joaquin” and the “Captain Sutter”, and you will think as I—old things have become new. The runners for these different boats will also inform the travelling public that their respective boats will beat anything else up and down the rivers, or “bust.” Such a recommendation would rather intimidate a less *fast* people; but here, anything that will “beat or bust,” is just the thing to suit. Anything that is *fast*, with danger or adventure in the undertaking, will be grabbed at, with a “to h—I with the consequences!”

MONTEREY.

Monterey being the centre around which some of the scenes of our California life is laid, a description of it and the adjacent country may not be uninteresting here.

It is situated at the head of Monterey bay, on a beautiful plain, which is scooped out of the pine-clad hills surrounding it. There is not in California a more picturesque or healthy place. It is one of the oldest settlements in California, being first settled in 1770. Nearly a century has passed since the first armed sons of Adam commenced the *Presidio* or fortification under the banner of Cortez on the little knoll that overlooks the placid waters of its bay. Portions of the remaining walls of this fortification, and those of the old Mission, which were built at the same time, are still standing. The present church, which now stands a monument of “times long past,” is within

the limits of the crumbling walls of San Carlos de Monterey. To stand amongst these mouldering ruins causes thoughts of the past and present to roll through our mind; we think of those who lived and died within them ‘‘long, long ago.’ ’ Around the decay of a race nearly past, arise the stately mountains which adorn the present city of our destined race. Not only on account of antiquity and the unparalleled climate and loveliness of old Monterey, is it made dear to the heart of every true Californian: it is the old capital of *Alta California*. Here the former race who governed held their councils, and here the pioneers from the interior settlements flew for protection in the hour of danger.

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When our eagle soared aloft to view the goodly land for Freedom's sons, it was here she first found a resting place, and from her talons let fly to the western winds our starry flag, beneath whose folds our brave warriors told a wondering world that Pacific's waves now washed great America's western bounds. Not only was Monterey the first place in California that the American flag was hoisted, but it was the residence of *our* first governors, and from out its old walls went forth the mandates to us to *govern ourselves*; hither a world was told to come—that this was *Ophir*; and here, too, our model constitution was framed and signed. New things took from it the name of Capitol, and removed it to San José—and since it was removed from there, its ancient seat, it has continued to *move*; but, like the Prodigal Son, as soon as its wealth has been spent in foreign lands, in riotous living, and it has fed on husks of corn amongst swine, it will return again to its present place in hunger and rags, and be joyfully received by its father, who grieved for it as one that is dead.

Three miles south of Monterey is the Mission and valley of San Carmel. This Mission, like all others in California, has ceased to exist, and its buildings once teeming with busy life, are now a mass of ruins.

A feeling which cannot be expressed comes over the visitor to these old Missions; it is created by a mixture of sorrow and joy that is such as to make its experience a heart-felt pleasure. The old churches are generally the best buildings and have defied the decaying hand of time better than the rest. Their bells, which once sent forth melodious sounds to call their devotees to prayer, now

hang silent. The owl has made its home where the sacrifice was once daily offered. Where are the old occupants who used to make these crumbling walls resound with busy, happy life? They have passed and gone, to make room for those to whom their lands have been given. The old Mission of Carmel is built near the seashore, where the Carmel river enters it. The beautiful valley, the high peaks of the Coast Range that surround it, the pine forest that stretches far to the South, the wild sea that talks in thunder tones along its rock-bound coast, and the baying of the deep-mouthed seal, all tend to make it a romantic retreat for the lover of poetic scenery.

The valley of Carmel is some fifteen miles in length, of inexhaustible soil, and in a very romantic dell, which is now thickly settled by hardy California squatters. A remnant of those Indians 35 which once belonged to the Mission and whose labor built all these improvements, continue to reside on the Mission lands. As an evidence of the purity and health of Monterey and surrounding country, I may mention the fact that there are six of these Indians over one hundred years of age; two of them, whom age has withered until their frames alone proclaim them to be human beings, affirm that they were old people, and brought grandchildren to the Mission at the time it was built. They are both still able to go about, and are always found busy at some employment at their huts.

The Salinas plain, twelve miles from Monterey, is a beautiful body of land, twenty miles in its greatest width and about eighty in length, of unequalled soil, and watered by the Salinas river through its whole length. Large portions of this land are covered by Spanish grants, and the remainder is nearly all taken up by pre-emption claims. The mountains surrounding these plains abound with grizzly bear, deer, and hare; in the valley—quail, plover, curlew, snipe and every variety of geese and ducks are abundant, in their season, on the plains and waters in the vicinity. In the Carmel river, at certain seasons, salmon and other fish are found in abundance, and the mountain streams leading into the bay and valley contain brook trout equal in flavor and size to those of the Alleghanies.

JUDGE LYNCH.

The civilized world may cry down the short but concise code of Judge Lynch, but I feel confident that every honest man in California has hailed it as a God-blessed evil to them. A depredation was committed; the long rifles of the honest boys were slung across their shoulders, and the depredator was soon ferreted out and brought to trial before a jury, where every chance was allowed the accused to prove himself innocent—if he was found guilty, his punishment was awarded by the jury, and the sentences whatever they were, immediately put in execution. Petty thefts and frauds were punished by inflicting on the culprit from fifty to two hundred lashes with a rawhide on his bare back, laid on according to the directions in the code. If the offence was stealing horses, mules, oxen or large amounts of gold dust, death was always awarded; and hundreds of the bodies of these rascals who came to California to steal, because we had no law, now lie rotting in felon's graves. We were not blessed at that day with statutes as unintelligible as a Chinese Bible, or with hordes of lawyers who, for a pittance, would screen, under the plea of informalities 36 in indictments of proceedings, villains from just punishment. There were no jails or prison ships; but if a culprit was taken, he never escaped—money or influence availed him nothing. If he attempted escape, the enerring rifle brought him to a sudden halt. I am not an advocate of unlawful trials by the people; but those who know the purifying influence of Judge Lynch in 1849, and of the Vigilance Committee in 1851, will join with me in saying that their institution and their firm devotion to the cause of right, alone saved California from becoming the theatre of strife and bloodshed unknown before in the history of the world.

Laws to govern us we had none, with the exception of the laws of usage, called by those who do not know its purifying influence in a new population, as Lynch Law. The laws of Mexico were presumed to exist, but were not enforced but by the consent of all parties concerned in civil cases. We had Alcaldes who we elected, or they occupied their offices by appointment from the Governor. To the decision of these, trifling disputes were given as final. But if theft, robbery or murder were committed, we threw down our mining tools, shouldered our rifles, and the offending parties were soon on a trial before a jury; if he was found guilty, he then and there paid the penalty; if innocent, he was dismissed with an admonition. I believe there was but one case of these high misdemeanors tried in 1848. A Frenchman had become notorious for horse stealing in the neighborhood of the Dry

Diggings—his propensity for horse and mule flesh became so great that it attracted the attention of the miners, and we determined to put a stop to it. He was soon caught in the very act of horse-stealing, brought in and tried, and two hours after he was taken, he was dangling between heaven and earth, at the end of a rope. This severe but just punishment put a stop to thieving exploits, until 1849.

ADMINISTRATION OF LAW.

Another instance illustrative of the times, was a trial between two Jews at Carson's Creek. These two sons of Israel had carried on a shop in partnership, and had realized a fortune, but in their settlement, there were twenty-two hundred dollars in dispute between them, and it was given to the Alcalde for settlement, and he referred it to the decision of a jury. The miners knew that the *men* had realized their *pile* from the labor of others, and were determined that the litigants should at least pay for all the *law* they received. The first jury disagreed—another was called—that also could not decide; a 37 third was made up, which came to an agreement, to the effect that the expenses of the whole trial should first be paid, and then the remainder equally divided between the two Jews. The *bar*—not of the court, but of the rum mill attached—had been thronged during the day, which bill, of course was to be paid by the disputants. The bill of costs was soon made up, and amounted to *eighteen hundred dollars*. This the Jews refused to pay, but the verdict of the jury and the money were both in the hands of the Alcalde, and he informed them that his oath of office compelled him to execute the jury's decision; he therefore paid from their bag the cost, and equally divided between them the remainder. They did *not* “go their way rejoicing,” but went off swearing a string of Hebrew curses which portended no good to the law-givers.

LAWYER'S FEES.

Owing to the mass of beings in the mines in '49; it became necessary for us to have Alcaldes and sheriffs for the different mining districts who were elected to office by a majority of the miners. They formed courts, before which culprits were brought; they also settled disputes arising out of disputed claims. They had no enacted laws to govern their actions, but what they thought was right

was the law; yet in most cases of petty criminal offences and cases of disputes were left to a jury, who were summoned by the Alcalde. The Alcalde's fee, in all cases, was three ounces; sheriff's two; and each juror one—with the addition of the price of all the whisky used by the court, jury and witnesses during the trial; if it was a criminal offence the prisoner had to foot the bill, if he was worth it, if not, no pay was required; and in all other cases the party had to pungle down the dust in advance, or they got no law. As an instance of settling small disputes at the Alcalde's courts, I will mention one or two in which I was summoned as a juror: At the Rich Gulch on the Moquelumne, in the spring of 1849, two Spaniards who were known to have had great luck in digging gold, had a dispute about the ownership of an old mule, worth about twenty dollars, and applied to the Alcalde to settle the matter between them; His Honor informed them that before he could extend the great arm of the law over them they would each have to 'fork' over three ounces for the expenses, which was done without a murmur—each commenced his harangue as to the ownership—not one word of which was understood by the court. After matters had thus progressed for a short time, His Honor informed them, in good 38 English, that they had better leave it to the decision of a jury. This was interpreted to them, and they gladly availed themselves of the offer. Two ounces more were paid in advance to the sheriff, before he would summon a jury. A jury of twelve men was soon collected, and the case brought before them. Neither of the parties could produce evidence that the mule belonged to them; and the jury, after hearing their statements, retired, and soon returned into court with their verdict, which was that the plaintiff and defendant pay each an equal share of the cost of court, and then *draw cuts* for the mule in dispute. The Alcalde's sheriff's and juror fees amounted to twenty ounces, and the *liquor bill* to three ounces. This the Spaniards cheerfully paid, drew *straws* for the mule, and went on their way rejoicing.

THE FIRST STEAMER.

The arrival of the first steamer in the spring of 1849, was welcomed by the thunder of cannon and the overjoyed huzzas of delighted thousands. It brought news from the Atlantic states only two months old, which was the *beginning* of the *future* short communication, when science and art will almost annihilate time and space. Previous to this if an outsider was lucky enough to get a newspaper six or seven months old from the States, he stealthily took himself off and adopted a

hermit's life until he had read it “‘clar’ ’ through, advertisements and all. If he attempted to read it in a public place he had to take a stand and do it in a loud, slow and plain manner, or hold it up in a perpendicular position so as to allow an immense crowd—front and rear—to aid him in its perusal. Before the advent of steamers on this coast, communication with the East was *via* Cape Horn or across the Plains. To receive answers from the Atlantic states, to letters written here, in ten or twelve months, was considered a fast line performance, although every exertion was made by the military authorities to keep up a correspondence by the shortest route and quickest conveyance possible.

LOVE FOR CALIFORNIA.

Poor thing! No doubt but if *evil* eyes could be allowed to pry into everybody's letters, that many such loving little epistles might be read. Many men have been here and made fortunes and left, are now fast returning with their families, or with wives at least, to make this their permanent home. Comfortable homesteads are now to be met with at every turn. If a man comes to California and stays two years, 39 he will never want to leave it. As an illustration of what makes the old stock return to California, I will relate a conversation *verbatim* between the writer and one of the diggers of '49, who has just returned with a fair bride, and which will also illustrate California etiquette. The last time we saw each other was at the head of the Calaveras river. He had been in California seven months, and had made over eight thousand dollars. The diggings he had had become worked out, and being unsuccessful in finding others as rich immediately, he was sitting in his camp cursing California and everything in it, and pronounced it one of the *infernales*t holes a man ever got into. —From his manner then, I regretted to think that California was about to lose one who would make a good citizen. He held on until sometime in '50, and started “‘hum to York State,’ ’ where, the sequel shows, he could stand it but six weeks; and in that time made love to, and married a fair one to share his joys and sorrows through life. He was the last man I ever thought to have seen returning. When we met, the following salutations and explanations took place:

Writer —“‘Hallo! is that you?’ ’

Returned —“Wal, it an't nobody else—how are you, old stock!’ ’

W.—“So, so. In the love of God, what brought you back? when did you come? I never expected to see you here again.’ ’

R.—“O, Lord! I've been back more than a year. Couldn't stand it there, I'll swear.’ ’

W.—“Why? what was the matter?’ ’

R.—“Wal, old cock, the fact is, the people there are so cussed mean, that a man who has ever lived in California can't stand it amongst them. I hadn't hardly landed from the steamer in N. Y., before a perfect swarm were around me, trying to swindle me out of all, or part of my dust; some of them got so very near and kind around me, that I had to draw old *sixey*, and tell them just look down the barrel and see if they could see anything *green* in her bottom! And don't you think, *even* for that, I had to ‘cut out’ or get put in jail. Oh, C—st! such a place you can't think on.’ ’

W.—“Well, it ain't so bad in the country is it?’ ’

R.—“Wus a damn sight! Even my own relations tried their prettiest to get all the dimes away from me. I didn't see anybody that I was ever acquainted with, who did not want to sell me something, from a farm down to a d—d old second-handed coat?’ ’

W.—“So, you left? what are you at now?’ ’

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W.—“Yes; I got my gal and left them diggins as soon as God would let me. I've got a ranch up the river now; got plenty of horses and cattle, pigs and chickens, raise just what grain and vegetables I please, got plenty of money, and in fact, I'm as happy as a clam at high tide!’ ’

This is no single instance of this kind—so far from it, that it is a daily occurrence; every steamer brings hundreds of the same sort.

GAMBLING IN CALIFORNIA.

As gaming is a prominent feature in California life, and no doubt carried to a greater extent than in any other part of the world, a short review of it will not prove amiss.

We who have come from the *second* families in Virginia, have been taught to look on gamblers, and those who follow it as a profession, as little superior to the devil himself. This view of the members of the *black art*, may be good and just in other lands, but it is not applicable to California. To say gaming of any kind is not an evil of the most-to-be-dreaded description, would be to argue against common sense, and all laws of morality. It is an evil—in California has become a necessary one. It is, here, sanctioned by law, and its professors constitute a large proportion of the first class of Californian society, and one-fourth of the entire population of the state gamble to a less or greater extent. Take the gamblers, that is those who follow it as a profession here, and they constitute a body of men of noble disposition, free, open-hearted, and generous; and some of the best improvements in the state have been made by the gamblers, from the proceeds of many a fool's money. The state also receives a large revenue from the license imposed on gaming. To prevent gambling, by making laws for its suppression in California, would be as useless as it would be to stand in the Golden Gate and undertake to keep out the tide with a pitchfork. What a field for the study of human nature is a gambling-house!—where the tenderest strings of a man's nature are played upon, where the pre-eminent and prevailing dispositions. and the hankerings of the heart for gold, become the master passion,

As the first steamer brought the first cargo of foreign masters in the “mystic art,” their annunciatory proceedings in California may serve to illustrate scenes in a gambling house during the winter of 1848 and spring of 1849. Previous to this arrival, “monte” was the universal game, in the cities and mines, interspersed at times with “lump 41 o'gold” poker. In the mines, especially in the Stanislaus region, in 1848, I have seen the Spaniards, men and women, betting freely pounds of gold dust on a card, and smoking cigaritos until they won or lost, with as much indifference as if it had been so much gravel. In the coast cities, (San Francisco in particular,) millions of dollars

were daily staked on monte, during that winter. The scenes of these places of *amusements* have been shifted and a new set of men have come on since then.

It required large capital to become a monte banker, as a small concern would be *tapped* by almost any rough-looking *hombre* you would meet during that golden reign. Large banks had their crowds day and night, at which some rich scenes were to be witnessed. One-half the betters were men who, a few months previous, would have considered their characters ruined forever if they had been seen in such places; they were to be seen “pungling her down,” with their heads presenting a mass of hair and beard that would vie with that of Nebuchadnezzar's on his return from his country sojourn spoken of by Daniel; and around which fell in graceful folds portions of the brims of hard-worn “old tiles” from under which the only thing human to be seen was a “jolly red nose” and a pair of eyes sticking out like a boiled crab; Greasers wrapped in the folds of the everlasting *serape*, only watching for a “sure thing,” on which to pile down a few pounds of the “*oro*.” The rather trim appearance of a few business men could also be seen mixed with the crowd of betters provided the bank was a “good thing;” jolly sons of Neptune, who had adopted a country life in California for convenience-sake, could be heard cursing a losing card; and occasionally a bag of dust would be passed in by a son of Africa, who acted as an outsider. A good house would have four or five of these tables in full operation in it at once, each with its crowd of devotees. A bar the whole length of the establishment, was the next prominent feature, where “old red-eye” was under his different names, issued in a perfect stream to thirsty suckers at fifty cents per glass. Collected in the corners were small parties, who only loved to gamble so far as to play “old sledge” for the liquors, until from their winnings they became so essentially “corned” as to make a hard plank on the ground, when they retired to rest, appear “soft as downy pillows are.” Groups collected around old *topers* to hear them sing songs. A pair of dirty lumps of mortality, who had met after a long absence, commenced *wetting* the ties of “Old Acquaintance,” and they had become so loving as to hug and kiss each other. A poor devil who had been on a *bender* too long, might be seen out-shaking Belshazzar, and trying to hide from things more dreadful than “Mene Tekel,” which he thought he could see upon the walls. A few overpowered by the *fatigues* of the place piled up in a corner completed this faint picture of a California gambling house in 1848.

During the reign of this state of affairs, the *professors* before mentioned made their appearance from the decks of “California.” The billiard rooms in Monterey were the stages on which they made their *d’ebut* in to El Dorado. That quaint old place which had been many a little old-fashioned monte bank give away before the power of long bags of dust, was made to resound with a voice which told us plainly that old things must change. These gents brought new games; the billiard tables were stripped of their cloths, and converted into tables for the different games, and stands for those who wanted to auction off extra clothing, guns, pistols, and the most approved Bowie knives.—Monte, roulette, faro, A B C, twenty-one, and the sweat-cloth, had their representatives, who (a new fashion at the time,) praised their different ounce-catchers up in something after this style: “Here, gentlemen, is the monte bank that will stand you a ‘rip;’ walk up you, you chaps with the long bags o’ dust; jest bet what you please—it’ll all be paid; pungle ‘er down pungle-e?’” “Here you good-hearted fellows is the man, ‘vid de weel’—brought this ‘ere fixens all the way from home jest to give ye something to amuse you; this, genteels, is vat you calls roulette, the only game vat pays twenty-six times for one; you can jest bet where you please—on any number, column, red or black side, or on the eagle bird; walk up, gentlemen, and make your bets—if you think I would cheat why you can jest turn the wheel and roll the ball yourselves.” Twenty-one would have its devotee using his powers to increase the size of his circle of betters. Faro would be extolled for its age and respectability, and the only fair game in the house, the dealer having no earthly advantage but the *splits*. The man who had the sweat-cloth being a genius of the society whose members are known as “one of ‘em,” held a crowd around him, he was one of the comic characters we see at times, who come on the stage in this great drama of life and divert the lookers-on for a season, and then pass off. The inside of the house being full, he had to establish himself under the portico in front. The rainy season was not over, and the gentle showers which we see falling here at times, were descending in soaking torrents. In order to allow his betters a fair chance, he was standing out-side directly under the droppings of the eaves that were running in perfect streams over his tarpaulin hat and India rubber coat. His cloth was spread on a bench in front of him under shelter, to which he called the attention of the outsiders by slapping his sides and imitating the crowing of a cock; and in imitation of scenes in other lands, he would, with comic gestures and a Stentorian voice, cry “oysters! fresh clams! hot corn!” and many other kinds of

commodities that California had never been blessed with. This idea took—soon a perfect crowd surrounded him, when he commenced to inform them that he had for his own amusement, and for the benefit of the community at large, opened the good little game of ‘sweat,’ a little republican game that all could play at—‘jist walk up, ride up, tumble up, any way to get up; then stake up to win a fortune—I don't belong to the aristocracy—I don't; I'm jist a plain old devil like all of you—I am! and if you jest bet on old Ned's little game, you'll win—you will! and if any one gets broke, I'll give him money to get a big drink, sure!’ At this offer an *hombre* stuck down a quarter of a dollar and lost; ‘There, Uncle Ned,’ says he, ‘I'm busted—just give us the four bits for the liquor!’ Ned, to make his promise good, forked over the half dollar, (the price of a drink,) remarking, ‘you got me there, a leetle—you did!’ And thus continuing, he kept the crowd around him in a continual state of merriment. To use one of Ned's phrases, ‘when them banks left, they were none of them broke—they wer'nt.’

THE CALIFORNIA RANCHO.

Under the blessings of all the beauties and fertility of soil which nature could grant around Monterey, it is not to be wondered at that its inhabitants were happy; and a picture or two of life in 1847 in its vicinity, will give the reader an idea of a ‘ranchero's life’ in California. The word *ranch* means here what we term farm in the East. But there is a great difference in size, ranches ranging from one to thirty miles square according to the grants made to applicants from the Mexican government. These lands were chosen with the sole view of using them as grazing farms; they generally contain, however some of the most choice portions of our agricultural lands. In most instances the owners of these ranches have erected large one-story adobe houses, in which lumber of any kind forms but a small item of their composition, being covered with rudely-made tile, and having the ‘ground for a floor.’ But few of these buildings have 44 wooden doors or glass windows, a dried bullock's hide being used for the purpose of closing the apertures; such a thing as a chimney was never thought of in their construction.

The out-buildings consisted of rude huts, erected for the Indians, who were always found on the ranches, and who are, in fact, slaves to the rancheros, but under the mild name of Peon. The

principal feature amongst these structures is the *corral*, a pen on which much labor is always expended. In their erection large and strong timbers, some eight or ten feet in length, are used, the ends being sunk side by side in the ground.

Near these establishments, surrounded by a rude fence, is generally a fine piece of bottom land, well watered, called a *milpre*, which is used for the purpose of cultivating small quantities of corn, beans (*frijoles*), pumpkins, melons, and red pepper (*Chili colorado*)—and many raise considerable quantities of wheat and barley. The hills and valleys in the vicinity were covered with horses, cattle and sheep—many of the *rancheros* owning from ten to fifteen thousand head of horned cattle, from five hundred to two thousand head of horses, and sheep innumerable. Their implements of husbandry consisted of the California cart, comic old hoes, and a plow invented in the days of Moses. This plow is made by simply taking the fork of a tree, cutting one prong short for the stalk and leaving the other long for the beam; the stalk is sharpened and plated with a small piece of iron; the beam is left some twelve feet long, the end of which is made fast to the yoke on the oxen; the lower portions of the timber being left sufficiently long, forms the handle by which the unwieldy machine is kept erect. To work this ‘land divider,’ one yoke of oxen and two Indians are necessary, one of the Indians driving and the other holding the plow. Swarms of chickens and dogs, mixed amongst the whole make up the outside picture. The ranches from their size, necessarily placed the residences of the old settlers far apart, and each formed a little community within itself.

The reader (particularly one of the *sovereigns* of the United States,) who has been used to all the comforts and conveniences which the arts and sciences can render to man, will conclude from this picture that pleasure and comfort were rather scarce commodities in the good old times of ‘Life in California;’ this, at least, was my impression about those days. If happiness, in the full sense of the word was ever enjoyed by mankind, it was by the old settlers and inhabitants here before the discovery of gold brought our present mixed 45 *male population* amongst us. Let us look at the life of one of the old *rancheros*, as an illustration of the whole: He is a perfect model of health, if anything generally tending too much to corpulency. His dress is in keeping with the climate and the semi-civilized age of the country he lives in; his hat, composed of felt, made thick and

strong, covered with black oiled silk, has a tremendous brim, with a sugar-loaf crown of enormous height; from its bullet-proof properties, it protects him from winter's rains and summer's suns, and likewise serves as a formidable shield in an encounter with the knife—in a modern phrase, ‘it is a hard old tile.’ ’ His shirt with its immense collar made of the finest material, has the collar and bosom fantastically worked with lace and ruffles. His jacket is fashioned *à la* man-of-war, and made of fine black or blue cloth. Pantaloon are of fine white cotton, made in Turkish style, immense legs, the bottoms of which are confined as high as the knee by long white stockings being drawn over them; a pair of *calzones*, made of fine material and faced with scalloped cotton velvet of a different color from the body, opened up the sides and adorned with silver buttons, is drawn over the pantaloons, and usually left open as high as the knee, and the whole fastened around the waist by a fancy colored scarf. The shoes are made light, of parti-colored buck or elk skin tanned by themselves. A gaudy colored *serape*, that is always carried either by thrusting the head through the centre and letting it hang around the person, or carelessly throwing it over the shoulder or arm. His complexion, owing to the mixture of Castilian and Indian blood, is what one of our Western boys would term ‘yaller,’ ’ but on his olive-colored face sit forever the smiles of contentment and ease. Encase his legs in fancy-worked leather leggins, place on his heels a pair of immense spurs, and mount him on one of his finest horses, caparisoned with a silver-mounted saddle and bridle, give him a paper cigar, a lasso in his hand, and you have before you a *ranchero*—‘‘One of the olden time.’ ’

Having described the *ranchero* and his *rancho*, we must pay him a visit to know how he lives. The visitor was welcomed to one of these old *ranchos* with an unfeigned cordiality that has now nearly passed away. You would be embraced by himself and wife, and told by him that his *ranchos*, horses, wife, children, servants and all he possessed were at his service, as long as you wished to stay. The whole family also joined in this welcoming. The ‘‘whole family’ ’ in California, means a great many persons, for it is no unusual occurrence to find twenty-five or thirty children the offspring of two parents, the 46 mother looking nearly as young as her oldest daughter. The best the *rancho* afforded was provided for the visitor, especially if a stranger. The fattest of the flocks were always killed for food, the choicest pieces taken for the family, flesh cooked in different

ways, *tortillas*, *frijoles* and tea constituted the general subsistence; milk and cheese were also in abundance. The meat of fat cows was always hanging on a line to dry, and a room filled with jerked beef, so that the hungry about him might eat and be filled. The month of August, at which time animals of all kinds are fattest, was devoted on the ranchos to killing cattle for their hides and tallow. From five hundred to two thousand were yearly killed, their hides dried, the principal part of their tallow tried out, the lean portions of the carcass cut in strips and dried, and the remainder boiled down and converted into soap. The hides, tallow, and soap, formed the exports of the country, and were the only means for the *ranchero* to convert his stock into money. Yankee trading vessels were always on the coast to barter goods or pay cash for these articles of export. Bullock hides of good quality were worth \$1.50 in cash, or \$2.00 in goods. Good hides at that day, in fact, passed current for the purposes of internal commerce—they were California shiplasters, and they were the only circulating medium, not coined, ever used with us. The average price paid for cattle thus sold, amounted to about six dollars per head. With the proceeds of these yearly sales, the *ranchero* purchased fine and gaudy clothing for himself and family, and a coarser supply for the Indians in his employ, and also fancy horse equipage for himself and *vaqueros*, as the height of a Californian's ambition consisted in being superbly mounted. Thus surrounded by plenty, blessed with health, money at command, no sheriff or tax-gatherer to make professional calls on them, in the midst of their happy children, they passed their time amongst their flocks, breathing the balmy air which is always laden by the fragrance from the flower-clad plains. They may be said to have sung and danced their time away. Pic-nic parties were frequent, to which the young and old repaired, and made the hills and dells in the wild woods ring with the merry peals of laughter; fandangoes were also of frequent occurrence, and the sound of the violin and guitar scarcely ever died away at the old homesteads. After skimming over the broad plains on their fine horses during the day, they joined in the giddy waltz at night. It was of no unusual occurrence to see the little black-eyed girl of seven or eight summers, and her great grandmother going through the intricacies of a Spanish dance together.

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THE DIGGER INDIAN.

The only thing that can be called *human* in the appearance of the digger Indians of the Sierra Nevada is their resemblance to the sons of Adam. I have made these class of beings a study and in them I find but few traits belonging to the human family.

In the early days of gold digging these Indians looked on in wonder at the exertions of the white man to procure from the rivers and gulches things not to be eaten, but they, following the example of the whites, soon procured some for themselves and found that they could barter it for provisions and clothes. Indians were at work for miners and others, receiving in payment for their week's work an old shirt or handkerchief. The wild tribes were soon mingled amongst the whites in all the diggings. They came in from the *bug -and- acorn* hunting grounds, naked as nature had made them. Beef distributed amongst them had an attraction to bring them to the tents of the traders, whose slaves, in a manner, they became. All the gold they got was spent for such things as they took a fancy for. In their first trades, all they had in their possession was given, or offered, for any gewgaw that struck their fancy, as they had no idea of the value of gold. Thus it was that traders often received for a gaudy colored handkerchief, a fancy string of beads, or a red sash, from fifty to five hundred dollars. Whatever amount of gold was in the possession of the Indian, he freely offered for such things as he pointed at. If it was accepted, he would snatch the article up, put down his money, and go off jabbering like a monkey at the idea of the manner in which he had *fooled* the white man. But this state of things did not continue long. Old Mission Indians informed them that the whites sold to each other by *ounces* and *pesos*, and that they could get more if they would have their gold weighed. This opened the eyes of the traders, and some of them procured scales and weights for the *accommodation* of the Indian while on his shopping expeditions. Whether the Indian gained by the operation is rather doubtful. Indian prices of goods ranged about as follows; cotton cloth or calico \$20 per yard, plain white blankets six ounces, serapes from twenty to thirty ounces each, beads equal weight in gold, handkerchiefs and sashes two ounces each, beef \$5 per pound, and every thing in like proportion. It was not these prices only that they had to pay, as in settling, when the scales and weights were brought out, to look at the slugs of lead called pesos and ounces, and the arrangement of the scales was enough to make a white man blush; yet Mr. Indian regarded

it as perfectly fair, and would pile on 48 gold until the scales would exactly balance, using every precaution that he gave no more than the precise weight.

It was laughable to see the manner in which their fancy prompted them to adorn themselves. Some taking a fancy to shirts, might be seen parading around with a dozen on at a time; others decorated themselves with red sashes and fancy handkerchiefs until they resembled a decorated telegraph; while another portion thought a Spanish hat sufficient to cover their nakedness—and in many instances the wearer of the hat would have his naked heels adorned with a huge pair of California spurs.

In July and August, '48, some of the settlers moved their families into the mines, and the face of the American female was a new source of wonder to the Indian race, and attracted them in large numbers. Amongst the admirers of the white women, was one tall, fleshy, well-formed Indian, who was as naked as he came into the world, and he seemed backward in going near them on this account, but would stand behind a tree at some distance off, and peeping from behind it, would admire them for hours at a time. At length he seemed to have formed a resolution to dress himself, so that he could approach nearer to them. For this purpose he went diligently to work with a sharp stick, digging gold. He forsook his tribe, and was forever to be found with white men. An everlasting smile was on his face, and he appeared to be the soul of good nature. In a week he had got a *pile* sufficient to dress himself up and he wended his way to the camp of a trader: here he purchased a uniform jacket, such as had been worn by Col. Stevenson's regiment, a handkerchief, and a pair of socks, and then commenced to dress up. The jacket was A No. 1, and the man No. 4. When he buttoned it up his flesh stood out in a roll around below it; the collar was so tight that it caused the veins in his forehead to swell to the size of a man's finger; he then drew on his socks, and made direct for the camps of the American ladies. The jacket and socks were all that covered him, the rest of his person being in a state of nature; but he felt sufficiently dressed for an interview with the ladies, and he was soon amongst them, showing himself off to the best advantage—but the pride of human nature is often sufficiently lowered—even that of digger Indians—for our beau was unceremoniously kicked from the presence of the fair sex, by a very rough looking *old dad*.

WAGONS AND FREIGHT.

At the time California was first occupied by the Americans, the only means of transportation was by California carts and pack mules. 49 The California cart is a curiosity to the American when he first sees it; it is, like the California plough, an Egyptian invention, and may be classed among the relics of antiquity. To those who have never seen one, a short description may not be uninteresting. The wheels are made by cutting blocks from the butts of the buttonwood tree, are about twenty inches in thickness, and from two to four feet in diameter; through this a hole for the axle is made, about six inches in diameter; the axletree is made of a heavy oak timber; the tongue or pole is usually about fifteen feet in length, made of four by ten scantling; to this is framed the heads of timbers of like size with the pole; the body or box is made of small poles, arranged around the bed, like a cage. In these unwieldy things, the ranchers transported to the sea-coast their hides and tallow, and, lined with raw hides, they could transport barley or wheat; or, by putting some beds in the bottom, and covering the top with a quilt or sheet, it was converted into a *pleasure* carriage, in which the Dons transported their lady friends to all places of amusement, or made journeys of business. On these excursions, the *carata* is usually drawn by five or six yokes of oxen, driven by three or four Indians. The male portion of the family, mounted on fine horses, acted as escorts of honor, and the whole caravan was usually set off by from thirty to forty half-starved dogs. With the exception of the few American wagons brought over by the emigrants, these carts were the only locomotive power we had, and long trains of them could be continually seen on the roads leading from the southern country to the mines, from which they never returned, and which in many cases, they never reached, as the numerous wrecks along the road testified. The speed of these machines was about twelve miles a day, provided they had not to stop to make new axletrees, which had usually to be done once per day, at least. This means of transportation could not be depended upon for taking supplies into the mines, and those having American wagons would not commence making roads and hauling in supplies, while they could make from one to five hundred dollars per day by mining; and the only means for some time used, was by pack mules. The price for transportation in launches on the rivers, from San Francisco to Sutter's *Embarcadero*, was from 50 to 75 cents a pound, and from there to the mines, it was near the same price. Owing to the large supply usually taken in at first

by the miners, there was not much transportation required until the winter of '48 and spring of '49, when the price of hauling from Stockton or Sacramento to the mines, ranged from \$1 to \$1. 25 per pound. Provisions, in consequence, had to rise accordingly, and \$200 for a bullock, \$800 per barrel for 50 flour, and \$400 per hundred pounds for sugar, coffee, and pork, were the prices we had to pay. These prices may sound like impossibilities to miners of the present day—I speak truth. A great change has come over the scene—the times that were are now no more; gold is as plenty, but not as easily got. In those times, we picked it up from the top of the earth; now, it is deep beneath the hills that hidden treasures are found.

THE PIONEERS.

The foreigners of California, who had been it for several years, were married to daughters of old rancheros, and generally rich and happy. The restraints of refined society and the bonds of civilization which they were used to in other lands, were here thrown off, and life and the pleasures of this world became doubly dear to them; their natural shrewdness gave them advantage over the native population that proved so beneficial as soon to place them in possession of equal wealth with their benefactors. Those who had been but a few years here, principally hunters and trappers, continued to live a free, roaming life. Life in California, with them, might be termed the essence of human liberty. The climate being that of perpetual spring, the hills and plains were as comfortable residences for them at all times, with the addition of a tent or lodge, as they could desire: they spent their time in hunting sea otter, (with which the coast abounds,) beaver, bear and deer. The skins of the sea otter were worth here \$40 each, and were purchased for the China trade; bear and deer skins and bear's oil commanded good prices, and were purchased by the trading vessels on the coast. Monterey was the principal trading post for them, to which their furs were brought and sold. With the money thus obtained, they purchased such necessaries as they needed in the mountains, of which *whiskey* formed no small item. After their purchases were made, they then indulged in a good old-fashioned frolic, until the remainder of their money was gone—they cursed all things civilized, and left for the mountains again.

Of all the human family on earth, there are none to excel the hunter and trapper of the American continent in deeds of noble daring and personal bravery. Amongst hostile tribes of savages he has pierced the depths of the wilderness, thousands of miles in advance of civilization; alone he has set his traps on the inlets that form the heads of the Mississippi, Missouri and Columbia rivers; fearless alike of the dangers from man or beast, he has pitched his lodge in the deepest recesses 51 of the Rocky Mountains and the ice-bound shores of the northern lakes. And here, in California, even in advance of the Cross, he was to be found, hunting the fur-clad animals on the waves of the Pacific, or in Nevada's snow-capped hills.

To know how these pioneers enjoyed “Life in California,” we must go to their homes in the forest. Far from any settlement, they pitched their lodges, or built a rude hut on some pure mountain stream, surrounded by groves of timber. In the redwood forests, found in the heads of most of the vallies making in from the coast, those hunting otter, deer, and bear, generally took up their residences. Here, free from the trammels of law, or restraints of refined associations, and knowing nothing of “man's inhumanity to man,” they enjoyed the heart's pleasures that alone can be found in the picturesque solitudes of the mountain's depths. There is an ennobling lesson which is learned in the wilderness by the mountaineer of America, that places him, in principle, above the rest of mankind. From the dangers that surround him at all times, he has been taught to look on them, and even on death itself, with cold indifference. Fear is a word to which they know no meaning; and their rifles are ever ready to repel infringements or imposition on their liberties. They learn from the great Book of Nature spread out before them, the existence of one more great than they —of one Eternal Being, who almost speaks to man, while he is surrounded by the greatness of His works, on which the stillness of the wilderness has been unbroken through countless ages. If the human heart longs to hold communion with Heaven's King, it is not to be found in gorgeous temples, adorned with glittering tapestry, built amidst piles of palaces inhabited by licentious man; not where crowds of the sons and daughters of earth have adorned for gaudy show; whose hearts are filled with wrangling ambitions, even as they kneel on downy cushions, before altars adorned in costly array; not amid the strains of earthly music, and clouds of incense from burning censers, can the heart of man be humbled to adore an unseen Ruler! But go to the homes and haunts of the

mountaineer, in the lone forest, where the grandeur of Heaven's architecture surrounds you; where the music comes from babbling brooks, and songs of sportive birds, where the air you breathe is laden with the sweet perfumes from the flower-clad hills and vales around, which arise as a befitting incense for adoration; where the cloud-capped peaks of the mountains ever point into the azure vault above, and tell the heart there is a God. For this great Being, the mountaineer alone has 52 veneration. They hold in derision, anything like a government which attempts to check them in the full enjoyment of their actions; and they hold in contempt such things as officers of the law, and the members of refined society; and the life of a mountaineer in California may be said to have been one of independent happiness not to be met with elsewhere.

THE AGUE.

In the fall of 1848, portions of the northern mines were unusually sickly, and those who remained on the rivers during August and September of that year (if they were not too lazy to shake) had the fever and ague. A man who got sick suffered; there was no shelter for him, no attention paid to his wants—nor could medical aid, in many instances, be procured. Thus situated, suffering from disease and neglect, exposed to the hot sun during the day, and to the cold at night, many died. I met a poor fellow from Feather river, who was trying to reach Sutter's Fort; his teeth were chattering, and his whole frame was in a *pleasing shake*. On enquiry, he informed me that every body on the river was as bad as he was, and that he only left because *the pine bushes* had taken the *ager*, and were dying so fast that he thought he had better make his escape.' '

A MONEYED NIGGER.

I remember seeing the captain of a brig on the beach at San Francisco, who had a crew, with the exception of a cook. He met a negro, and asked him if he wished to go as cook on his brig. The negro, after cocking his hat on the side of his head, and bringing his arms akimbo, coolly inquired the wages offered. The captain informed him that ten dollars per day was as much as he could afford. The negro, at this offer, burst into a loud laugh, and informed the captain "Dat if de *capten*

wished to hire heseff out for *twenty* dollars a day to fill dat occupation, jes walk up to de restaurant, and he would set him to work immediately.’ ’

A JEW IN THE MINES.

Amongst our population of that golden day, we had *one* Jew. The old miners will ever remember Dutch John. When I arrived in the diggings, old friends hailed from every side, and an invitation was soon given to all hands to go down to Dutch John's and take a *big 53 drink*. As John's store was about a fair sample of the trading establishments of the day, a short description may not be uninteresting:

The *building*, like all others then used, consisted of brush cut from the closest trees; his stock of goods, two boxes of crackers, a few boxes of sardines, a few knives, (samples of every pattern ever made,) a half box of tobacco, and two barrels of the *youngest* whiskey I had ever tasted. The counter was the head of an empty barrel, set off with a broken tumbler, tin cup, and a junk bottle of the ardent. Scales and weights were not much then in use, and John's store had none. A drink was paid for by his taking a *pinch* of gold dust with his thumb and fore-finger from the miner's bag, or sorting out a lump the size and value of a dollar, according to Jewish ideas of such things. Before taking the pinch from the bag, John's finger and thumb could be seen sliding down his throat (as far as the balance of the hand would permit) for the purpose of covering them with saliva, to make the gold stick, and he then thrust it into the miner's *pile*. The amount of such a pinch was from four to eight dollars! “ *Gott und Himmel,* ’ ’ John: if we have accounts to settle in the next world, won't the clerks have a time of it with yours! This mode of settling was looked upon rather as a source of fun for the miners, than as an imposition.

CALIFORNIA A FAST COUNTRY.

There is a *fast* mode of doing business in California, which had to be adopted, to keep up with the times. As an illustration of the *short talk* business habits to be met with in our cities, towns, and elsewhere, is a conversation held between the worthy captain of a trading vessel and a boatman on the Stockton slough, some time ago. The trading vessel and her captain were making their

first voyage to the thriving city of Stockton. Just as they entered the slough, they were met by a gentleman in a small boat, with his dog and gun, going to the marshes to pass a few hours (snatched from business pursuits) in killing ducks, when the following dialogue occurred:

Captain —Boat ahoy!

Gent —Hillo!

Captain —How far to Stockton? How deep and wide is the *creek*? What is the price of flour? What dog is that? What'll you take for your gun?

Gent —Three miles; twenty feet by seventy yards; twenty-two dollars, and rising; the dog *ain't* mine, and the gun *ain't* for sale.

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Business is often transacted to the amount of thousands of dollars by merchants and traders, in just about the same short-handed manner of conversation. We are a *fast* people. If an incendiary sets fire to one of our *fast-built* cities, containing fifteen or twenty thousand inhabitants, and burns it up in a *fast* manner, we go to work and rebuild it in fifteen or twenty days, in a superior style; an undertaking that may appear to the balance of *slow* creation as a *fast* job, *fastly* done, by a d—d *fast* people. If a *fast* rain fall and raise the gold-sand rivers so *fast* as to wash away the dams and other improvements built on them by our *fast* working miners, they are again rebuilt in a firmer and *faster* manner than before. Our farmers raise crops of grain and vegetables *faster*, which they sell *fast*, at *faster* rates than any portion of the *fast* world we live in. We now have *fast* steamboats, *fast* horses, *fast* express lines, and some of the *fastest* “ *hombres* ’ ’ that can be met with; and in fact it requires a *faster* pen than mine to detail the *fast* way in which fortunes are made here. We have seen, for the last four years, people coming into the country *fast*; and for a time they went out of it *fast*. But now there are so many who like the *fast* place, that they have determined to remain *fast* in it for life. If an *hombre* gets tired of his *fast* life, just let him steal something, and he can get a free passage out of this *fast* world on the California Lynch & Co.'s *fast* line.

THE FIRST LEGISLATURE.

San Jos´e was a wicked place during the winter of 1849 and '50. It was not only wicked on account of the unrestrained use of wine, women and gaming, but then there was so many little comical plans at work all the time, to worm the cash out of the dear unsuspecting people for the officers in power. On my arrival in the capitol there appeared to be a thick whispering in the air, a fœtid smell perceptible, and when the breeze would stir the polluted atmosphere, broken sentences were to be heard, such as—“Ten thousand dollars for _____.” “Eight thousand for _____.” “Seven thousand for _____,” and “Five hundred to each _____.” “Twenty-two dollars and four bits, at least, per day—ha, ha, ha,” and other chopped-off sentences, apparently coming from a bacchanalian feast, would intrude themselves upon the ear; such as “gentlemen of the (*hic*) third house, I rise to (*hic, hic,*)—point of order.” “pass another basket of the anchor brand,” “how much, sir, do you suppose it will cost to get that measure through?” “We won't go home till morning, till day light does appear.” Such mysterious sounds must have a source, at least so 55 thought the writer, and as the State House was the most likely place to learn public and secret things, thither I went. When I entered the hall of the second house of our first honorable Legislature, who do you think I saw there, in all majestic pomposity? Why gentle reader the devil! yes, Belzebub himself. The secret was out, the mysterious whispers in the air were explained—I knew it was he from his personal appearance—and the company he kept. He was seated at the opposite end of the hall to that of the Speaker; in the centre of his dear children, the sweet babes of the third House. There was nothing unusual in his appearance except his coat and nose; in the description of which the reader may see his lordship as plain as I did. His coat was of fustian, fashioned *à la* sack, with immense pockets on either side, and many others in different parts of it, of smaller dimensions. The large pockets appeared to be inexhaustible liquor stores, as all the members of the three houses seemed to draw continually from them. Protruding from the smaller receptacles, in this noble garment, might be seen the heading of different bills his lordship wanted to present, and in one was a sample of state scrip—an article he had opportunely thought of, for the benefit of his humble servants. His nose was the greatest feature to be seen during the session of that, and all subsequent Legislatures of this glorious State. It was made of gold, and had to be

the length of the hall so as to touch up each honorable member, or at least a majority of them. To make this appendage appear acceptable and its owner bearable it had divers fine specimens stuck on different parts of it, and at intervals it was graced by sundry bags of dust, thrown carelessly across its desirable proportions. You can readily imagine that a smeller of this description would have a great influence on almost any body of gentlemen, even those of very strong minds. As hard a nose as this, must come out of a very hard face; and this old gentleman's as well as I can recollect, resembled a pile of black trap-rock.

This being a new feature in legislation to any I had read of, or seen, I was curious to know how it worked, and so sat and witnessed the proceedings for a time. It was evident that the honorable members had to make a raise to pay themselves and all the officials, as long bills for board and liquor were daily being presented. The Treasurer had “nary dime” to pay out, and the question first to be discussed was a financial one. Money-lenders were plenty, and the good people of California could have borrowed half a million at ten per cent per month, payable in ten years. This offer was made to the honorable 56 body in open session, but as soon as it was brought up for consideration, I saw the use the long nose was put to. To have accepted this offer would have greased the wheels of government in too plain a manner, and would have allowed the people to have kept the machine moving too glibly and would not have allowed the babes of his Satanic majesty a chance to speculate in scrip, so the gentle shake of the golden snout quieted the clamor, and from the pocket of his lordship's old coat came forth a more savory and convenient plan in the shape of a bundle of pretty papers that only bore thirty-six per cent. interest, and could be redeemed at *any time*.

When the bill to issue scrip came up, one hard-fisted member had the audacity to rise, and ask Mr. Speaker if that “are warn't a little agin the Constitution.” The words were hardly out of him, before the long nose was tickling his cheek; the specimens rattled, and bags o' dust slid up and down before his delighted eyes to such a degree, that he settled back in his seat. The idea of the State making so much money in one day, so tickled the honorable members, that the bill to issue State *shin plasters* went through both houses, snapping and cracking like a burning hemlock plank. These papers passed for a few days at *par*, then fell a “*leetle*—” just twenty-five per cent;—only

to try the thing. Members and feeders out of the crib began to wear long faces at this state of things; but *Nosey* soon showed them by figures that to raise their pay a few dimes, it would make the sum of difference come out just even. And it was a wonder to see with what grace his Satanic Majesty handed out the fee and salary bills from his great coat pocket, in which the members were allowed the modest sum of *twenty-two and a half dollars per diem*! Those bills passed, which was another great blessing to the dear people, which the shin-plaster system brought about. Having seen the legislative elephant sufficiently, and was about leaving, I saw Mr. Devil hunting up the ‘‘Foreign Miners' Tax’ ’ bill, and I hurried off to say a few *Ave Marias* for my own salvation.

When the elders of the people gathered together again in 1850, behold! Satan went also and took his seat amongst them. His great golden nose had its old influence, and the specimens and bags o' dust did marvellously work upon it. When he saw the effects his proboscis had in certain water lot and usury bills, he became proud of heart, and desired to try his old offer of broad lands to make them fall down and worship him. We read in the Good Book of his Satanic Majesty offering our Saviour all the kingdoms of the earth, if he would fall down and worship him; but His Honor failed in the speculation. Not so with his California undertaking; he told the great wise heads that San Jos e was too mean a place for such devout servants to stay in; and he took many of them up into a high mountain, even into a high peak of the coast range, and showed unto them all his dominions round about. Some looked with longing eyes to the land of the mountain king—even to Monterey. But he said unto them, ‘‘Go not there, my children, for honey and wine are scarce in that land, and the frail daughters of Eve dwell not there.’ ’ Being sorely tempted, they looked on the great valley where they had dwelt, even the valley of Santa Clara, and appeared loth to leave it. In those days there dwelt in the land of Sonoma a goodly man, whose name was Vallejo—a man devout and just, and one who feared God and served the Israelites—and the devil tempted him. Being sorely pressed by the evil one, he was tempted to scatter many pieces of gold, even half a million of *pesos*, amongst the wild oats that grew upon the mountains, where the elders of the land could go and gather them. And the devil showed them this goodly place, near unto the great waters, in the land of Vallejo, where the gold was sowed, and where the elders who followed saw it. They all fell down and worshipped him, saying, ‘‘Oh, good and just devil, thou hast ever been near unto us in the hour

of our need, thy glorious snout hath ever directed our paths aright; and now thou hast shown us a goodly land, and we will go and dwell therein.' ' And behold! when the summer came, to say the month of June, they moved the high priest of the people, and his household, with the tables of stone whereon the laws were written, and the great ark wherein the treasures of the people were wont to be kept, from the palaces in the great valley of Santa Clara unto the bleak hills that the elders had chosen, and did there pitch tents wherein they might dwell, for the *Temple* for their reception was not yet built.

When the elders were again to assemble in '51, the devil was sorely pressed for a place for their gathering; but he gathered them together in our great city, to which the merchants of the earth are wont to bring their merchandise, even the city of San Francisco, and there chartered one of the fiery vessels that go into the seas, the ark *Empire*, to ferry them across to the land chosen for them. This land was not pleasant to look upon, and the elders pressed the devil hard to remove them, who listened to their grievings, and determined to take them unto a kindly place, where all their heads should become *dead ones*. And the place of his choice was the great city of Sacramento. The ark *Empire* having been an ark of safety to the elders during the stay in that land, was again seen ploughing up the great waters, with the high priest and all the elders within her, which did sorely grieve the good man, even him who had sown the gold upon the hill, and even a widow's tears were shed on their departure.

In that goodly city to which they went, the rains fell and the floods arose, but they heeded it not, for the devil was with them, with his nose as bright and long as ever it was, and there he could be seen hauling from his pocket bills for the sale of all the lands that a kind high priest had given unto the little children for an inheritance forever. Cooley bills, and bills for a tax on labor, are also held within his bird-like, sinewy hands. And so bold has he become, that he has even dared to meddle with the free press of our people, and comes to take his seat, with his pockets filled with printers' type, which he offers to set up for the benefit of all whom it may concern. Oh that our elders would learn to fear the devil.

A TRIAL.

We might here notice what effect legal proceedings had on a California jury previous to the institution of our present courts. Being in San Jos´e in the winter of 1849, while the first Legislature was in session at that place, a suit was being tried before the Judge of the First Instance. The point at issue being the title to a lot of land in the town of San Jos´e, for which both the plaintiff and the defendant held *Alcaldes'* deeds. The dust being a little more plentiful then than it is at present, the litigants had each armed himself with a *limb* of the law. It was soon made known amongst the “great unwashed” that two “rale lawyers were gwoine to plead,” and a general rush took place for the court house. To give the general reader an idea of the whole affair, it is necessary to describe the Judge and Jury. The Judge like a majority of the judges in California at that day, was a firm, honest, and just man, with good common “hoss sense,” but possessing very faint ideas of law, or the many little technicalities attending thereon. The jury composed of twelve honest men, presented rather a rough appearance, for so honorable a body. Eight out of the twelve had their waist adorned with California *jewelry*, in the shape of six shooters and Bowie knives; the other four being Spaniards, had the top of their leggins beautified with the protruding silver handles of the never absent boot knife. From the unusually healthy appearance of some of their countenances, it was quite 59 evident that they had been in attendance on one of the *wakes* nightly held during that winter of magnificent drinks in the third House of the Legislature. The two legal gentlemen, who had attracted the attention of the “unwashed,” were duly in attendance. One armed, simply with a volume of the Holy Scriptures, while his opponent came with a perfect load of volumes on Law, which was the most attractive feature in the whole proceedings, as the astute gentleman piled up the volumes before him on the table, until it appeared as if he had the whole Congressional Library to draw from, and some of that *vile* auditory went even so far as to “larf.” One of the old ones, whose buckskin suit and unshaved and unshorn appearance proclaimed him to be one of the old trappers before mentioned, became indignant at such displays, and informed the crowd that, “that war too bad for honest citizens to stand for; boys, I'ev been tellin' on you, what this 'ere country would be comin' to afore along.” A kind of “that ar a fact,” approbation was given to this opinion; quiet was restored, and the trial proceeded. Numerous witnesses were examined in the case, *pro* and *con*, to whose evidence the jury listened with attention. At times a discussion would take place as to the different points in the evidence, between the legal gentlemen, which was highly amusing to the

outsiders, many of whom actually had never seen a case conducted by attorneys before, and such exclamations as “don't yo hear that,” “don't it take them 'ere fellows;” “by gosh he's a hoss;” “he be d_____d;” and so on, as the gentlemen either gained applause or disapprobation.

The examination of the witnesses being closed, the attorney for the plaintiff was about to commence his argument before the jury, when two or three of those honorable gentlemen had to beg leave to go out a moment—and nearly all of them had the same occasion to leave. I did not see any of them drink ardent spirits, but they all went into a place where it was mixed and sold at that time. The jury being again seated, the legal gentleman opened his case in quite an elegant style, which was listened to with “hang mouth” attention; he turned to the jury; and to soft soap that body in particular, commenced by saying: “Gentlemen of the jury, I can't say that you are, physically speaking, handsome men, [a laugh, in which the court joined,] but I do say that I feel assured, from your sun-burnt brows and toil-worn hands, that you constitute as honest and upright a body of men as ever sat on a jury.”

Juror — “Wal, we a'nt nothin' else, and I feel confident that your client's cause is safe in your hands.”

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The legal gentleman had all that rough assemblage on his side up to this point; but as he had never seen the elephant, he commenced to overhaul the numerous volumes of law that lay piled up in front of him, and after opening them at numerous marked places, he turned to the jury, and commenced by saying: “Now, gentlemen, I will read to you all the law bearing on this case.” But alas! Othello's occupation was gone. At the mention of *law*, a buzz of disapprobation was heard in the crowd, and the jury was almost thrown into spasms. The legal gentleman took no notice of this, but raising up one of his books, said: “Now, gentlemen of the jury, I will read to you from Blackstone, vol. 2, page _____”

Juror — “No, you needn't; we don't submit to any of Blackstone's laws here.”

Juror 2d —“No, nor Mexican neither.’ ’

Juror 3d —A big, burly looking man—stood up, shook himself, blowed something similar to a hunchback whale, and then sat down again.

The legal gentleman appeared to be “set back over a feet,’ ’ and commenced a stirring appeal to the court for protection. The court, not being posted up in such matters, squirmed and twisted about, similar to an eel in a frying-pan. The judge lit his pipe, wiped his spectacles, and gracefully informed the jury that they must submit to hear the reading of all the law necessary in the case. The laws in reference to the case, from different commentaries, were then read to a perfectly inattentive and disgusted jury.

The attorney employed by the defendant then arose. He had seen the Texas *elephant*, and knew well the course he had to pursue. He told the jury that he had a better knowledge of the state of California, than to think for a moment that such a thing as laws of any kind existed, with the exception of the accursed laws of Mexico, which he knew no true American would submit to. After a short but patriotic speech and eloquent address, he submitted the case to the jury, amidst a thunder of applause. The jury soon returned a verdict for defendant. The defendant was a white man, the plaintiff a *greaser*; this fact might have had some slight influence, but I guess not. An appeal was immediately taken.

The plaintiff and defendant had then plenty of money, and in 1851 the case was still before the Supreme court. I saw the defendant, 61 with whom I am acquainted, a short time ago, and, gentle reader, he was the poorest white man I ever saw.

TULARE VALLEY.

In the many histories and sketches which have been written on California, not one of them has given to the public any authentic account or satisfactory description of this vast body of valuable land, which has laid for ages the home of the wild beasts of the field, where they have roamed in wild liberty over its vast and fertile bosom unchecked by the hand of man. The writer does not

undertake this task for any other purpose than to give to the world a true and correct history of this valley, which remains a hidden mystery to even nine-tenths of the inhabitants of California at the present day.

In extent this valley reaches from the head of Suisun Bay to Walker's pass, within one hundred and twenty miles of Los Angeles, being a distance of near three hundred miles in length. It is bounded west by the Coast range of mountains, and on the east by the Sierra Nevada, and its average width is about sixty miles—measuring from the foot of the low hills on each side. The Moquelumne river may be said to be the dividing line between the Tulare and the Sacramento Valleys. This vast plain, containing 20,000 square miles of tillable land, and watered by many rivers, and beautified by lakes, is as yet an almost unknown portion of our State, as regards its value to the agriculturist and miner.

Its climate is, as Col. Fremont remarks, like that of Italy, although the middays of summer are, in many portions of it—especially the lower part of the valley—oppressively hot; yet the evenings and nights are deliciously cool and refreshing. From above the mouth of the Merced to the head of the valley, a cool breeze blows from the northwest from 10 o'clock, A. M., until 10 P. M., which keeps the air perfectly pure and refreshing throughout the summer months. In winter, a perfect spring may be said to exist, as the centre of the valley is never covered with frost or snow, except an unusual hard winter prevails. Owing to the height of the upper part of the valley above the level of the sea, it makes the most delightful and salubrious portions of California, and where man has but to dwell for a season; and he becomes enraptured with its loveliness.

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SOIL.—The traveller crossing this valley, or traversing it in any direction during the dry season, would judge from its parched appearance, where it is not watered by the rivers, that it is a barren waste, unfit for any purposes of man. This was the opinion I formed of it on my first visit. Being a practical farmer, I had a curiosity to examine the soil and the inducements offered by the general aspect of the country to agricultural pursuits. The lower part of the valley consists of a deep, rich, sandy loam, intermixed with strata of decayed vegetable matter, the whole resting on a bed of

gravel or sand. The depth of this soil varies from one to six feet, the deeper portions being nearest the centre of the valley. The vicinity of the Tule Lake, and the large body of land lying between the lake and the San Joaquin river consists of a light loam, intermixed with different species of clay. There is no portion of this valley, from the head of Tule Lake to Suisun Bay, that is not all that the agriculturist can desire, when aided by means of irrigation. From the head of the Tule Lake to the vicinity of Kern River and Buena Vista Lake, a distance of seventy-five miles, the valley may be pronounced a barren desert, with the exception of a strip of some ten miles in width, bordering on the slough of Buena Vista Lake. Around this lake and Kern river, the soil again assumes a rich, sandy loam. This barren portion of the valley is composed of red clay, interspersed with different mineral substances, and so undermined by gophers and kangaroo rats, as to be in many places impassable by man or beast, even in the dry season. No live thing is to be seen upon its dreary bosom, either animal or vegetable, with the exception above mentioned.

In the dry season, there is not one drop of water to be found within the boundaries of its parched bosom. This relates to the valley only; in the coast range, and Sierra Nevada bordering on it, are to be found beautiful vallies, well timbered and watered. These vallies are formed by the long spurs making out from the mountains; and many of them offer every inducement to settlers, owing to their rich soil and unequalled climate.

RIVERS.—On the western side of the valley, from Suisun Bay to the head of these plains, there is not one stream to be met with. During the rainy season, there are several small creeks running from the Coast range into the valley, none of which contain water only during the continuation of the rains. On the eastern side, in going south from the Moquelumne, the first stream met with is the Calaveras. This stream, taking its rise but a short distance in the Sierra Nevada, is not affected by the melting snows, and is only a stream of note during the rainy season—at that time it becomes a deep and rapid river; its overflows fill several of the sloughs in the vicinity of Stockton, but its principal body empties into the Moquelumne. From the middle of August to the first of November it becomes dry, with the exception of pools found along its bed. All the springs and rivers of California commence rising some two or three weeks before the rainy season commences,

and by the middle of November the Calaveras becomes a running stream the greater portion of its length. It is useless for any purpose of navigation or for irrigating its valley.

The Stanislaus is a river of some note; taking its head far in the Sierra Nevada, it continues a large, deep, and rapid river from the first of December until the first of July, being fed by the rains during the winter and the melting snows during the beginning of the dry season. This river could be made navigable for vessels of light draught, for twenty-five miles from its junction with the San Joaquin. During the dry seasons, its waters are sufficient to irrigate the entire plain lying between it and the Calaveras. The modes of irrigation from these rivers will be noticed in their proper place.

The Tuolumne is nearly the same size of the Stanislaus, and could be made navigable for nearly the same distance. It empties into the San Joaquin some ten miles above the mouth of the Stanislaus.

The Merced is a much larger stream than any yet mentioned, and could be made navigable to near the foot of the mountains during the season of high water. It empties into the San Joaquin some twenty-five miles above the Tuolumne.

The Mariposa, Cowchilla, and Fresno rivers may be classed with the Calaveras, being running streams during the rainy season and spring only. These streams do not enter directly into the San Joaquin, but their united waters form the immense tule marsh between the bend of the San Joaquin and the mouth of the Merced; the water thus collected enters into the San Joaquin at many different points during high water. The Mariposa being celebrated for the rich mineral lands it drains, is formed by the union of Fremont's, Agua Frio creeks and their tributaries. After it enters the plains some five miles, it forks, and the water thus divided, continues its course towards the marsh, but the waters of them sink to such a degree, that the branches can be stepped across where they enter the tule marsh.

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The San Joaquin is the next and last river that runs from the Sierra Nevada directly to the sea in this valley, and forms the main channel that drains the lakes and carries off the waters of all the rivers before mentioned. All the rivers that run into the Tulare valley, having their heads in the Sierra

Nevada, run into the plain, where they run nearly due west to the San Joaquin and the lakes. The San Joaquin is, with but one exception, the largest of these rivers. Where it leaves the mountain, it runs westward for upwards of forty miles from the low hills to the middle of the plains, where it suddenly bends to the N. N. W., and continues its course to Suisun bay. At its bend it is joined by the lake slough, which conveys into it the spare waters from the lakes in the plains above. The San Joaquin for size and commercial purposes, may be rated as the third river on the western coast of America. By an outlay of some few thousand dollars in improving its navigation, by the removal of points in the short bends and sand bars formed by them, vessels drawing two feet water could navigate it to within twenty miles of the point where it leaves the Sierra Nevada, during the year, a distance by river of near four hundred miles. Vessels drawing from four to five feet water, can run up as far as the mouth of the lake slough during seven months in the year. As yet no inducements are offered to steamers to navigate the San Joaquin higher than Stockton, although they have been up as far as Graysonville; schooners and brigs have also been up to this point. The writer has twice navigated this river, and once sounded it from Bonsell's Ferry to the rapids at the foot of the mountains, and in regard to its capabilities for navigation, speaks from experience; but the obstructions above named must be removed to make it navigable as far as stated. The current of the San Joaquin is about two and one-half miles per hour, from its junction with the lake slough to where it meets the influence of the tides.

King's river is nearly as large as the San Joaquin. It is navigable to the mountains, but its length from the low hills to where it enters the Tulare lake, is only about forty miles. It empties through several mouths into the north-east corner of the Tulare lake, and is a beautiful and picturesque river.

The Four Creeks are the next waters met with. These deep and rapid streams are formed by one river. Lieut G. H. Derby of the U.S. Topographical Engineers, who made the first surveys of this portion of California, in May, 1850, named this Francis River. It is larger than the San Joaquin or any of its tributaries where it leaves the mountain.

This stream can be heard when you have gone a few miles in among the Buttes at its entrance on the plain, thundering from the rocky heights of the snow capped Nevada. Its waters, as if tired of their task, seem to stop to rest in a beautiful small lake, formed amongst the conical hills.

These hills divide the waters of Francis River at the foot of the Lake into the four streams known to the traveller on the plains as the Four Creeks. These Creeks meander thro' a heavily timbered and beautiful country, some twenty-five miles, where they empty their waters into the Tule Lake.

Allow me here to digress for a few moments from the tenor of these sketches, and you who admire the beauties of nature, untouched by the hands of man, accompany me to the top of the conical hill that rises its head near the mountain—far above the rest that surround it—and there view the fancy pencillings of the finger of the unseen Hand that formed from chaos this the most lovely spot in California.—Now from its top we see around us a hundred conical hills rising from the plain, smooth and diagrametically shaped, as if done by the chisel of the artist. Here, too, the Sierra Nevada rises abruptly from the plains—its wall-like, rugged sides running almost perpendicularly up, until its spiral peaks are capped with the eternal snows that shine with dazzling brightness from the rays of the rising sun. Yonder, far in the plain, rise tall spiral cones of long, slim rocks, whose bristling tops look like piles of spears stacked by giants of another age, who have long departed, and left their arms to turn to stone, beneath the petrifying hand of time. Here, on the green plain, from which the Buttes rise can be seen here and there the broad, low-spreading branches of the evergreen oaks. The stillness of nature around is only broken by the thunder of the waters of Francis River as they come through the rocky gorges of the mountain passes: but, here at our feet, their white foam has died away, and in this crystal lake, where fish of a thousand species sport, they seem to stop and rest before they hurry on to their destination. Now let us turn and look westward.—The oaks, in their majesty, thickly cover the plain for miles around, and stretch away to the shore of the Tulare Lake. Amongst them and through high green grass, meander the Four Creeks. To the right, at the distance of 25 miles, runs the belt of timber, marking the course of King's river to the lake. On the left is seen at the distance of twenty miles, the broad body of timber that marks the course of Tule river. The body of land, thus bounded, is 66 the best in the valley—well timbered and watered, and

covered with the finest grass in California. Stretching beyond this to the west lie the placid blue waters of the Tulare lake, whose ripples wash the foot of the low hills of the Coast range—the blue tops of which set a boundary to the scene.

As we look on this—the garden of California—the pride of an American heart makes our mind to people it with the hardy farmers of this country. We can imagine their neat cottages peeping out from amidst fields of flowing grain. We can see the neat village with its church spires, marking the march of civilization—and hear the lowing herds that browse on the luxuriant grass around. But those fancy pencilings of the mind are put to flight, as our eyes fall on the scene at our feet. Here, at the foot of the mound on which we have been viewing the scene, the grass has been trampled down—the smoke of immense fires has scarce died away; the scene tells you that a large encampment has just left. Yes, it is the late camp of the Indian Commissioners. Those fires were their council fires, where they have been making treaties with the wild beasts of the field in human shape. Stand on the borders of this camp! a long line of ashes marks the place where once stood the buildings erected at an immense expense by the United States! there, too, almost within it, are twelve hillocks of fresh earth—they are the graves of twelve of our murdered country-men! Here, over these smoking ruins—here, over the graves of our murdered companions, have the soft hands of the Commissioner grasped in friendship those of the incendiary, and the murderers of our people. And here these good Commissioners signed away to the *Digger Indian* all the right of the white man to the best portion of this desirable spot. Can these treaties stand? Will the settlers of California submit to it? No. Look among the graves there; one looks greener than the rest; it is poor old Wood's grave. He was my old companion; we together explored the plains around, where the foot of the white man had never trod before. He was the first settler on the Four Creeks. He now sleeps there, murdered by the Indians, who, instead of being punished, have been pampered, fed and enriched, by the *Christian* hands of the Indian Commissioners. But now the demon of revenge has seized my soul; the blood runs boiling through my veins; the beautiful scene around has become dark and desolate. Come, let us hasten away on our descriptive journey up the plains.

The next stream above the Four Creeks is Tule River, which is the last that enters directly into the lake. This river is near the size 67 of the Tuolumne, and continues to run throughout the year. Five

miles from this is Moore's Creek, a pretty stream, which runs until about the middle of July. All the above mentioned rivers are well timbered with oak, and the valleys along them are everything that man can desire for the purpose of agriculture or grazing. The land lying between them only wants water and cultivation to convert it into gardens.

From Moore's Creek to Kern River, a distance by a direct course up the plain of seventy-five miles, there is but one small stream running through into the plains, which is called Cottonwood Creek, in Lieut. Derby's survey. This stream ceases to run in July, but the thirsty traveller can find water in any place in the low hills at any time of the year, by sinking holes a few feet in its sandy bottom. This creek is about half way between Moore's Creek and Kern River; the waters of this and Moore's Creek, after forming a lagoon in the plains, find their way to the lake through a slough. A short distance from where the slough of Buena Vista Lake enters it, Kern River is the most southerly river of the Tulare Valley; it is a fine stream, and nearly as large as the San Joaquin. After running a short distance into the plain, it branches out, and a large portion of it runs nearly northwest into the Lake slough; the balance of its waters are discharged into Buena Vista Lake. The whole or part of the waters of this river could, if necessary, be led along the foot of the low hills as far as Moore's Creek, from which the plains now parched up could be irrigated. This, like the other rivers, is well timbered, and the land in its vicinity is of the most fertile quality.

LAKES.—There are now but two lakes in the Tulare Valley of any note—the Tulare and Buena Vista. In Col. Fremont's survey, the Tulare Lake is laid down as being double the size that it is at the present day; in 1842, when his survey was made, the body of water he has laid down did exist, but was two distinct lakes, divided by a high, narrow ridge of land, and only connected by a slough. These lakes were known to settlers, and priests of the missions of California; the lower one as *attach'e*, and the upper one as non-*attach'e* lake. The *attach'e* only now exists, and is known as the Tulare Lake. It is about fifty miles in length by thirty in width; its length and breadth can be used for the purpose of navigation; its waters are now eight feet lower than they were ten years ago, and they continue yearly to decrease. It is fed by King's River, Four Creeks, Tule 68 River, and the

sloughs draining the upper waters of the valley. The banks of the non- *attach'è* lake are still plainly visible.

The slough from Buena Vista Lake passes through its old bed, and during the season of high water there are large lagoons formed in many places along in the bounds of the old lake. Buena Vista Lake is a beautiful sheet of water, twenty miles long, and from five to ten in width; it lays nestled in the head of the valley, and is fed by Kern River, and several small creeks which empty into it. The Sierra Nevada and Coast range of mountains here unite, and form the head of the valley. The neighborhood of Kern River and Buena Vista Lake is such that the inducements offered to the settler will soon people it. The Cajon pass from Los Angeles, the Panoche Pass from San Luis, and the celebrated Walker's Pass from the east, all come in here, in the vicinity of Buena Vista Lake. Colonel Fremont, in giving his opinion to a committee of gentlemen who had under consideration the great Whitney project of a railroad to the Pacific, informed them that Walker's pass was the only practicable point for a railroad to be constructed through the mountains. Owing to Col. Fremont's thorough knowledge of the topography of these mountains, his statements can be relied upon; and if the iron horse ever snuffs the balmy air of California, it will be, as he imagines, from the hills at Buena Vista Lake. But more of this anon.

LAKE SLOUGHS—The slough that conveys the water from Tulare Lake into the San Joaquin, is, during the high water, sufficiently deep to float vessels of the largest class. Its length, from its entrance into the San Joaquin to the edge of the tule beds of the lake, is about thirty-five miles. Many are under the impression that this slough runs directly into the Tulare Lake, and forms a navigable chain between the two. This is not so. The depth of the slough is sufficient for any class vessel, but it is so crooked that it is difficult to sail through it in a small boat; but the great preventative to its navigation is, that it does not run into the lake.

The tules at the lower end of the lake are some fifteen miles in width; the water of the lake oozes out through this for miles, and then, owing to the height of the lake above the slough, the water begins to gather into small sloughs; and these, running to a common centre, form near the other edge of the tules the lake slough. Where the slough leaves the tules, there is a fall of near five feet,

and the water runs rapidly for the distance of nearly a mile. The writer made three attempts to enter the lake in a whale boat, but did not succeed in getting over three miles into the tules, owing to the slough spreading into hundreds of small branches, too narrow and swift to get a boat through.

Lieut. Hamilton, of the U.S. army, entered the lake from King's River in a boat, and carefully examined the lower part of it, but could not discover the least sign of any outlet. During high water, there is a slough which makes out of King's River, and running along the edge of the tules of the lake, enters the lake slough near its head. This slough could be navigated by small boats for about two months in the year. The public may rest assured that there is no direct outlet to the Tulare Lake, through which a boat can pass.

The slough connecting the Tulare and Buena Vista Lakes is about eighty miles in length, and is navigable for small boats during the greater part of the year. This slough passes through the bed of non-*attaché* lake, and during high water there is a lagoon forms on it, near its centre, which is about twenty miles long, and from one to four miles in width. Travellers coming down the west side of the valley, (which is by far the best route to the north, or to the southern mines,) follow this slough, on which is good grass for animals throughout the year.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES.—In giving to the public a description of the Tulare Valley and its resources, I am guided by personal observation, aided by the opinions of geologists, farmers, planters, cultivators of the vine and tea tree, with whom I have had intercourse and consultation on the value of California as an agricultural country; or to what purposes its rich lands could be converted from the stillness in which they have lain through ages past, and made to swell our commerce and trade, and enrich our people.

Six years ago, the only knowledge that the world at large had of California, was by the topographical survey of Col. Fremont, whose report started to our shores some of the hardy pioneers of the western States. The accounts given by our naval officers, with but few exceptions, presented it as a barren country, unfit for anything but grazing purposes; yet all united in praise of its unequalled climate. The gold discoveries following the news of peace with Mexico, and

the acquisition of California by the United States, had a tendency to retard the development of its agricultural resources for several years; but now its value as such is just being appreciated. Many now find 70 that the potato and onion *diggings* fully equal in value any diggings yet discovered.

There is not one foot of California, (the Sierra Nevada and gold region excepted,) on which wheat, barley and oats cannot be raised to any extent desired. In the old States, as the farmer sows his seed, doubts cross his mind as to whether he will ever reap as much in quantity as he sows; twenty-five fold is the greatest yield he can expect, and that on his best land, and all depending on the season.

But here the farmer can start at the mountain top and sow down to the depths of the valley, and *know* that the yield will be at least seventy-five fold. It is no rare occurrence here to reap from a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five *fanegas* to one sown; and in many instances, three crops of barley and wheat have been raised from one sowing, the yield of the third year being half as good as the first. Under such circumstances, why should California yearly send millions of dollars to foreign ports for bread? It will not continue; the plough is about to work out a new state of affairs for us, and place California on an equal footing with her sister States; we will soon have plenty and to spare.

I saw, in 1850, a crop of barley, raised on the Tulare Plains, equal to any I *ever* saw in the country. It was raised on a barren looking spot, where there never was any water except during the continuation of the rains. It was sown in December and gathered in June. The Tulare Plains will produce, without irrigation, small grain on every foot of them, with the exception already mentioned.

For the cultivation of corn and vegetables, irrigation becomes necessary; and for this purpose the great Unseen Hand has provided the waters that, with but a small exertion of the hand of man, will spread to any point he may desire.

The tule marshes, about which much has been written, invite the planter to convert them into rice fields; they can be drained or flooded at pleasure for that purpose. Along the rivers and in the drained tule beds, hemp, flax and tobacco can be raised to an extent and perfection that would stand

unparalleled. A gentleman from the southern states informed me that he had closely examined the soil of the Tulare Valley, and that from his observations, he felt assured that cotton and the sugar cane could be brought to high perfection any place within the plain.

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For the cultivation of the grape, California will contend with sunny France or Italy; and the whole of this valley could be made one vast vineyard and orchard.

We have amongst us several thousand of the inhabitants of China; a great many of them are intelligent men, from whom much reliable information can be obtained in regard to the introduction of the tea plant into California, and the value of our tule lands for the cultivation of rice. I have been assured by some of them that every inducement is offered for the introduction and cultivation of tea in California. These emigrants are, as a class, the best people we have amongst us—they are sober, quiet, industrious and inoffensive. It is a rare occurrence that they appear in our courts, engaged in suits of any kind; and never under criminal charges, has one of them been tried, or one act of dishonesty detected amongst them. Those of them who understand the civil institutions of the United States, adore them; and on our festive days or days of celebrations of our public achievements, the China men can be seen in great numbers in the ranks of our processions dressed in the grotesque costume of their country. Thousands of these men are ready to become citizens of the U. S., settle down, and turn our waste lands into beautiful fields, as soon as proper inducements and protection is afforded them; and no better class of men could be chosen to develop the agricultural resources of the Tulare Valley than the Chinese who are amongst us.

Tobacco and flax now grow in a wild state on the middle portions of the Tulare plains, and acres of it may be seen in different places around the lakes, and between the Tulare Lake and the San Joaquin.

The lands lying along the different rivers of the plains, are the most desirable of any in the valley; they can be successfully cultivated in any species of vegetation desired, without the aid of irrigation. Farms running two miles into the plains from these rivers, would be the most valuable

of any in California. The soil is rich and deep, and the bottoms are heavily timbered with oak of the best quality, and sufficient for all purposes of fencing, etc. In cultivating the lands on the east side of the valley, between the rivers, an apparent obstacle may arise from the want of timber. This scarcity can be easily remedied, from the inexhaustible supplies of the finest timber from the adjacent Sierra Nevada mountain, not only for agricultural purposes, but for plank or railroads. If a railroad is ever constructed from the Mississippi to the Pacific ocean, it is most probable its course will be down the Tulare Valley, as Walker's Pass 72 offers the only practicable point at which it can pass the mountain barriers that gird the Pacific coast. Every material for the construction of a railroad along the foot of the Sierra Nevada, is at hand the entire length of the Tulare Valley. It is but folly to doubt for a moment, in this fast age we live in, that a railroad will, at some early day, be constructed from the Atlantic States to California, connecting with an iron belt the two extremities of our Union. It is but for the American people to say it *shall be*, and presto, 'tis done.—Things go too slow now between the two oceans to satisfy our fast propensities, and without some *geni* of the universal Yankee tribe should invent an aerial road, and some fine day come scanning it through the air, the railroad *will be built!*

The greatest difficulty under which the farmer labors in California is the want of timber; but this is a small obstacle when surmounted by the introduction of wire fencing, which is as durable and efficient as that of wood. The rich lands that have been so successfully cultivated in the vicinity of the Mission of San Jos´e for the last two years, are at least twenty miles from any timber; but the deficiency is chiefly supplied by the wire fence. These fences can be put up at a less expense than those of timber, and are fully efficient in protecting crops against the depredations of stock.

Owing to the want of proper grasses ever being introduced on the tulare plains, it becomes bare during the dry season, with the exception of those parts watered by the rivers. On the lower side of the Stanislaus River, opposite Mr. Belcher's ranch, a few Mormon families commenced a settlement in '47; they introduced the red top grass which is known as herd grass. This grass is the best that farmers can sow in the Tulare valley; it forms a thick, substantial sod on marsh lands, and grows luxuriantly on high and dry places; it affords excellent pasturage during the year, and hay made from it equals the best cured clover hay. It can now be seen where it has spread from the Stanislaus

to the French Camp above Stockton. The writer procured from this grass about a pint of seed in 1849, and scattered it in the bend of the San Joaquin where the earth was naked. It is now spread for five or six miles around, thickly covering the earth and affording the best of pasturage or land for cutting hay from. This grass is no doubt the best that can be introduced on the plains.

Through the barren portion of the plain between Moore's creek and Kern river, there is a belt of land along the Buena Vista Lake Slough, about fifteen miles in width, which could, by introducing on it the herd grass, be converted into the best grazing land in the valley. Thousands of wild horses subsist on the grasses growing there now. It is not the valley alone that can be made a garden, but in the Coast range and Sierra Nevada, there are large and fertile valleys, well timbered and watered, that will afford room for large settlements. Nearly all the land on the rivers has already been taken up by settlers, the Indian reservations not excepted, as they are generally the best in the valley; but a short time, and squatters' stakes will be seen planted all over the plains.

I would respectfully invite from our cities and towns the gentlemen organ grinders, cappers for gambling tables, runners for steamboats and hotels, vendors of pies and parched corn, pickpockets, and wharf loafers, who are now a nuisance to our communities, to take a walk into the country and look at the rich lands that invite them to honest labor and wealth. If you can make nothing by mining, the farmer wants your services, for which he will pay you well. California is no place for you to follow your old callings; it won't pay.

The Tulare Valley is celebrated for being the most healthy portion of California. The only place that is subject to disease of any kind, is in the neighborhood of the Tulare Lake, where the ague is prevalent at certain seasons of the year. Not only in the valley, but in the mineral regions bordering on it, prevailing diseases of no kind have as yet made their appearance. The prevailing north-west winds during the summer months, and the unparalleled purity of the air during the winter in this region, warrants health, the greatest wealth man can possess.

The many inducements offered the agriculturist in this valley, and the many large and fruitful valleys adjoining it, on the Coast range of mountains, must soon people it with a farming

community. The rivers are highways to market for all the produce raised in this section of country, and Stockton a market house for its reception. Every river of any note in these plains offers the best sites for mills or factories in California, as any water power desired can be obtained on them.

MINERAL RESOURCES.—The mineral resources of the Tulare Plains, of themselves, is no doubt of but small importance; but the surrounding mountains are loaded with mineral riches, which are here included in the wealth and resources of these plains. All that portion of the gold region from Rio Seco south, is included in what is known as 74 the southern mines, and border on the Tulare Valley. These mines now receive their supplies through Stockton and the rivers above it. This region will be peopled with thousands of miners for a hundred years to come, who being consumers, will ever afford to the farmer a ready market for his produce, thus keeping within ourselves the wealth derived from our inexhaustible resources. Although millions of dollars have already been taken from the southern mines, their real value is but just beginning to be developed. The rivers draining this portion of the mineral lands of California, are not as rich as those of the northern mines, but the dry diggings, and the vast quartz veins, surpass in richness those of the north. The whole southern mineral region is traversed with the richest quartz veins ever discovered. Their number, richness and magnitude, makes the word ‘inexhaustible’ convey but a slight idea of their intent. Hundreds of square miles lying amongst these veins yet remain untouched by the miner's pick, although a rich deposit lies almost all over the region which they traverse—the depth varying, from the surface of the earth, where millions of dollars have been gathered, down to hundreds of feet. At Moquelumne Hill, Murphy's Diggings, and other places, many have realized large fortunes by sinking from fifty to a hundred and fifty feet in the hills, where at the bed rock the rich deposits are found; and these places are but the beginning of what is to be realized in the mineral region by this source of mining.

There has been but little mining done south of the San Joaquin; but it is not because gold is not to be found there, both in placer diggings and quartz veins, that the progress of the miner south has been prevented. The gold deposits between the Mariposa and Kern Rivers are to be found far in the Sierra Nevada. The numerous veins of quartz bear to the south, and can be traced as far as man can get to the east in the Sierra Nevada. The writer has found gold on King's River, Tule River, and

on a branch of Kern River, all of these places being far in the east. The mountains at the head of the valley become low, and can be passed with pack mules to the east, at almost any point at the head of the Tulare valley. Walker's pass, however, is no doubt the best. The most correct map of the mountains of this as yet almost unknown region of California, is the one made by the Jesuit priest, in 1775. A copy of these surveys, with an accompanying journal, is now in the possession of Dr. A. Randall, of Monterey, a gentleman celebrated for his scientific acquirements, who is about to have the map and journal published. From this map, it appears that 75 these priests have explored several hundred miles further up the Colorado than any surveys of the American government have been made, and traversed the region between the head of the Colorado and the head of the Tulare valley, in four different directions. They describe the country as being broken by low ranges of mountains, interspersed with rich and fertile valleys; and, although the mineral resources of this section are untouched, yet it is evident that the belt of gold which traverses California, passes into Sonora and Mexico through here.

Owing to the numerous tribes of hostile Indians, and the remote situation from supplies, of the region south of the San Joaquin, but little has been done in mining operations, or any explorations of consequence made; and there is no doubt, from the appearance of this region of California, that gold deposits of unequalled richness yet lay untouched.

Silver, iron, and cinnabar are also found in this region. In exploring in the neighborhood of Moore's creek, the writer, in company with others, found a shaft, partly filled up, that had been sunk apparently twelve or fifteen years ago; a part of the windlass apparatus was still standing, but in an advanced stage of decay. This shaft can be seen at the foot of one of the spurs of the Sierra Nevada, near Moore's creek, and about five miles from the edge of the plains. On inquiring of an Indian who had been at work there, he at once informed us that long ago some white men and Spaniards had been there, but they all died. This party were no doubt all murdered by the Indians. On mentioning this circumstance to Dr. A. S. Wright, a scientific gentleman for many years connected with many of the silver mines in Mexico, he informed me that from the description given, it was no doubt the same place worked by a company of explorers who were fitted out and sent from Mexico to California, some twelve years ago. He then informed me that in the archives at the city of Mexico,

there was on record a letter from a Jesuit priest, dated at one of the missions in 1776, informing the government that in the search amongst the mountains for sites for missions, they had discovered silver in pure masses that weighed several tons; but to prevent a sable mining population from emigrating to California and destroying the prospects of the missions, they had prohibited the Indians and others who accompanied them, on pain of excommunication and death, from disclosing where these deposits were. The knowledge of this record induced Mr. Wright and others of his associate miners in Mexico to fit 76 out the exploring party before mentioned, which was put under the direction of a Mr. Hoyt. After several months' absence, Mr. Hoyt sent to them from California some of the richest specimens of silver ore ever seen in Mexico; Mr. Wright described them as being almost solid silver. The place described by Mr. Hoyt, he informed me, agreed with the description given by me of the old shaft found on Moore's creek. After the receipt by them of Mr. Hoyt's letter, and the specimens he sent, they never again had any tidings of himself or any of his party, although every inquiry had been made for him.

The Coast range is known to be rich in silver and cinnabar deposits, but owing to the superior inducements offered in the gold regions, there is but little doing in them; but a broad hand points to a day not distant when the earth along these ranges will be disembowelled by the miner, and their now hidden riches be brought to light, to swell our wealth, and fill to fullness the channels of commerce. I feel that I have but given an ungarnished, incomplete outline of the agricultural and mineral resources of the Tulare valley; but it is to be hoped that a geological survey of the State may soon be made, and those resources of it given authentically to the world. In the mean time, let writers remember that if they say anything against the resources of our State, they may rest assured they but expose their ignorance.

WILD HORSES AND MODES OF CATCHING THEM.—Of all the dumb creatures that have been created for the use of man, the horse stands the most noble and useful. To see the horse in all his beauty, you must view him as he prances on the wide and wild plains of his nativity, unbridled or unchecked by the hand of man.

The Tulare Valley, perhaps, contains a larger portion of wild horses than any other part of the world of the same extent. On the western side of San Joaquin, they are to be seen in bands of from two hundred to two thousand. These bands are to be met with at intervals from Mount Diablo to the Tulare Lake. The traveller, in going from the mouth of the lake slough to the head of the lake—four days travel can see the plains covered with these fine animals as far as the eye can reach, in every direction. There are but few horses on the eastern side of the plains, with the exception of that portion lying between the San Joaquin and King's Rivers, and running down to the lake slough, where there are a great number yearly taken in this range by the Spaniards at the point called Puente de San Juan. These animals are ⁷⁷ never seen in poor or thin condition; a circumstance that of itself speaks volumes for the value of the country they range over for grazing purposes. Besides the innumerable quantity of these noble animals that are to be found on the plain, the large and fine valleys in the coast range have also their quotients.

The wild horse of the Tulares ranks amongst the finest of his species. He, unlike the common mustang to be found in southern portions of America, is of fine size, unparalleled proportions, and as fleet as the wild winds he breathes. They are of every color, from a glossy black to pure white. When these animals are caught, they are soon tamed, and can endure any amount of hardship without any other sustenance than the pasturage that the country affords. The Spaniards frequently travel on one of them from seventy-five to one hundred miles per day. For endurance of fatigue on pasturage alone as subsistence, the horses of California have no equals. The writer, in 1847, took two horses from the U. S. caballada at Monterey, (from the pasture) and rode them, alternately, on an express, one hundred and forty miles in ten hours and forty minutes, a feat that the officers who were in Gov. Mason's staff at the time, well remember. The same horses were in use the following day, with no appearance of stiffness or marks of fatigue.

Amongst the wild horses on the Tulares, many are to be seen with the brands of the missions and ranches on them; and to what age these animals will remain serviceable, or how long they live, cannot be ascertained, as no notice has been taken of their longevity; owing to their spirit and breed,

the word “old horse” is scarcely ever applied to one of them, although many are known to be over twenty years of age.

Amongst the animals that have escaped from their captors, and are enjoying sweet liberty on the rude and grassy plains of the Tulares, is the famous horse “Sacramento,” raised by Capt. Sutter. This horse has been frequently seen by Spaniards, (who know him well,) while running horses on the plains. As Sacramento's history is a singular one, I must be allowed to digress until I give a brief sketch of it. He was raised by Capt. Sutter, on the Sacramento, is a fine, large iron grey, and fate apparently destined him to figure in our history. He was presented to Col. Fremont by Capt. Sutter, as a part of his outfit, on his return to the United States, after his first tour of exploration to California; he was the pride of that expedition; he was taken to Kentucky, where he was a universal favorite and pet, and being a stranger, from California, he was also looked upon as a curiosity; but 78 destiny had marked out for him his course, and he was doomed to leave the quiet retreats and shelter of civilization, and tread again the boundless, trackless wilderness between there and the Pacific. He arrived in California again in time to be of considerable service to the patriots of the bear flag army. He was sent from Sonoma to Monterey for the service of Col. Fremont's battalion. On the way down, the party in charge of the animals for the battalion—twenty-seven in number—were attacked on the Salina plains by one hundred and fifty Californians, when the short and bloody battle of the Salina was fought, and the Spaniards put to flight. Sacramento, in this battle, was ridden by the lamented Capt. Burroughs. Partaking of the impetuous fire of his rider, he plunged into the ranks of the enemy; there he pranced with the gallant Captain, who continued to deal death around him until he fell. Sacramento did not apparently feel the loss of his rider, as he was still seen prancing amongst the enemy. The uneven struggle was short, and the Californians were defeated. Their retreat was wild, rapid, and disorderly, and in the midst of their flying squadrons, Sacramento could be seen, with head and tail erect, apparently glorying in their defeat; but he soon found that he had lost his rider and his own caballada, and left the enemy's ranks, and returned with a loud, exulting neigh to the American camp. He was next ridden by one of Col. Fremont's officers, on the campaign to the southern part of California, until the treaty of Los Angeles released him from military service. He was afterwards sent to a ranch, with a view of

giving him some rest; he had remained but a short time in retirement, however, before a band of thieving Indians from the Tulares visited the settlements, and stole him with many other horses, and made for their haunts in the mountains, with the intention of making a feast upon the flesh of our noble animal. But Sacramento, as if conscious of his fate, and feeling himself deserted by the Americans, whom he had so faithfully served, determined to declare his independence of the human family; and he carried out his resolve by making good his escape from his captors, and joining one of the vast herds of his species that inhale for ever the free winds of the valley. In this he showed a spirit imbibed from those he had served. He is now wild and free, and amidst the whirling herds can be seen his noble proportions, which freedom has developed to fullness; but apparently knowing the hardships to be endured in bondage, he only comes near enough to the hunters to see that they are men, and then flies like the wind, aided as he is by fear of the unerring lasso, until distance hides 79 the hated objects from his sight. Keep clear, brave horse, for you well know your fate if you are again caught in the toils. You have seen man long enough to know him; you know the voice that was once kind to you has often bade you to go, in harsh, unmeaning tones; the hand that caressed you also placed within your mouth the iron bit, and guided you, a beast of burden, through rough and thorny ways on desert lands and mountains wild; you proudly bore the warrior to the fatal charge, upon the battle field, where you learned that man oft sought the life of his brother for nought but power, and to bow the neck of the one to the other, as the fate of the contest might decree; and you would have soon been converted into food for him, if he had needed you for that purpose; you have lived too long amongst the free, not to dread again the yoke of bondage.

The greatest number of horses are taken by making strong corrals, and running the bands into them. The hunters first ascertain the range of a band, and then select a suitable place to build their corral, which is done by making a pen of heavy timber, to which is left a narrow opening. On the outside, leading from the gate, are built wings which gradually widen out for a long distance. When this is completed the band are surrounded by the hunters and driven in, where they are lassoed and tied together.

But there are great numbers taken with the lasso. For catching horses in this way, the best and most fleet horses that the rancheros possess are selected, and are not used for several months before the

running season, which is usually in the months of May and June. They then go into the plains in the vicinity of the most numerous bands, and make their encampment and corral. When they get prepared for running the bands, a scene of wild and glorious excitement commences, which must be seen to be appreciated.

There are no people in the world that can surpass the Californians in horsemanship. In the use of the lasso—that indispensable appendage to a Californian's outfit—their dexterity cannot be excelled. They will catch an animal while at full run, around the neck or by either foot they may desire. The unerring precision with which they throw the lasso is only attained by long practice. In catching wild horses, the runners usually number from ten to fifteen. In preparing for the chase they put nothing on the horses they ride with the exception of a light bridle or halter, and a strong belt around the body of the horse, to which the end of the lasso is fastened. As soon as the band of wild 80 animals make their appearance, the runners mount and remain on their horses until the band come to a halt. The wild horses, when they see any strangers in their vicinity, make a rush in a body towards them, and when within forty or fifty yards make a halt, and if nothing frightens them they will come close up. It is at this indecisive halt that the hunters partake of the first wild feeling of delight, which is attendant on the sports of the chase. If the hunters are unobserved by the band, they soon intermix with the animals on which these men are mounted, and become an easy prey to them, each one of whom never fail to catch one. But if the band become frightened and start off from them, then commences a scene of rare and glorious sport. The wild animals, the hunters, and the horses upon which they are mounted, all seem to become possessed of a glorious monomania, which propels them over the level unbounded plain faster than the hurricane's wild winds.

As soon as the animal caught has been choked down by the tightening noose, which is usually but a few moments, the horseman dismounts and shifts his bridle and girth to the captured horse, and mounts him and teaches him to be the servant of man from the hour of his capture.

The increase of the wild horses of this country is very slow. Besides the large numbers which are annually captured, there are bands of wolves and coyotes continually hanging round the horses,

feeding on the helpless colts, few of which escape until they become large enough to protect themselves.

ANIMALS AND GAME.—Every beast and bird of the chase and hunt is to be found in abundance on the Tulares. Horses, cattle, elk, antelope, black tail and red deer, grizzly and brown bear, black and grey wolves, coyotes, ocelots, California lions, wildcats, beaver, otter, mink, weasels, ferrets, hare, rabbits, grey and red foxes, grey and ground squirrels, kangaroo rats, badgers, skunks, muskrats, hedgehogs, and many species of small animals not here mentioned; swan, geese, brant, and over twenty different descriptions of ducks also cover the plains and waters in countless myriads from the first of October until the first of April, besides millions of grocus^{*}, (sand hill crane,) plover, snipe, and quail. The rivers are filled with fish of the largest and most delicious varieties, and the sportsman and epicurean can find on the Tulares everything their hearts can desire. Parties of gentlemen from our cities, who wish to leave for a time the confines of their narrow limits of business, and enjoy the exhilarating pleasures of a trip into the interior, can find their every wish gratified by a journey up the Tulare plains. April and October are the best seasons—April in particular; for at this time game of every description is most abundant, and the plains and mountains are one continued bed of roses and gaudy flowers; even to breathe the air, is life and health itself. Go up by land as far as the lake, and return by water, and you will ever bless the time you made the excursion. The western side of the plain is the best travelling, and the range of the greater portion of game. In such an excursion, you can unite business with pleasure, as you can see and judge personally of the value of the Tulares for agriculture, and her noble river for the purpose of navigation.

Grus Canadensis.

MEANS OF IRRIGATION.—The foundation and waters for irrigating the Tulare valley have been furnished by the all-wise Creator, that man in due time might apply them to fertilize with moisture the rich earth that is not blessed with the “rains of Heaven in seed-time, and in the time of the ripening fruit.” The plains have a gradual descent from Buena Vista lake to the bay, and from the foot of the mountains on each side to its centre. To irrigate the eastern portion, it is but necessary to construct dams at the foot of the low hills on the different rivers, and lead the water

Early recollections of the mines, and a description of the great Tulare valley. By J.H. Carson ... Stockton, To accompany the steamer edition of the "San Joaquin republican", 1852 <http://www.loc.gov/resource/calbk.150>

through channels to any portion of the plain desired. The fall of the land is sufficient for this purpose, and not so great as to cause a waste at the sides of drains, by a too rapid descent. The land is superior in quality, and better adapted to the purpose of irrigation from the rivers than the Salt Lake valley, where the Mormons have so successfully converted the waste and parched wilderness, by irrigation, into fruitful fields. The land lying between Tule and King's rivers can be cultivated in any way desired, without the means of irrigation; although the means are at hand, if required, from the Four Creeks or either of the rivers. Between King's River and the San Joaquin the land is now watered by the numerous sloughs which make out from these rivers, and meander in every direction through the plain between them, during high water, which is in June, and a part of July, —the very season when their fertilizing influences are required. All the rivers of the plain can be divided into as many different channels as may become necessary for the purpose of watering the spaces between the upper streams, by diverting the water out of them at the foot of the low hills. It cannot be expected that the State, or General Government will ever construct means of irrigation for any portion of California; and it must necessarily be done by the settlers on them. If farming is done properly, the waters of the rivers will be required for its aid, during the time they are swollen from the melting snows in the mountains, in the months of May, June, and beginning of July, and an abundant supply can be easily obtained.

The descriptions of the Tulare Valley that have been given in these letters to the *Republican*, are but faint outlines of the true worth of this vast body of land, which has been so long overlooked. To attract the attention of the public to it, has been the writer's great aim; but go and see it for yourselves, and you will find that its worth has but half been told.

Will this valley ever be settled? Will the bare places be made green with fruitful fields, through which the diverted crystal waters will be seen winding their fertilizing course? Will the hum of the flouring mill and the factory's roar, ever waken from the sleep of ages the stillness that has ever reigned along her mighty rivers? Will the whistle of the fire-horse, as he comes thundering on his iron way, ever startle from their coverts the wild deer and elk? The answer is yes! and that, too, at no distant day. The unmeasured strides to greatness that California has been and is now taking, warrant the assertion. The thousands of the young and hearty sons of toil whom we see around

us that have come to make this their homes, tell in thunder tones that with the blessings of God, that here nothing is impossible—that here, under the blessings of our glorious, free and republican government, there has been a new era commenced in the world's history, so great that the civilized world looks on in wonder. Let not the wheels of government become foul and fall in our way, or obstruct the paths in which we are now treading, and ‘‘the wilderness shall blossom as the rose,’’ our mighty mountains tunneled, our thousand rivers confined to their beds, and California become the seat of commerce, wealth and art,—THE BRIGHT GEM OF THE WESTERN SEAS.